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CANADIAN LITERATURE.

THIS subject is one that may very fitly engage the attention of every Canadian, and especially of those whose present occupation is the acquisition of literary culture, and the development of æsthetic taste. In the course of this paper we do not purpose so much to review what may be regarded as comprising the national literature of our country heretofore, as to investigate the prospects of its future development, to enter upon the enquiry whether Canada presents any facilities, any materials for the elaboration of a literature that will confer lustre and dignity upon the Canadian nationality. Yet, if we refer to what has been accomplished in this interesting department, it will not be denied that Canada has produced authors not wholly unknown to fame ; and although no comparison can be instituted between their humble efforts in the sphere of letters and the immortal productions of writers in older and more favored lands, still, we are justified in predicting from the performances of the past a more than respectable mediocrity in the future. In any work which shall be hereafter written purporting to be a history of our national literature the names of Sangster, Hevyssege, Wilson, Howe, McGee, Haliburton, McLachlan and Dawson, must

ever be mentioned with peculiar reverence as being worthy pioneers in the fields of Canadian literature.

On a brief review of our literature heretofore, it will be observed that the greater portion of it is provincial rather than national in tone. This, however, need not be wondered or cavilled at, when we consider the circumstances under which it was produced. It is only recently, since the confederation of the various provinces, that that national feeling ; that pride of common country and destiny, without which no community has ever carved out for itself an enduring record in the fane of history, that this sentiment has been developed among the different sections of our young and rising Dominion.

It is easily observable, on reflection, why greater progress in the various departments of literature has not been attained in a country situated as our own has been. In a country whose soil was only being redeemed from the original forest ; whose chief notoriety was derived from its supplying the markets of Europe with lumber and furs ; in such a country it is easy to see why no marked advance, no brilliant achievements in the world of mind were made to the edification and delight of the remainder of the