

which are full of interest and value to ourselves as Canadians. This department of study will not hamper in any degree the legitimate operations of other Sections; though it may influence enquiry in certain allied directions. But here, it seems to me that, without limiting the freedom of individual members in their choice of subject, much work of great practical value may be accomplished by a judicious selection of themes specially necessitating prompt consideration. The literature of France, with its "Chanson de Roland," its Froissart, its Molière, Corneille, Racine; and all its brilliant creations, to the latest productions of De Musset or Mérimée, pertains, like contemporary English literature, to European classics. Canadians may emulate the great masters in letters, as they have already done in more than one department; but the republic of letters is free to all without the fostering aid of a Society such as this. It is, indeed, a matter of just interest to watch the growth of a native Canadian literature in the languages both of France and England; and to trace the influence of novel environments moulding and fashioning our intellectual, no less than our physical development. But without slighting this attractive branch of work, it appears to me that more important results may be anticipated from a class of communications that have already received some attention in the past, and which I hope to see making greater demands on our space in the future. They are exemplified in the volume of Transactions now issued, in such papers for example, as "La race française en Amérique," "L'élément étranger aux Etats-Unis;" etc., as in previous volumes, we had "Les races indigènes de l'Amérique devant l'Histoire," "Les aborigènes d'Amérique, leurs rites mortuaires;" and in another, but not less interesting

aspect: "La province de Québec et la langue française." In like manner, in both the present and the past volumes, papers on "The Half-Breed," "The Huron-Iroquois," and others of the aboriginal races of the continent have been contributed to Section II. Thus the ethnology and comparative philology, not of Canada only, but of America, have, to some partial extent at least, been brought under review. It is a small portion of the wide field mapped out for our joint labours; but in this direction, as it seems to me, valuable results may be anticipated, marked by such local character as will naturally be looked for from our Canadian Royal Society, and constitute a special feature of its Transactions. The polished language of cultured France, though here transferred to a region beyond the Atlantic, is kept *en rapport* with the Parisian centre of refinement, and fed from the perennial fount of French literature. But here also are the peasants of Normandy and Brittany, transplanted to "la Nouvelle France," under the old régime, bringing with them to their new home a provincial patois, embodying elements peculiar to those scenes of Scandinavian colonization and Celtic institutions. Here, unaffected by revolutions that have so largely influenced the more recent history of France and of Europe, they have dwelt for generations, intermingling to some extent with the aborigines, and brought into novel relations with other intrusive races of the New World. To the modern Frenchman, they cannot fail to present in many ways a singularly attractive study; but it is in their philological aspect that the widest value lies; and the changes already noticeable in idiom and vocabulary, have awakened an intelligent interest among many students of language. The cultivated Frenchman not only