

**DOMINION DAY,
CARACTACUS;
MALCOLM AND
MARGARET. POEMS**

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Dominion Day, Caractacus; Malcolm and Margaret. Poems by Æneas MacDonell Dawson

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ÆNEAS MACDONELL DAWSON

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POEMS,

BY

THE REV. *ÆNEAS McDONELL DAWSON*,

L. L. D.; F. R. S.

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PREFACE.

However inconsiderable a work may be, it is customary to honor it with a word of preface.

Let it be observed, therefore, that there is no exaggeration in the high qualities ascribed in the following lines, to Caractacus, the heroic, but ill-fated defender of British liberty.

In "Malcolm and Margaret" it is stated, without violence to history, that, according to popular belief, the usurping King, Macbeth, possessed a charmed life. Shakspeare, in his admirable tragedy of "Macbeth," has so familiarized us with this idea, that what is said of it in the Poem, will not have the appearance of mere fiction.

The portrayal of a King and Queen of Scotland, in the eleventh century, as very noble and exalted characters, will be no surprise to those who have studied the history of Celtic Malcolm and his Saxon consort.

A re-print of the Ode for Dominion Day, will not, it is hoped, prove unacceptable, considering that it was so well received when first published, some years ago.

OTTAWA, 1886.



FOR

DOMINION DAY.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Genius of Canada mourning in her solitary haunts on the banks of the Ottawa. Consolation is offered to her. A council of chiefs is called from which the greatest results are anticipated. But evil passions interfere; factions and parties arise. The white man comes. The wigwams of the Aborigenes are seen near his dwellings. This picture of peace comforts the guardian spirit. She experiences still greater joy on beholding the prosperity of the country, the harmony of its races, and its more recent developments.

O saddest lot!
In lonely grot,
Bound by unholy spell
Cheerless ever to dwell!

Thou mournest, hapless sprite,
Wrapped in thy misty pall.
Nought can thy soul delight
Lone by the melancholy waterfall.
The pines around,
The weeping skies,
The dull cold swampy ground
And caverns dark e'er greet thine eyes.
The moaning wind and hissing wave,
Of spectres dread the hollow groans
That echo as o'er nature's grave,
Of Goblins fell the dismal tones,
The whirling demon-pool that yawns [*]

(*) A fearful whirlpool near the Chaudiere falls, not inappropriately denominated the "Devil's Hole," into which a considerable portion of the waters of the Ottawa are seen to rush without any visible outlet.

Aye thirsting, panting for its prey,—
That Stygian tide o'er which ne'er dawns
The cheering light of rising day :—
What awful sounds thine ears assail,
O, genius of the forest land !
No marvel if thy solemn wail
Thine Ottawa's echoes all command !
Yet cheer thee, solitary Sprite !
An aged Chief, in council sage,
Thine eyes shall see. Ere dawning light,
Each warrior shall his care engage
O'er hardiest braves that long has borne,
In forests wild, unquestioned sway,
From Manitoulin's woods unshorn,
To billows of the " Salt Lake " spray.
Ah! hope not that the weary sprite
In sagest council shall delight,
Lo! promptly round the Chieftain strong,
Crowd counsellors, a motley throng,
Each passion o'er his dauntless soul,

Claims for itself unique control,
 First envy seeks her empire to secure,
 "Divide and Rule," have sages said,
 This maxim envy plies—her task is sure,
 Dissension o'er the wigwam's spread.

Ambition next her towering head uprears.
 Mad faction tears the grave Divan;
 Considerate counsel there no more appears,
 Each growling party for its man.

In anger frowns the Chief, from blood shot eyes
 Fierce lightning's dart ;—the throng recoils ;
 But wrathful soon, its anger's torrents rise ;
 The Council all with fury boils.

"Revenge ! revenge ! the haughty Chieftains cry ;
 "Revenge ! above the torrent's roar,
 They louder yell ; 'tis watchword and reply ;
 "Revenge ! " Revenge ! " o'er Ottawa's shore.