

logist, Sir William Logan; but, as yet, no poet, no orator, no critic, of either American or European reputation. About a century ago an eminent French writer raised a doubt as to whether any German could be a literary man. Not, indeed, to answer that doubt but from a combination of many causes, arose as a golden cloud, that gifted succession of poets, critics and scholars, whose works have placed the German language in the vanguard of every department of human thought. Forty years ago a British Quarterly Review asked, "Who reads an American book?" Irving had answered that long ago; but Cooper, Longfellow, Emerson, Prescott, Hawthorne, and many another, has answered the query triumphantly since. Those Americans might, in turn, taunt us to-day with "Who reads a Canadian book?" I should answer frankly, very few, for Canadian books are exceedingly scarce. Still we are not entirely destitute of resident writers. Dr. Dawson has given the world a work on his favourite science, which has established his name as an authority; Dr. Daniel Wilson's speculations and researches on Pre-historic Man have received the approval of high names; Mr. Alpheus Todd has given us a masterly original treatise on Parliamentary Government, which will be read and quoted wherever there is constitutional government in the world; Mr. Fennings Taylor has given us an excellent series of sketches, on contemporary Canadians; Heavysege, Sangster and McLachlin are not without honour among poets. An amiable friend of mine, Mr. J. LeMoine, of Quebec, has given to the world many *Maple Leaves* worthy of all praise—the only thoroughly Canadian book, in point of subject, which has appeared of late days, and for which, I am ashamed to say, the author has not received that encouragement his labours deserve. If he were not an enthusiast he might well have become a misanthrope, as to native literature, at least. Another most deserving man in a different walk—a younger man, but a man of untired industry and very laudable ambition—Mr. Henry J. Morgan, now of Ottawa, announces a new book of reference, the *Bibliotheca Canadensis*, which I trust will repay him for the enormous labour of such a compilation. These are, it is true, but streaks on the horizon, yet even as we watch others may arise; but be they more or less, I trust every such book will be received by our public less censoriously than is sometimes the case; that if a native book should lack the finish of a foreign one, as a novice may well be less expert than an old hand, yet if the book be honestly designed, and conscientiously worked up, the author shall be encouraged, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of the better things which we look forward to with hopefulness. I make this plea on behalf of those who venture upon authorship among us, because I believe the existence of a recognized literary class will by and by be felt as a state and social necessity. The books that are made elsewhere, even

in England, are not always the best fitted for us; they do not always run on the same mental gauge, nor connect with our trains of thought; they do not take us up at the byo stages of cultivation at which we have arrived, and where we are emptied forth as on a barren, pathless, habitationless heath. They are books of another state of society, bearing traces of controversies, or directed against errors or evils, which for us hardly exist, except in the pages of these exotic books. Observe, I do not object to such books, especially when truthfully written; but it seems to me we do much need several other books, calculated to our own meridian, and hitting home our own society, either where it is sluggish, or priggish, or wholly defective in its present style of culture.

If English made books do not mortise closely with our Colonial deficiencies, still less do American national books. I speak not here of such literary universalists as Irving, Emerson, and Longfellow; but of such American nationalists as Hawthorne, Bancroft, Brownson, Draper, and their latter prose writers generally. Within the last few years, especially since the era of the civil war, there has been a craving desire to assert the mental independence of America as against England; to infuse an American philosophy of life, and philosophy of government, into every American writing and work of art. Mr. Bancroft's oration on the death of Mr. Lincoln was an example of this new spirit; and Dr. Draper's "Civil Policy of America" affords another illustration. It is a natural ambition for them to endeavour to Americanize their literature more and more; all nations have felt the same ambition, earlier or later; so Rome wearied of borrowing from the Greeks, and so Germany revolted a century ago, against French philosophy, French romances and a Frenchified drama; so the sceptre of mind passed for a time from Berlin to Weimar, and of late only by annexation has it gone back to Berlin. No one complains of this revolution. As long as justice, and courtesy, and magnanimity are not sacrificed to an intolerent nationalism, the growth of new literary States must be to the increase of the universal literary republic. But when nationalism stunts the growth, and embitters the generous spirit which alone can produce generous and enduring fruits of literature, then it becomes a curse, rather than a gain to the people, among whom it may find favor; and to every other people who may have relations with such a bigoted, one-sided nationality.

It is quite clear to me, that if we are to succeed with our new Dominion, it can never be by accepting a ready-made easy literature, which assumes Bostonian culture to be the worship of the future, and the American democratic system to be the manifestly destined form of government for all the civilized world, new as well as old. While one can see well enough that mental culture must become more and more to many classes what religion alone once was to