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**SUMMARY.**—**LITERATURE.**—Poetry: A Lecture delivered in French at a séance of the French Canadian Institute, Ottawa, by the Revd. Ed. McDonnell Dawson.—**EDUCATION:** What becomes of Teachers?—Employment of Teachers.—English Public Schools Inquiry.—Pickings from Blue-Books.—**SCIENCE:** Canadian Geology.—**OFFICIAL NOTICES.**—Ministry of Public Instruction.—Appointments: Inspectors of Schools.—School Commissioners.—School Trustees.—Annexations, Separations and Erections of School Municipalities.—Board of Examiners.—Wants: An experienced Teacher wants a situation.—**EDITORIAL:** Distribution of the Common-School Fund.—Taxation for Education in Quebec and Montreal.—On Some Characteristics of British-American Mind, by Principal Dawson, LL.D., McGill University, Montreal.—Agricultural Education by Lord Aylmer.—**MONTHLY SUMMARY:** Educational Intelligence.—Literary Intelligence.—Scientific Intelligence.—Notes and Memoranda.—Meteorological Intelligence.

## LITERATURE.

### Poetry. (1)

A Lecture delivered in French, at a sitting of the French Canadian Institute of Ottawa, on Friday the 26th February 1868, by the Rev. Ed. MACDONNELL DAWSON.

No excuse need be offered for commencing with Poetry. The Poets were the earliest instructors of mankind. They were the Sages and Theologians of the primitive ages. Their language was indeed highly privileged; for God himself was pleased to make use of it in communicating his will to men. The greatest of his chosen servants who acted as his ministers and ambassadors to the world, were eminently poets. What could equal the sublime strains of Isaias and Ezekiel, the plaintive notes of Jeremias, the varied harmony of David, or the entrancing songs of Solomon, the wisest of men? This King, so renowned for his learning, was also the greatest poet of his time. His poetical compositions were remarkably, numerous. (III. Kings 4; 42.) "Solomon also spoke three thousand parables; and his Poems were a thousand and five." Who has not heard of the

(1) It may be proper to observe that it was resolved to insert the Lecture on the Poets of the Canadian Provinces, in the *Journal of Education* at the request of the Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee. It was the last or almost the last request that the Hon. and lamented gentleman ever made to any friend in this world. The Lecture, as already mentioned, was delivered in French to a French Canadian Society, — *The French Canadian Literary Institute of Ottawa.*

The French Canadian Poets of the Province of Quebec are treated of as well as the Poets of that Province and those of the other Provinces of the Dominion who have written in English.

The Poets forming the subject of the Lecture will be given in the order in which they were delivered. It is presumed that such readers of the *Journal* as prefer French to English Poetry, will have as little objection to this arrangement as was shewn by the audience to whom the Lecture was addressed.

Bards of ancient times? Among the Celtic Nations especially, they enjoyed much respect, and a high social status. They were not unfrequently the Rulers of their people, and they always possessed political power. This may have had its inconveniences, which however were outweighed by the many blessings that attended this salutary and civilizing influence. It was a powerful corrective to the despotic tendencies of warlike chiefs; and it kept within bounds the selfishness of the powerful and the theories of politicians. Whilst it prevailed, the numerous Celtic people of the pre-Christian ages enjoyed a degree of civilization and refinement quite unknown to the Frank and Saxon. No wonder if poetry and its votaries exercised so much power of old in the world; for song is of heavenly origin. It is the language of those who dwell in Heaven. Did not the beloved Disciple when he beheld in vision (Apoc. 15; 2, 3.) the celestial abodes, hear the servants of the most High "singing the song of the Lamb," whilst they held in their hands "the harps of God?" Are we not also informed (Luke II; 13, 14.) that when announcing the Saviour's birth "a multitude of the Heavenly Host were heard praising God" in these sublime strains: "Glory be to God on high, and on earth Peace to men of Good will?"

Honor then to divinely Poetry! If it has enshrined the Myths of Pagan Antiquity and so preserved the early traditions of the human race which they wonderfully shadow forth, it expresses also those sublime conceptions of the Patriarch and Prophet world, together with those revelations from above, those manifestations of the Divine mind which constitute our Religious System. Few, only a select few, are privileged to speak its language. Fewer still are gifted to discourse in its loftier strains.

That Canada, so young a Country as yet, should have produced any Poets at all is more to be wondered at than that it should have produced so few. Such a thing as *learned leisure* is scarcely known in these regions, so lately a howling wilderness, so recently snatched from their wild forest state, and from the possession of the bear and the wolf. Who, in so new a state of Society as Canada presents, has time to labour in the field of Literature, or who, can gather and enjoy its fruits? Where there is so little appreciation of literary efforts, is it matter of surprise that such efforts should be proportionally few. Every species of labour deserves its reward. In whatever field the labourer is employed, *he is worthy of his hire.* The Poet even must enjoy this meed. Nor does he toil for such sordid gain. He, more, far more, than men generally, is above mere material considerations, but, he is entitled to his reward. And if he find it not in the good taste and the appreciative mind of his fellow-countrymen, where in this world, shall he look for it? He speaks not the language,—he knows not the sentiments of foreign lands. He must have his audience at home. And it must consist of those, who have everything except perhaps his genius, in common with him,—the same country, the same kindred, the same feelings, the same tongue and the same destiny. Grant him this and he will rejoice in his abundant recompense. Our Canadian Poets enjoy not as yet,