

after the somewhat lively interest awakened by the scenes attending its first discovery, we witness only a dull, unvarying round of petty squabbles between Indian braves and French voyageurs, and the feuds and animosities of rival fur traders. We are wearied with the recital of the peculations of one Governor, the blunders of a second, and the general imbecility of a third—the only spice of interest imparted to our early history arises from the episode of Wolf's capture of Quebec, and possibly also from some of the occurrences of the war of 1812; and, if we advert to later time, the case is if anything worse. The later period of our history is almost solely occupied with the story of the working, so to speak, of the machinery of government, the narration of changes in provincial legislation, various parliamentary enactments, &c. Their recital cannot be regarded as affording a very inviting field for the efforts of the ambitious author, or as proving of interest to the general reader. A history of this Dominion of ours can, as yet, evoke nothing of the absorbing attention excited by the perusal of the career of the most illustrious nations of antiquity; contain nothing of the pathetic interest attached to the decline of the Dutch Republic; elicit nothing of the admiration and enthusiasm experienced in reading some of the stirring passages in the history of our own great Mother Land.

In the department of the prose romance, in which this age appears especially to delight, there is presented a more favourable opening for the attention of the Canadian author. There is, indeed, to be seen in Canadian society none of those startling contrasts which are to be observed in more populous and older communities, yet, if the field be thus somewhat limited, it is not to be wholly deprecated on that account, as at the utmost it merely affords less opportunity for the display of the sensational element, which should be amply atoned

for by the varied merits of that society which it would be his pride and his pleasure to depict. Whatever quality is most desirable for a nation to possess, no one from a conscientious study of their character can deny to Canadians, whether it be the cultivation of the social virtues; the diffusion of general intelligence; a certain independence of thought and action; the prevalence of energetic thrift; or the possession of the heroic element of pluck.

We may also pride ourselves on the fact that there is ample scope, from the natural characteristics of our country, for the production of a descriptive or narrative literature of the highest order. We scarcely need dwell here on the peculiar beauty of our country, for every country has a type of scenery peculiar to itself; of the rustic and glowing richness of its landscape; the vast expanse of its sea-like lakes; and the majestic flow of its noble rivers, which only await

“The gleam,”

The light that never was on land or sea,  
The consecration and the poet's dream,”

in order to render this land as celebrated as any in the category of song. Although the Scott of Canada has yet to be found; although the interpreter of much of Nature's handiwork has still to be heard, yet that need not preclude us from even a silent appreciation of the masterpieces of Nature by which we are surrounded, confident that in due time the long looked for poet will give utterance to the sentiments we mutely entertain. Our lot has been cast in an essentially new country; new in the establishment of its political institutions; new in its literature; new in its nationality; let us hope it has entered upon a career of honour and success that will remain freshly new in the memory of the world, when the glories of older and more favored lands, perchance even those of our revered old mother England herself, will only be faintly remembered as an indistinct dream of a halcyon past.