

nation, but in those activities of the literary life which, in a progressive community, find exercise in the supplying of repositories of information and record, of the utmost value in the present and future of the country. Of similar import is the publication of such works as Dr. Todd's "Parliamentary Government in the Colonies," Dr. Ryerson's "History of the Loyalists;" M. Doutre "On the Constitution;" Mr. Rattray's "The Scot in British America;" Mr. Dent's "Canadian Portrait Gallery;" and his valuable record of "The Last Forty Years." Other undertakings of like character we might also speak of, which denote an awakened interest in the subject which has recently occupied Mr. Bourinot's facile pen, "The Intellectual Development of the Canadian People," and emphasize the fact that the passing years are creating annals in which future historians of the Dominion may find interesting material of research, and the coming poets worthy themes for their muse.

And what the poets themselves are doing, though the age is a material one, is not to be overlooked. Though much of their work lacks the strong fibre and fervour of imagination we would like to see it possess, there are artistic results and an emotional ardour and susceptibility to the beautiful wholly commendable. In the fineness of sensibility and frequent daintiness of expression, recent years have brought us a higher order of verse, which proves the growth of culture in the community and the presence of refining influences actively at work. What it most wants is that it should take its inspiration more largely from Canadian sources, treat more freely of the history and legends of the country, deck itself in the tints of our glorious land, and sing more of the songs of our woods and waters. The atmosphere of nationalism, indeed, is one that should more penetratively per-

vade our literature than it does. If it is ever to fire the heart of the nation, and to create a distinguishing type of national character, it must cease to be imitative, and find the materials of its art and occupation at home. It may borrow the literary forms of author-craft in the Old World, but its themes must be those of the New. Let us also import the high standard of old lands, by which to test our work, and to set a high ideal before our literary workmen; but having these, let the rest be original and creative. If with half a continent to draw upon, we remain servile to Old World models, we have inherited to little purpose the traditions of our race. But we have faith in the higher purpose of our writers, for a Canadian songstress, in lines prophetic, has already assured us of ambitions that are stirring hearts to claim a world's attention:

"Oh! Poet of our glorious land so fair,
Whose foot is at the door:
Even so my song shall melt into the air,
And die and be no more.

But thou shalt live part of the nation's life;
The world shall hear thy voice,
Singing above the noise of war and strife,
And therefore I rejoice!"

In this hope let us go forward, ever manifesting an ardent interest in, and giving heartiest support to, the intellectual life of Canada. Literary composition, admittedly, is not an easily acquired art, and there is need of all the aid and encouragement that can be given to it. Few as yet are born to wealth or leisure in the country, and they who write to live are the majority of those who please or instruct us. The literary work hitherto done by Canadians has been achieved through corroding care and amid the tumult of alien noises. Let that of coming writers have the aid of a more favourable environment. What the proposed Royal Society