EXCURSION

TO THE

HOLY LAND

OF

THOUGHT,

BY HENRY LACROIX

Montreal:
PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL, ST NICHOLAS STREET.
1867.

EXCURSION

TO THE

HOLY LAND

OF

THOUGHT,

BY HENRY LACROIX

Montreal:
PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL, ST NICHOLAS STREET.
1867.

The following Lecture was delivered, at the Mechanics' Institute, Montreal, on the 16th December, 1867, by Henry Lacroix, for the benefit of the "INSTITUT CANADIEN."

INTRODUCTION.

As a prelude to the "Excursion" we are about to undertake, and in which we hope many of you will join, as heretofore in Excursions of other kinds, of which we have been the promoter—it is well that we should speak about the object for which it is undertaken. Every one is aware that it is for the benefit of the Institut Canadien.

That Institution raised on the solid and good foundations of free thought, derives its worth and practical value from the exercise of a common right and duty that you all hold it a sacred obligation to fulfil—or else you would not be here to night to listen to our words—and that consists in having the moral and intellectual courage of *expressing* free thought. By holding fast to that sacred obligation of free men, the Institut Canadien has thereby earned your lively sympathies; but on the other hand it has had to meet and to face another influence, which we are bound to respect for its good works, but not to follow in its wayward paths. By refusing to do so the Institut has been stigmatized by that influence and held up as deserving of scorn and contempt, not to say more.

Your sympathies are now being called into activity under the spur of necessity. You do not wish, you cannot allow that this Institution—called by the soul element that forms and animates it to act such a great and noble part in the future — should any longer be exposed to undergo the painful ordeal, or *penalty*, as some would call it, that it has so long endured. You cannot allow it for reasons of interest or for other motives.

We stand here for the purpose of presenting reasons of a general order which spring from the topic of which we are about to treat. How can we hope to become great and prosperous, to have an enlightened national mind, to be so constituted as to form a hale and hearty body—unless before-hand we prepare the ways and means to become so?

Apart from sectional, class and sectarian feelings that have an existence among us, and that have a right to live and to

prosper, without, however, encroaching too much upon those of their neighbour—there is one general feeling that also lives and that should be common to all, irrespective of peculiar ideas and notions entertained by any one. That feeling is the *National* feeling. Remove that feeling from any class, any body, religious or secular, and in it you will find an enemy to the national cause, to the general welfare.

The "Institut" Canadian in feeling, in sentiment and in mind—there is no use disguising the fact—has not prospered so well as it should have done, because it would not become sectarian in religious matters, because it would not be a pliant tool in the hands of Ultramontanes, who wished, and wish still, to control it. This is a plain and truthful statement of the case, which we defy any one to contradict, or to set at naught.

We don't think it would be proper to irritate the public against those who have followed that course toward the Institut. We prefer that evil should be foiled in its attempts by the direct and positive actions of good; that men of progress, influenced by free thought, should act their part without reluctance, without looking with ill feelings on those who thus call out into active play their good and cultivated faculties. All social centres have positive and negative elements, which produce good results by antagonism. That we should belong to the one, it follows that other men must represent the other. They exist among us for active service, and they verily fulfil their mission, with will and might. It's all right! we don't feel inclined to find fault with them for so doing.

As representatives of the liberal side of principles, we, of the Institut, feel no reluctance or false shame in saying, that we request and require the support and help of those who fraternally think as we do, and side with us, with the principles we stand on, advocate and mean to profess for the general welfare. Every representative man and woman, whose mind sees, feels and comprehends the obligations of duty and the present case, will understand, that active and substantial sympathy must follow closely the utterance of thought on the subject. Every sympathiser is requested to substantiate his sympathy, if but with a mite, according to his circumstances and means.

There is among us a large party, headed by a powerful

influence, who earnestly desire that this movement should not succeed. Praise be to them for their logical course, for their steadfast adherence to the principles they profess and represent! They are styled our enemies; but we like to meet such enemies, when they leave aside their occult means and ways, to face them with unveiled intentions and open actions, knowing well that this course is a right one, and of which none, not even our enemies, can disapprove.

It does not follow because we are one as a population, that we must allow our moral leanings to silence our combative and highest mental faculties; that we must be afraid to hurt the feelings of those who oppose us in every way— either by the expression of thought, by counter-actions, or by any necessary movements on our part. Society is so constituted that antagonism must exist in an active state, on one side as well as on that side which is the aggressive party. Sentimentality in the defense of a cause, is at best but a poor co-operator and auxiliary. It follows, therefore, that those who *are for us* must *work* for us, act with us, if they wish to be logical in theory and consistent in practice. In the race of life earnest and positive will leads the wây and earns the stakes at issue.

The adversaries of the Institut hope that the public will be neutral and indifferent—that those who advocate and profess free thought, will keep aloof on this occasion, and show no signs of life, or of intelligence. How far that hope will be realized remains to be seen.

The advocates of free thought, of all shades of opinion, of all origins, have one common interest in maintaining institutions which assume the mission of spreading on a large scale, the principle that actuates them. The greater the field that an institution has to work in, the greater the necessity for general support it requires. The Institut has undertaken the arduous task of speading among the large class of French-Canadians the active and positive principle of free thought. It is a great and difficult undertaking, which must, however, succeed, even against all the opposition in the way, if the resources required and asked for, be extended for its support. The circular published lately by the Institut, shows that the members have given a proof of their devotion to the cause they profess and defend. Before calling on the public they have subscribed to the extent of their means. They have personally nothing to

gain by the sacrifice ; but in obedience to the great law controlling them, they willingly and cheerfully give, so that future generations may reap a good and plentiful harvest.

Legal professors of a high standing have lately opened a course in the Institut. It is expected that this new endeavour will answer as a proof that the motto of the Institut "*altius tendimus*"— we aim higher—is not only a nominal but an active profession. It is now annexed to the Cobourg University for this purpose, and the Institut contemplates undertaking also the professorship of other high branches of knowledge. In time the "Institut Canadien" will undoubtedly be a great boon to both city and country. When such persons as the Emperor Napoleon, the Prince Napoleon, and *savants* such as Thièrs Guizot, Cortambert, the great geographer, and others in Europe, apart from the Institut de France, honor the Institut Canadien with munificent gifts and favours, surely the public may well be called upon for a share of its well known liberality.

It is in an individual capacity that we offer you the above condensed statement and suggestions, and not as an officer of the Institution for which we now plead. We believe it is also proper to add, that the following "*Excursion to the holy land of thought*" is our own action, our personal emission of thought, and that we, individually, are the only responsible party concerned in it. We somewhat stand apart in our ideas, even in the "Institut Canadien," from those with whom we associate and whom we esteem.

EXCURSION

TO THE

HOLY LAND OF THOUGHT.

We would extemporize this "Excursion" with a paragraph serving as a guiding rule to our pen, and as an inviting bidding to our hearers and readers, that we hold them and our subject in close relationship of heart. We would also intimate that the following hints and details, evolved from the mysterious elements of truth, although wearing a light and hazy aspect, are none the less substantially borne out by the active faculties of the human mind.

We hold that thought emitted is a creation and at the same time a creative function of the Universal Mind. A strong impulse tells us to hope, that our quiet wanderings in the high regions of mentality, into which we wish to lead you all, after having learned somewhat the way, will be found as pleasing and instructive to you as to us.

The love of the beautiful, and love for our kind have led us to trace the following picturesque landscape, which every human brain reflects during dreamy moments, when all is quiet and still.

It is called *Paradise*, that beautiful, that good and wise realm into which we wish to lead you. Many have gone to its shores, now and then, but they have returned with but a faint impress of it on the senses. None, however gross, have been denied "a look" at the gorgeous scenes presented. None can say "it is not my own," for all feel, within, a consciousness that outlives and outspeaks the term and voice of passing mo-

ments. Many of you have reached the shores of Paradise, wherein you dwell and which dwells within you; but the cares of active life have summoned you back. It does so, so often, that you feel as if it were a strange land, not your birth-right.

We would sing songs of praises to those who are thus excluded from Paradise; we would hold them before the world, before all, before the All-Mighty Mind, to whom all is known, to whom all is *one*, as meritorious beings, as active benefactors of the human race.

The "dire evil," so dark without, so bright within, which men are wont to behold under the first aspect, is one of the mysterious points of nature which theory unfolds and practical genius makes known.

When carried above crude ideality, in the horizon of thought, we behold the world as it is, and we enter into Paradise, to which many, *all* are called, but in which few remain for any length of time. The elect, of different grades, who people this sphere, are godly in appearance, but not more so than the others are in reality—within. The burden of the creative mission, which the elect do not bear, is the glorious reality which the many can claim as their own. The sombre dens of life are the practical Paradise inhabited by the many;—there darkness prevails, but there also the *dark ones* make light! The elect enjoy life in its highest spheres,—the many endure it, in the lowest planes. The first bask in light—the others grovel in darkness. Both are godly and are bound together by connecting links. The *all* is *one*, when wisely interpreted; may you all see truth in this wise.

The progression of ideas has made a revolution in the world of thought. Science proves beyond a doubt "that extremes meet," and this guiding axiom makes the lowly no longer an outcast, but a being gifted with godliness.

Now, brothers and sisters, who listen to our words and expect perhaps strange revelations, "something new," know ye not, that mind is of all time, and that you also are of all time—in the truest sense of the word. Assembled here to meet us, to hear us, to roam with us through the avenues and by-ways of "the Holy Land of Thought" you will be surprised to find that you have visited no "strange land" and that the scenes presented are well known in many points and somewhat familiar to each of you.

From the plane where we now stand, within a circumscribed circle, or atmosphere, where to suit great purposes, all is made solid or tending toward that state, where attraction, gravitation and repulsion obey certain laws of condition —our eyes dart rays of light to illumine close or distant objects and scenes, and we are thus made to see. These rays from our brilliant orbs, so small in volume, so beautifully organized, a mystery yet to the most famed oculists, are but physical or gross in nature, although they are not seen, although they escape the touch. These rays are material because they precede a superior action, because they are the carriers of a finer substance emitted from the brain. That substance called thought has a self evident existence; its action in universal life, everywhere prevailing, is traceable in the effects which appeal to the senses, even in primary forms ascending into varied and innumerable conditions.

From this platform—this small planet—erected by "thought" and willing hands in the vast expanse of space, and at which all work to complete it, we cast vague glances here and there, through the misty veil that holds us together as a common family. We do so only occasionally, when leisure moments occur, when labour itself seeks rest, and then we all behold and realize that this small globe, as compared with which we are so small, so insignificant in size, sinks into nothingness as a point of comparison to us, even in the individual sense. This most revolutionary and practical theory, so much at variance with the rules of science which have been laid down, and to which the world looks for instruction and knowledge, has itself rules, conditions, teachings,—if but very few teachers —and a very comprehensive philosophy for all enquiring and dispassionate minds. This single fact which radiating minds experience, which all men feel within themselves, if not otherwise, is a grand, stupendous manifestation of our power to summon all without— within us—and to carry elsewhere, to the very core of Universal Creation, and to all parts of it—a part and parcel of ourselves by and through the mysterious evolution of " thought."

The godly beings who thus exercise the godly power, and who by ignorance are often apt to think little of themselves, have yet but little self-knowledge. They atomize themselves in the general survey, and when looking by and through that portion

of their general unity they realize not that all is within the individual. The world they inhabit, by the power of self-expansion, becomes comparatively a single atom; but they willingly lose sight, knowledge and comprehension of all else that exists without the boundary circle they have worked—even if only by thought—around this globe. They wish to be small when immensity is unto them an inward faculty, an undying principle, capable of infinite creations to fill infinite space. In form small and almost meaningless, they truly exhibit a power, which we glory to hail in plain words and to assign to every one.

The power of contraction in man is equal to his power of expansion—thus does ignorance become his partner and helpmate to exclude light, where and when darkness is required, during a very short space of time, to accomplish certain works.

On this sphere created by "thought" as architect and director, and which many thoughtless men inhabit with a lesser number of thoughtful ones— we find that the common mission and undertaking advances well, notwithstanding what is said to the contrary. The very men who deny that, belie their words by deeds—if not by thought. What matters that many godly men should clothe themselves in darkness, of different degrees and shape, and perform a part in relation to those conditions,—are they not still godly in every way ?... Can we ignore that fact ? Can we not see the live embers beneath the ashes that cover them ? Knowing that fact, are we not bound to proclaim it, and to redeem from oblivion such a large portion of the human family ? When darkness is made to echo loud peals and to dart burning flashes in every direction, and to augur ill—light must also testify to its own existence and hail " good news" as the ultimate result of every action.

The final mission of the law of Love has now undertaken to break the " third" seal which reveals to our mind the intellectual part of that law.—Love, understood, emancipates moral slavery, as a necessary consequence.— It is thus we are made to see better, and behold brighter scenes than heretofore. It is in consequence of the advent of that new state of things that the redeeming traits of the human race are brought out to light. That man should ignore himself for

a time, we admit; but that he should ever remain in darkness, can no more be entertained under new and brighter auspices.

Amid the noisy action of this World-Shop, the quiet but ever present foreman *thought*, goes and comes, directs, supervises, lends a hand to power, and inspires all workmen and even the works performed by them, with a soul element to animate them.

This World-Shop, built up by the suggestion of thought and by the hands of man, in the great expanse of space, is a noble testimonial of power, of which all men may well feel proud. None, however low in the social scale, however poorly endowed in other ways, need feel ashamed of his condition, need feel here "from home" need feel inferior to those who surround him and who work with him in other capacities at the same general undertaking. Common brotherhood meets here for one same common purpose, although individuals take unto themselves different parts;—in a godly manner they all come; in a godly manner they all leave. While here many seem to superficial observation—as *outcasts*—and, are not all in that condition, in relation to former superior conditions, as to comfort?—and as such awaken in the hearts of some of their co-laborers no direct, positive sympathy and love; but be it said those coarse notions are now becoming somewhat obsolete. A complete revolution is being made in the world of ideas, and fraternity is becoming a settled fact.

Changes in the material aspect of the world bring about changes in the moral sense—so it happens that a wider range of ideas, having a more comprehensive tendency and effect, augment the brain capital and enrich the human breast with brighter and gentler feelings. The past history of man—which written lore shows under such sombre aspects, and which thought would show to have been darker still in primœval periods instead of being a subject of reproach to man, presents a different view to reflecting and comprehensive minds, and it becomes us, under the present circumstances, to foster everywhere the beautiful theory—that the future presents as much difference to the present as this does to the past.

The gradual and constant development of ideas, brought on by the raying out from every human form, and by no class of men in particular, is a beautiful and gorgeous pheno-

menon that no words can yet well describe. We notice, and it is well said, that the greatest philosopher can learn from a fool. This proves beyond a doubt that the mysterious element of thought—which forms the most developed portion of the individual—must abide in every one as a constituent of his selfhood, as a necessary appendage of the human organism. To place this element always in the head of every individual, would be committing the same error as placing heaven outside of this globe—where the *conditions* of heaven are also to be found. Electricity and lastly magnetism are spoken of as raying in and raying out, through every pore of the human organism, and as forming around it an atmosphere more or less condensed or gaseous, coarse or ethereal in kind. Thought is an all pervading principle which stands in the same relation to electricity and magnetism as the future does to the past and the present. We conceive that thought's headquarters are in the head; but "there are many mansions in that fatherly house"—some coarse and dark quarters, some that are illumined with a soft but hydrogenic kind of light, and others where the frontal door-ways look ahead to receive good news and welcome them. As an atmosphere thought envelops the organism and buoys it up in the world of matter, so as to keep these particles of humanity in a distinct and individual state. No one ever complained of being "himself," of having a tenement of his own to live in; thought which creates and entertains that impression in every one—finds it "good" nevertheless, to better constantly the individual conditions, which are always good by themselves, so as to increase in this world the amount of good things that are in it. No one can find fault with living in more favorable conditions—but a certain number, if not all, grieve at losing the good things they have, even in exchange for those that are better. Apart from being progresive this world is also conservative, and, in every human being it will be found that this latter faculty is not to him a stranger, and an unwelcome visitor at all times. Human brotherhood is evidently a fact in all individual ways and means; none can find fault with others and consider himself a privileged being, because his moral or mental faculties are called into more active service, than those of his more physical neighbour.

At one time in the practical history of this world it was

considered a blasphemy against truth and "revelation" to pretend that Love was a universal law, and that "outsiders" had a right to it as well as "insiders." Those "good old times" are gone by and "better ones" have succeeded them, and now all men smile on those queer notions of olden times, as wisdom smiles on the queer ways of infant ignorance.

Angularities produce angular results. Humanity aware of that seeks in every way to alter the shape of the globe, so as to cause it to produce a more uniform influence. This gigantic undertaking, which minor ones—of a personal character, indefinite in number and kind—serve to bring about, will ultimately in ages to come, be achieved; there is no doubt of that. It is through individual efforts that general progress is attained, as you must be aware. It is by the raising of the individual that the whole human family is made to bear a different look, to have more value as a whole. The welfare of each, therefore, becomes a matter of great importance, a vital point in the science of social economy. It is a subject which calls for constant attention and on which all the capacities of genius, both of a scientific, moral and philosophical character, are called to expend and expand themselves. Help the poor in body, in morals and in mind, so that they may overcome the steep ascents of social life—says the clear ringing voice of thought, says the godly spirit within every one. To ascribe that thought to any maxim maker as specially *his*, is to misconceive and undervalue the godliness of the human race. Authority has had its day as a rather general thing, and it now becomes the new age to teach a moral philosophy that will elevate the individual and society at large. In plain words, it is opportune and necessary that man individually and collectively, should think more of himself and less of authority.

Expended thought has many shrines where vast numbers of votaries and devotees congregate. Thought, even of a stale kind, has such nourishing qualities that millions and millions find it a suitable food and live on it. It requires many agents and many ages to materialize a set of ideas, to render them hard and unpalatable. There always exists a number of men to recall and represent the primitive ideas and ages—showing that incarnation of thought is a constant revolving process of nature. The small number of men who attract and represent

new thought will find that it is but reincarnated thought, bearing a different look and qualities on account of its rebirth and remodelling. Whatever antagonism there may be between the old and the new, between the dark and the bright, between old doctrines shrivelling human conceptions, and those that expand the heart and the mind, we find that those objective and subjective phases tend toward one same end, with all the seeming contradiction exhibited.

The doctrines of Love have a body, a spirit and a soul, and each of these parts have human representatives to contribute to their development and outgrowth. This simple exposition we would wish every one to bear well in mind. Those three degrees of substance, of substantial ideas, that prevail among us, that divide us into three separate general camps, cause us to entertain, to love and to glorify the degrees of thought that form and reform us.

Before the advent of the era of Love, thought had a well defined physical tendency and nature. The body of all ideas now current and to become so in future times, was then formed! Thought, then, as a body, now reappears under a spiritual form and state! Thus we understand the history of thought and of manhood. Thus does thought speak through us and tell its own history. Eras and ages repeat themselves

Thought, which is truth, outlives changes and bears a brighter aspect as the wheel of time revolves and brings back to material life objective existences.

Without wishing to cast a slur on those who entertain and represent the first degree of thought—the body element of the law of Love—nor those who seek and develop its spiritual conditions—we must say that those two camps are but rear guards on the road of progress. Well called "followers" they lead not the way. They are a body and spirit unto the law of love—but they are not its *soul*. The first are numerous, the others much less so—a copy on a large scale of those two parts in the individual organisation. The flesh heeds the inspiration of the spirit—so it happens with the first in regard to the second.

Thought, under those two aspects and shapes of a human kind, wears not its brighest look; it appears thus without a head, without brain functions, without a forward motion. It sheds not bright ideas among those "followers" of two differ-

ent grades; it keeps them within narrowed horizons where darkness, more or less dense, and semi-light, more or less apparent, prevail. Thus does it happen that these two class representatives of thought see the future—or the brighest portion of truth—under sombre and vague colours. Thus it is that mankind in its two first class degrees, represents the two first stages and states of thought—when it becomes incarnated into matter.

Thought viewed under the above description is headless, is rear thought, is sombre and semi-light thought. To complete its *sensible* being thought forms and incarnates itself into a small class, which in common with its fellow men of different planes, bears the same general character and appearance, although it differs with them in point of mental organisation. As the head portion of all things is always small so is the *head* portion of mankind. As a visible soul that small class is an inspiring agency to diffuse light over the rest of mankind and to act a paternal part over them. That right of paternity is often a subject of dispute in the human family... so much does inward thought in all men tell them that *the whole is one*, that glory and godliness without is not greater than that within!!

As an impartial and unprejudiced delineator in the premises, we present the different states and shades that meet our view and form a whole. Enlightened thought guides our pen and through our mediumship it wishes well to all those who differ with us in ways and means, in ideas and action. Although we are forced, in a wordly sense, to describe the high and the low, the new and the old, the bright and the dark, under varied appearances—so that one seems superior to the other—still it must be plainly evident to every one that those distinctions in our mind are far from having the importance often ascribed to them. To have better times it is essentially necessary that the better portion of thought should prevail and become more widely diffused. The godliness within, which for creative purposes is required to become without, keeps pace with the outward growth or expansion of thought and its expression through human kind.

The better times inaugurated and to some extent in practical sway, allow the free expression of the brightest ideas without submitting the authors to the painful tests of the

heretofore "good old times." That is one of the bright achievements of better thought, that wished for and proclaimed equality unto all classes, which sentiment all men find within themselves as a principle of justice, love and wisdom. The better thought we feel and express in common with others who consciously and conscientiously believe as we do, is not enclosed within sectarian boundaries, but on the contrary it embraces a vast and general verge, and *designs the very soul element of all doctrines* having shape and form and being professed by all men without exception.

Thought, although occupying the highest flights in other creations of superior excellence, where its objective beings revel in the greatest glory imaginable, finds it "good" to renew constantly its states of existence—to undergo conditions of infancy, adolescence and maturity, throughout all forms, degrees and ages, and to reincarnate itself in the vile, the good and the wise, making them as they are, as they are seen, as it is right and proper that they should be, in each progressive condition they occupy.

Thought, scientific and moral, attains its highest, or rather mature condition in the philosophic. Thus does man who "was" who "is" and who "will be," become mature or wise, fully developed, when his mind is prepared to see, to feel, and to dispense the right of equality unto all his fellow men.

Unto all conditions or degrees of existence there is what we literally term a *better* thought, seeking always to advance the state of the individual, leading him to follow the example of others in those things which make them more happy. It is to that better portion of man we address our words, with which we commune. Antagonistic propensities will naturally heed not our words, nor sanction their real meaning—finding the direct and positive light too strong will they not receive it in another way, under a different form?

"All is well" says the clear ringing voice of thought, through every mind that faces the soul of things. All *was*, all *is*, and all *will be* well, we are inspired by thought to believe. That state of bright faith and conviction is unto us a buoying condition, a new born faculty that we cherish, and that no passing clouds can obliterate. We hold up that condition and faculty before each of you, as a development attainable to all, as an individual "golden age," unto others a

substantial fact, and that will ultimately be unto all—as foreseen by all former ages.

All is well, indeed, we repeat, in the progressive world we live in—and out of it also. Were it otherwise, thought would be less than thoughtless, and its universal condition would not have been, could not be in the present nor in the future. These logical conclusions, that clear thought suggests and upholds, are as true as they are simple.

Those who find that all is "wrong" look at and see but what remains to be done. They invite discouragement, dis content, and thus darken the horizon that surrrounds them. They all believe, however, in angels of light, in their mission to brighten the human lot; but that thought unto them bears a material form; they expect and wish for a tangible manifestation, a hasty demonstration to strike their material senses. The benign, invisible thought that comes to them as a ministering and guiding angel, does not seem to them as *the* Messiah, as the one called for, as the one that should come—although none other is more fitted to assuage the feelings, to enlighten the mind, to render existence a blessing. That class of men ever fully represented in this world does not bear, however, the same look, the same status as heretofore. There is a constant improvement in that class as in other classes, and that is due to the *reincarnation of its beings*, to rebirth in matter, or to the rebirth within them of thought; the two ways are objective and subjective phases fully demonstrated by facts and by the substantial lessons of logic and thought—the parent of facts.

There is in truthful reality a *hell* in every state, as well as a *heaven*, and thought bids us to say—that the highest, the most developed state that exists, inside and outside of our sphere, even that which poets chant, which theologians point out, and toward which *all* are gradually returning, in a scientific, moral and philosophic way, in an objective and subjective manner—has also a "hell," a real hell, although a light and enlightened one, when compared to other hells or to other shades.

Thought has within itself all conceptions that take an outward existence. That ONE principle, seemingly pluralized by universal sway, by objective representation, by its transcendentally beautiful triune demonstration, is a father, mother and child in the human family—it is the ALL and ALL—the one and every one.

This literary and abridged form of thought—*the synthesis of all general and popular beliefs*—describes in few words what elementary knowledge takes so many to circumscribe. It belongs to this age to codify what preceding ones have amassed, and to render that sum clear and plain. This age —the head and soul age of the moral phase of this world— will assuredly fulfil its mission as others have done, and elaborate a system in keeping with the developed state of ideas. The moral law requires a comprehensive framing, a head unfoldment as a constituent part to those already evolved in former ages. To close the era of Love on this earth, thought is actively engaged in condensing ideas, and it so happens that we act as one of the pioneers in that work.

It follows as a rule and necessity that maturity takes the place of former ages, and that it represents them still, but in a more developed form. Thus will it happen that incoming ideas will model out a new state of things in social and mental economy, and produce the greatest development of the era of Love.

Far are we from condemning or wishing ill to our fellow men, who represent an antagonistic or different position to our views. Unto all men we hold forth a bright aspect of thought, but it is not expressed in a tone nor with the intention of wounding or forcing it on any. We would have it understood that our views belong to the moral order—and that they trace out, if they do not well define, the high state of that phase of our being.

As a conclusion we would say, that the changes about to be effected within the small circle that binds us together, on this globe, by the power of thought, are of a kind that will suit every one—even those who may now grumble and find fault with the disturbance. Are not the external members of society and those who are their propelling organs, subjected to and effectually controlled by the intelligence that runs and escapes through them? Mankind is virtually a body constituted to act the same functional parts as the individual body. Every individual comes to reason, so does humanity under the direction of THOUGHT.

(*Circular.*)

INSTITUT CANADIEN.

This Institution was founded in 1844, when the French Canadians had not a single library in the City of Montreal, nor a place where they could read either books or newspapers or meet together. In 1852 it was incorporated under the name of the "INSTITUT CANADIEN."

Some time after, manifestations of ill-will on the part of the clergy were noticeable, and the clergy began to establish libraries and lecture rooms of their own, which they had never thought of before. However, the success of the *Institut Canadien* was so marked, that in 1857, not less than 700 members were contributors to its maintenance.

In 1858, the clergy determined, if possible, to destroy the INSTITUT. They had already three powerful institutions of their own, —the Sulpicians had formed the *Cabinet de Lecture* and *Cercle Littéraire*, and the Jesuits, *l'Union Catholique*, where members had access to libraries and reading rooms gratuitously or at trifling cost. They attempted at first to induce the members of the INSTITUT to exclude from their number those who did not profess the Catholic religion, and then to exclude from their reading room the *Witness* and the *Semeur Canadien*. After protracted debates, which lasted several weeks, the victory remained with those members who were desirous of maintaining the integrity of their Constitution in regard to equality of creeds and origins, and their liberty of reading all organs of public opinion. Then a system of calumny was organized in order to represent the library of the Institution as containing several books of an immoral character, and finally some leaders, in the interest of the clergy, circulated through the city a written declaration containing those calum-

nies and soliciting signatures to a resignation of the members in mass. The effect was the withdrawal from the INSTITUT of 150 members at one time, and the foundation of the *Institut Canadien-Français*, with the view of taking away from the INSTITUT those who had personal sympathies with the 150 retiring members, but had objections to put themselves under the exclusive tutorship of the clergy.

Since 1858, the French-Canadian young men, who had almost all enrolled under the banner of the INSTITUT CANADIEN have been divided among that Institution, the Cercle Littéraire, the Union Catholique and the Institut Canadien-Français, the latter receiving from the gentlemen of the Seminary an annual contribution for its support.

The INSTITUT CANADIEN could not but gradually lose some of its efficiency under the active and unceasing persecutions of the clergy, and the rivalry of so many institutions, supported by rich corporations.

Efforts were made to show to the clergy that the only ground on which they avowedly persecuted the INSTITUT CANADIEN, namely, the pretended immorality of their books, was unfounded. A deputation waited upon the Bishop of Montreal with a catalogue of their books, offering to purge their library of any books that should be indicated to them as being immoral. His Lordship kept that catalogue six months before him, and when the deputation went back to have an answer, His Lordship returned it without indicating a single work as being immoral.

Notwithstanding that proof of good will, the Bishop maintained the pastoral prohibition and religious penalties he had decreed against the members of the INSTITUT, which consist in the refusal of sacraments even *in articulo mortis*, and a threat of refusal to bury any one dying a member, in a catholic cemetery.

Many members of the clergy acknowledge the justice of the cause of the remaining members of the INSTITUT; but they are obliged to submit to the dictates of their superiors, and they continue to enforce the penalties imposed by the Pastoral letter of the year 1858.

By the concerted action of the clergy and of the three rival literary institutions above mentioned, the number of the

members has been reduced to about 300, of which 150 only are in a position to pay their annual subscriptions.

The INSTITUT has been in possession of real estate on Notre-Dame Street since 1854. By the enlargement of that street, they have been obliged to demolish and rebuild at a time when they still owed $4,000 on the property.

The indemnity paid by the Corporation was partially absorbed by taxation for the improvement of the street, and the remainder by the payment of the $4,000 due on the property, so that the INSTITUT had to find means to meet the whole cost of the re-building.

The following statements will show the actual position of the Institution in different respects. It will be seen that though the assets are far above the liabilities, the annual income is far below the annual expenditure with the heavy interests which are actually running:

FIRST STATEMENT.

ASSETS.		LIABILITIES.	
Real estate, cost value	$21,825.95	First loan	$12,000.00
Books	4,698.58	Second Loan	2,800.00
Statues given by Emperor Napoleon	1,000.00	Notes payable	1,800.75
Books, &c., given by Prince Napoleon	2,600.00	Other debts	150.00
Furniture, &c	1,523.00	Balance in favor of assets	18,641.78
Bills receivable (extraordinary subscription among members)	3,745.00		
	$35,392.53		$35,392.53

SECOND STATEMENT,

Showing the annual income and expenditure.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
Rent of two shops	$1,100.00	Librarian's salary	$400.00
Annual subscription of members (150 at $3)	450.00	Water	33.50
Subscription to library and reading room (20 at $3)	60.00	Gas	94.00
		Assessments	67.50
		Special tax	116.00
		Insurance on personal estate	25.00
		" real "	59.00
		Subscriptions to newspapers	155.20
		Fuel	101.50
		Postage	40.20
		Commission on collection	28.00
		Stationary	15.00
		Binding	50.00
		House expenses	37.50
Balance against income	797.00	Interest on $14,800 at 8 per 100	1184.00
	$2,407.00		$2,407.00

THIRD STATEMENT,

Showing how the two accounts would stand if the " INSTITUT *" was free from debt.*

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
As above in No. 2	$1,610.00	As above	$2,407.00
		Off interest	1,184.00
			1,223.00
		Balance in favor of income	387.00
			$1,610.00

The members reduced in number, as already stated, have taxed themselves to their utmost capacity, in order to meet the annual deficit. The bills receivable mentioned in the first statement amounted at first to $4,935 of which $1,190 have been paid. The extraordinary subscriptions made among themselves, and which amounted to $4,935, were made payable at the convenience of subscribers, many taking a few years to pay their notes. These delays will put the INSTITUT in a position in which for a time it will be impossible to meet the demands upon it, and the actual deficit will continue partially if not wholly, and will increase the debt even after the subscription notes are paid and absorbed.

If means however were adopted at once to pay off the hypothecary debt, the amount of those notes would be sufficient to meet the remainder of the liabilities.

In view of these facts, the members of the INSTITUT CANADIEN have resolved to appeal to all those who appreciate the freedom of thinking, reading and speaking, by and for themselves, and the right to meet in social intercourse with their fellow-citizens of different creed and race, and to ask their friendly and benevolent aid to put themselves for ever above any danger of exhausting the material means of securing and enjoying these privileges.

The amount to be realized, if this appeal be favorablyl stened to, is $14,800.

Twenty three years of struggle and hardship, are an evidence of the faithfulness to the principles of freedom of meeting, freedom of thinking and freedom of discussion. During that period the INSTITUT CANADIEN has been the rallying point for those who protest against intolerance, and who seek to protect liberty of thought and action.

Besides the gratitude which the donors will acquire in the hearts of the present and future members, the INSTITUT offers to take all donations as pre-payments of annual subscriptions, so as to entitle any donor to enjoy the privileges of ordinary members for as many years as will be represented by every $4 subscribed. The intention of the Committee of Management is to raise the Annual Subscription of Members from $3 to $4.

JOSEPH DOUTRE, President,
A. BOISSEAU, 1st Vice-President,
N. DUVAL, 2nd Vice-President,
J. N. BIENVENU, Recording Secretary,
E. MELANÇON, Ass't Rec. Secretary,
GONZALVE DOUTRE, Cor. Secretary,
HENRY LACROIX, Treasurer,
ALPHONSE LUSIGNAN, Librarian,
HENRY WIGHT, Assistant Librarian.