

## A REVIEW REVIEWED.

In order to be fully impressed with the fact that Canada is a growing country and gradually securing an increasing share of attention from historians, one has only to turn to the latest Review of Historical Publications relating to Canada, of which volume II has just appeared. This exceedingly useful and handy volume, containing a review or mention of every work pertaining to Canada, worthy of any notice whatever, is the work of Prof. Wrong, assisted by Mr. H. H. Langton. It reviews those historical publications which have appeared in the year just closed. Over 150 have been touched upon, covering a very extensive field, and relating to Canada's relations to the Empire, Provincial and Local History, Geography, Economics and Statistics, Law, Education and Bibliography.

The book, which is published by the Librarian, is well gotten up, and should form a welcome addition to every library. The individual reviews are fairly written, some exceptionally so, being marked neither by a captious fault-finding on the one hand, nor a desire to say nothing but good on the other, a defect which mars so many criticisms. An honest attempt is made to be fair, although in a few cases there is a mingling of severity.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things in connection with a review like that of Prof. Wrong's, is to know just what works should be given a prominent position, since some must of necessity receive minor notices. This will depend largely on the individual tastes of the editor, and while some of us would perhaps have wished to see more extended notice given to books which are dismissed with a few paragraphs, we cannot but feel that on the whole, the editors have exercised judicious selection.

1897 was not marked by the appearance of any work of exceptional merit, but by a great many of a rather mediocre standard. Perhaps the greatest work of the year is the publication of the Henry-Thompson journals, under the name of, *New Light on the North-West*, edited by Elliot Coues, of New York. Last year produced a great deal of literature dealing with the far west, and, now that the Yukon is occupying such a large part in the public mind, we may expect much more. Dr. Dawson of the Canadian Geological survey has contributed some very interesting notes and statistics regarding that part of the country. French Canada also occupies some prominence. Old manuscripts are constantly turning up in which very valuable historical information may be secured. Our government archives should possess ample material for throwing some light on the more obscure periods of our history, for example between 1760 and 1774.

We understand that it is the intention of Prof. Wrong to issue his Review annually. The next volume will appear next February, and will deal with the historical publications of the present year. An undertaking so peculiarly our own, should receive the most active assistance from all who feel any interest in matters relating to Canada, and should meet with the hearty welcome which it deserves. Prof. Wrong and his able staff of contributors may well feel proud of the character of the work which they have done. To a student with any predilections towards history or economics, every one of the 250 pages will prove highly interesting. Those who have read the present volume, will look forward with some expectancy to the appearance of the next.

J. T. A. SMITHSON.

## A GENEROUS ACT.

Mr. R. A. Thompson, M.A., of '85, has donated \$25.00 to the Department of Mathematics, to be used in purchasing books for the Library. Mr. Thompson's generosity is greatly appreciated by the undergraduates and cannot be too highly commended to other loyal graduates.

## THE PERSONALITY OF WALTER SCOTT.

"Nature craves  
All dues be render'd to their owners."

T. AND C.

The world's history is nowhere better read than in the personalities of her great poets, because it is in them we have the embodiment of the principles through which we detect the universal tendency of mankind. Great poets are the natural and inevitable product of a national life marked by distinct tendencies, not the prodigies of capricious chance, but growths developed by principles and laws that work with the same inevitableness and consistency as those that bring the rosebud in the gentle days of springtime.

The poet stands for and propagates the truth that is man's need, and because he incorporates in his being a larger share of human experience than his fellow-men he sees beyond the horizon of present fact and reads in its significance the tendency of human hopes and aspirations. He is at once priest and prophet of his people; priest in that he knows the national life, prophet in that he sees into the future.

His knowledge of national life, however, will be commensurate with his penetration of insight into the range of human knowledge, his capacity for experience, and the degree in which the absolute man within him comes into consciousness. He it is who listens to the inner and mysterious song of the universe, hears and sees that to which others are deaf and blind, because it is all the harmony of the world heard in the inner sanctuary of his own soul,—that soul in which is mirrored the world's shadows, that sees the eternal in the transient, the ideal in the real. Such a soul feels itself stirred to utterance: the content seems divine; it has a message for man and longs for artistic expression. What will its medium of revelation be? Will it speak of humanity, of nature, or of the unseen world?

Shakespeare saw the important things of life centred in *humanity*, ever mindful, however, of nature's place, and had a message of universal application, the revelation of which was cast so far down the ages that men still cry, hundreds of years afterwards, not the eureka of sudden acquisition but the ever hopeful cry of Ariel,—

"Hark, hark! I hear  
The strain of strutting chanticleer."

Wordsworth, on the other hand, would teach us to see the expression of an Absolute Being in the daisy, the grass and starlit-sky: man's path is along the streams, through the meadows and on the hills,—through all *nature* rather than among men; "and 'tis my faith," he says,—

"And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes"

Milton saw the importance of the spiritual element in man. He tells us of the invisible powers of the *unseen world*, and teaches us to find our light and guidance in them:—

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but, what thou liv'st,  
Live well; how long or short, permit to heaven."

Each poet, then, must have an attitude toward life; his poetry must be his interpretation of it as revealed through his personality; it must be a revelation of what he considers important in life, and in the measure of his greatness will embody, through the creative impulse, a larger element of truth than he himself has consciously embodied,—such is the strangeness of the consistency of