THE WAR, AND ITS MORAL:

A

CANADIAN CHRONICLE.

BY

WILLIAM F. COFFIN, ESQUIRE,
FORMERLY SHERIFF OF THE DISTRICT OF MONTREAL, LIEUT.-COLONEL, STAFF, ACTIVE FORGE, CANADA, AND H. M. AGENT FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ORDNANCE ESTATES, CANADA.

goonfreat
PRINTED BY JOHN LOVELL, ST. NICHOLAS STREET.
1864.
MY DEAR SIR,—I venture to appeal to your respected name as the best introduction for the little work which I do myself the honour to dedicate to you. To you, indeed, it owes its existence. You conferred upon me the appointment I have the honour to hold under the Crown in Canada, and that appointment has given life to an idea, long cherished in embryo.

The management of the Ordnance Lands in this Province has thrown me upon the scenes of the most notable events of the late war. It has brought me in contact with many of the surviving actors. It has revived early recollections of my own.

The achievements of 1812 were the household words of my childish days. For three years, I grew up among the men, and almost among the incidents of the time. In the Spring of 1815, from the Grand Battery at Quebec, I had watched the slow cavalcade which bore Sir George Prevost across the ice of the St. Lawrence, on his return to England.

Fifteen years afterwards brought me back to a country which, for thirty-three years, has been my home. During this long interval, the subject of the war has never ceased to be one of great interest. It has led to many enquiries, and to a gradual accumulation of material, which might have seen light earlier, had I
not been daunted by a wholesome precept of my English schooling:

Si quantum cuperem, possem quoque. Non me us audet, Rem tentare pudor, quam wires ferre recusent.

That I do so now, must be ascribed, in great part, to the liberality of my Publisher; in some degree to the pressure of a belief that, under the circumstances of the times, the effort had become a duty; and still more, to the opportunity and incentive you had made.

Permit me therefore, "Si tam parvum carmen, majestas recipit tua," to offer to you, in you honourable retirement, this mark of respectful homage. Canada owes to you a deep debt of gratitude. The revival of the military spirit of the country is due to your fostering hand. At your touch the Volunteer force sprang into life. The spirit you infused is inextinguishable. Your parting words will never be forgotten. As a member of that force, "quorum pars parva fui," I offer this humble tribute to your talents, your patriotism, and to your manly, English, independence of character, and have the honour to subscribe myself;

My dear Sir,

With regard and gratitude,
Your faithful servant,

WILLIAM F. COFFIN.

OTTAWA, 2nd January, 1864.

Works consulted and documents furnished—chiefly by personal friends—which have contributed to this Chronicle of War of 1812.

Alison History of Europe.
James Military occurrences of the War.
Christie History of Lower Canada.
Armstrong Notices of the War of 1812.
Tupper Life of Brock, and Correspondence.
Stone Life of Brant.
Neff Army and Navy of America.
Schoolcraft History of Canada.
Bibaud Histoire du Canada.

Scott Dundee, a sketch of Canadian History.
Mansfield Life of Gen. Scott.
Gifford History of the War of French Revolution.
Sabine American Loyalists.
Veritas Letters of 1815.
Answer to Veritas The Canadian Inspector.
Pontiac Conspiracy of.
Greig History of Montreal.
Bouchette Topography.
Morgan Celebrated Canadians.

The Canadian Inspector, 1811, 1812, 1813, and 1814.

Manuscripts, Memoranda of:

Major General Thomas Evans.
James Richardson, D.D.
Col. Sir Etienne Taché.
Colonel John Clarke, St. Catherines.
Judge Jarvis, Cornwall.
Colonel McLean, Scarborough.
Squire Reynolds, Amherstburg.
Sergeant Andrew Spearman.

Manuscript Memoir of Sir George Prevost.
Journal of General and Governor Simcoe.
Report of Commissioners of Indian Affairs.
Review of Tupper's Life of Brock, in the same.

The Author tenders his thanks to the Hon. Pierre J. O. Chauveau, Superintendent of Education, L.C., for access to the valuable collection of Books and Documents relating to Canadian History, to be found in the Library of the Jacques Cartier Normal School, Montreal.
CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

Preamble

CHAPTER II.


CHAPTER III.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER IV.


CHAPTER V.


CHAPTER VI.


CHAPTER VII.


CHAPTER VIII.


CHAPTER IX.


CHAPTER X.

American forces. British strength. American force on landing. British retire. Fort George falls. Vincent occupies Beaver Dam. Description...
CHAPTER XII.


CHAPTER XIII.

Return to Vincent at the Beaver Dam—Retires on Burlington Heights—Colonel Harvey—Stoney Creek—British retire from, and the Americans occupy their position—Harvey's plan for night attack—The Americans surprised—Desperate fighting—Americans dispersed—Generals Chandler and Winder taken prisoners—Present aspect of the ground—Old Lutheran Chapel—Burial place of the slain—No memorial stone—Why not? Americans fall back on Niagara—Abandon camps and supplies.

CHAPTER XIV.


CHAPTER XV.

General de Rottenburg succeeds General Vincent—Dearborn retires—Boyd in command at Fort George—American Frontier exposed to attack—Colonels Bishopp and Clark—Clark's career—Hazardous and successful foray on Fort Schlosser—Bishopp, emulous of gallant deeds, attacks Black Rock—Black Rock, now and then—Bishopp lands—Defeats the enemy—Captures the place—General Porter rallies the Americans—The British attacked in turn—Bishopp wounded to death—His worthy career in Europe and Canada—Influence over the Volunteers—The Americans enlist the Indians—Lako Ontario—Commodore Chauncey attacks Bur-lington Heights—Fails—Again sacks York. Sir James Yeo provokes the Commodore out of Niagara—Two American schooners foundered—Two taken—More expected from Yeo very inconsiderately—Yeo did his duty thoughtfully and well—From Ontario to Lake Champlain—Escapade at Gore Creek. on the St. Lawrence—Death of Capt. Milne—Supplies how furnished—How transported in winter and summer—Value of the Commissariat—Sir William Robinson—Commissioners in Canada. Isaae Winslow Clarke—His career—Bateaux Brigades—

CHAPTER XVI.

Montreal the centre of supply—Description of Montreal—View from top of the Mountain—Montreal of 1840 or 1864, not the Montreal of 1812—Montreal viewed as the Military Key of Canada—Country around—View of Beloail—Canadian scenery—Canadian people—The Habituats, their progress, improvement and characteristics—Strong temptation to invasion—Approach to Montreal and the Richelieu country—Description of Lake Champlain—American force on the New York frontier available for invasion.

CHAPTER XVII.

Sir George Prevost and Sir James Craig—Sir James a good man but obdurate—Sir George politic and useful—He identifies himself with the people—they support him and British rule—The Legislature legalize the issue of army bills, and vote addition. militia forces—Eschequor Bills—Sir George prepares for defence—English Volun teers—French Militia—The two people incline to different systems of enrolment—Both readily unite against common enemy—Isle aux Noix—Attempt made to prise this post—Capture of American schooners Growler and Eagle—Reprisals—Officers and men of H. M. brig of war, Wasp, transferred to Lake Champlain—Plattsburg, Swanton, Champlain, destroyed—Montreal challenged—Blockade of the seaboard by the British—Increased American strength on the Lakes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Stung by reverses the British Admiralty acted with vigour—Ships were equipped of a calibre to meet the Americans—Americans blockaded in their own harbours—Commerce destroyed, revenue ruined—Seamen useless on the ocean, transferred to the Lakes—Naval engagements—Dominica and Decatur—Pelican and Argus—Boxer and Enterprize—Cruise of the President under Commodore Rodgers—Detroit frontier—Unpleasant vicissitudes—Story of the Frontier—Squire Reynolds—His narrative—Early state of the Detroit Frontier—Building of Fort Miami—Who paid for it—Surrender of Michigan Territory and Detroit to Americans under Jay's Treaty 1796—British war vessels on the Upper Lakes allowed to rot—Brock's interview with the Indians—June 1812—First scalp taken by the American McCulloch—Indian exasperation—Resolution to retaliate—Declaration of war received 28th June, 1812—Capture of the Cayuga Packet by Lieut. Rolette.
CHAPTER XIX.


CHAPTER XX.

Captain Barclay and Commodore Perry—Resources of each—Perry’s difficulty—Crosses the bar at Presqu’Isle—Description of Barclay’s crew and armament—10th September—Battle of Lake Erie—Desperate contest—The Lawrence surrenders—Perry’s personal exploit—Changes his ships—Renews the contest—The British squadron captured—Officers all killed or wounded—The resistance of Barclay and his crew—Barclay’s heroic character and conduct—Appearance before a Court martial—Honourably acquitted—Barclay’s defeat, Proctor’s doom—Position of Proctor—Nature of country—Supplies exhausted—Alternative of retreat or surrender—Retreats—Line of march—Difficulties—Followed by Harrison—Kentucky Mounted Riflemen—Tactics in the battle—Character of forest—Not impracticable to horsemen

CHAPTER XXI.

Proctor falls back to Baptiste Creek—General Harrison with Perry’s assistance follows—5th October—British force halts at Dalson’s Farm—Colonel Maclean of Scarborough—His reminiscences—Warburton in command at Dalson’s—Proctor retires personally to Moravian Town—Roused before daylight—Intelligence—Troops attacked and retreating—Warburton followed by Shelby and Kentucky riflemen—Description of these troops and mode of attack—Proctor halts his men—Nature of ground and position—Tecumseh—His last words—No abattis made—American attack—Defeat and surrender of the British

CHAPTER XXII.

Tecumseh—His character—Origin—Tribe of the Shawanese—From Virginia—Driven into Ohio—Thence into Michigan—The Brothers Elkottawa and Tecumseh—Influence of Tecumseh over Indian tribes, due to his personal qualities—Anecdotes

CHAPTER XXIII.


CHAPTER XXIV.


CHAPTER XXV.

The Disillusionment of the War: Freud has taken it upon himself to help the general civilian population understand and come to terms with their mental distress. He believes that the two major factors contributing to this distress are the disillusionment and altered attitude towards death which the war has brought about. According to Freud, within the warring nations, high social standards induced much self-restraint on the individual. These social standards were the basis of the civilized state’s existence. The disillusionment results not only from the discrepancy in moral relations exhibited by the state and its expectations, according to Freud, but also from the cruelty shown by individuals. The inmost essence of human nature consists of elemental forces, which include those that society considers evil.