

authorize the local authorities to pledge the proceeds of this tax as a security for raising money by loan, in order that the country may derive an immediate benefit. To provide for the sale of any lot upon which the taxes are in arrear beyond a certain period, and on which lot no sufficient distress can be found,—at the same time securing to the owner the surplus proceeds of his land if claimed within a reasonable period, investing such proceeds in public

debentures, and if no claim be made good, then to give the advantage to the Province, instead of some private individual who has speculated in the purchase of lands sold for taxes.

We trust the early attention of the United Legislature will be drawn to this important subject, and if any of the hints we have thrown out for the improvement of the present system lead to beneficial changes our object will have been fully attained.

THE LITERATURE OF A NEW COUNTRY.

HISTORY and experience concur in establishing as an axiom, that the youth of all new countries can afford to dedicate but a very brief space to the developement and cultivation of literary or scientific attainments. The anxious cares and struggles incident to that feverish stage of their existence, the efforts that must be made to maintain firm on a perhaps tottering foundation the new-born fabric of their nationality, the frequent necessity for the display of physical strength, and the pre-occupation of thought resulting from a constant racking of the brain to devise means of warding off dangers that too often threaten to strangle the infant Hercules in its cradle, draw too heavily on the mental resources of the intellectual members of the community not to exhaust the fund of reflection and contemplative invention from which, in the absence of such resistless subjects of consideration, all literary efforts, or spontaneous outpouring of the human mind, must be derived. It was not while the hardy Romans, in the infancy of their glorious republic, fought inch by inch for their very existence on the soil of Italy—while the Volscian horsemen plundered the frightend peasants of the Campagna, —or the Gaul thundered at her humble gates, that the rich genius of her poets, historians and orators proclaimed to the world the existence of a national literature. A hundred triumphs had wound their glittering way up the steep ascent of the regal capitol, a hundred kings in chains bore testimony to the might of the victorious legions, when Horace sang at the banquet of Augustus, or Cicero thrilled the hearts that

drank his burning words in the hushed and listening Forum. When Athens first landed a weak and fugitive colony on the shores of Livadia few bards, save the ephemeral strain of the wandering minstrel, cheered her early struggles, or prophesied her unborn glories.—Stately fanes sprang toward Heaven on the mount of her Acropolis, the spoils of the East floated in her gallant ships on the waters of the Piræus, when Pericles spoke, or Euripides sang; and it was the day of her decline that was lighted with a melancholy splendour by the glowing genius of Demosthenes.

When a population assumes a great commercial or manufacturing character, a tone of mind is given to the people highly unfavourable to literary progression. All the strength of mental invention and assiduity is devoted to the advancement of pecuniary interests, and the genius which might under different circumstances have produced an Epic, or a Chronicle, is exercised in extending the arm of commercial enterprise unto some quarter it never reached before, in mining for gold, or fishing for pearl. Leisure, the hand-maiden of literary effort, is wanting, and till her advent the thoughts of the mind die unrecorded, the high conception flowers but to wither, and fancy is nipped in the bud by the cold winds of distaste and ridicule, which, in such a matter of fact community, breathe chillingly on every thing apparently profitless, and consequently looked on as vain and trivial. It is only as the nation advances in importance and standing, when wealth has been produced by the successful labour of com-