

think, less than when I last saw you," she said regretfully.

The young lady reared her head, drew herself up, and walked some paces off to the other end of the room, and then, turning round, faced Miss Austwick, and said, "Let me impress upon you, Aunt Honor, that I have grown more than half an inch—very nearly three-quarters—since last Christmas. And why do you all bemoan me so? I've plenty of years to grow in. I'm not far on in my teens yet."

"And every Austwick, I am sure, was taller at ten or eleven," said her aunt.

"Oh, that may be. The poet Burns says—

"Ask why God made the gem so small,  
And why so huge the granite?  
Because he meant mankind should set  
The higher value on it."

"I don't know, Gertrude" said Miss Austwick, "that your ancestors, the Austwicks, were granite. The Dunoses, being Scotch, might be."

"And the Austwicks chalk, perhaps?"

Fortunately, her saucy rejoinder was not heard, for Miss Morris was taken with a cough that drowned the words. Yet, as she stood erect, making the most of her small stature, it was difficult to find fault with a creature at once so sparkling and so lovely. The face that looked out of its shining aureole of pale golden hair was of a pearly, pink-tinted fairness, that warmed into so glowing a tint, that the little mouth resembled a cleft cherry. The dimpled cheeks and firm chin completed the sweetest short oval shape; and the open forehead would have been too wide, but that it was softened by brows so flexible and delicately traced, that they gave at will an arch or pensive character to the countenance. Had the sleepiest pale eyes that ever blundered possessed gone with this combination of features, there would have been beauty—and great beauty—in the face; but when the soft, white, full eyelids raised their dark fringes, and revealed clear brown eyes, full of light and feeling, both their colour and radiance were a surprise to the beholder.

It might be, for 'tis a lore soon learned, that the child whose cradle had been surrounded by flatterers of her beauty would have prized it too highly. But there was a wholesome drawback, as years passed on. The fairy of the nursery still continued a fairy in size, and there were impatient exclamations and pitying murmurs. It mattered not that the form, like the face, was delicately perfect, if it was always to be a mere tiny miniature; for the Austwicks, a tall and stalwart race, reckoned it a necessary adjunct to comeliness in man or woman that they should be what is called "well grown."

However, if mental growth had contented them, Gertrude was certainly well developed in that. Kept carefully from books in early childhood, from a fear that her growth might be retarded, she had found means to exercise her memory in every song, poem, story that she heard, and when she was allowed to begin her school studies, her progress was that of one who, having been kept from the exercise of a faculty, was suddenly freed. Miss Morris, who had been the nursery governess of the child, when Mrs. Basil Austwick was advised to place her only daughter at school, became, by that lady's recommendation, a junior teacher in the establishment that her young charge was transferred to, and afterwards continued to be regarded as a sort of *attaché* to Gertrude.

While we have been thus diverging into description, the little niece had crept close to her aunt's chair, and, touching her black dress, said—

"I never knew my Uncle Wilfred, aunt. Will his death be a great grief to papa or to you?"

"It occurred in the prime of his days, child. He had been long away from us all. It is sad."

"I wonder he did not marry, and have some one to love him and make a home for him. It seems hard to think he died at an inn, as your letter said."

Her words stung Miss Austwick. "We'll not talk, little True. You're tired, and want refreshment."

The coming of this young lady so suddenly to Chace Hall of course suspended the purposed journey of her aunt, who, it may be, was not

sorry in her secret heart that a postponement of an investigation so foreign to her usual regular habits should have occurred.

Ah! little did she know that a time would come when the guilty secrecy she was maintaining would eat like a gnawing cancer into her heart, and banish for ever all peace. At present these unknown children inherited nothing, as she argued, but a name—barren to them of wealth—it might be of influence; what, after all, could it matter? Why should she soil the family honour by such a disgraceful avowal? Little did she deem that the family honour would be perilled far more by concealment.

(To be continued.)

## CANADIAN BOOKS.

MANY years have gone by since the Rev. Sydney Smith asked the question, "Who has ever read an American book?" The Republic can now answer the inquiry by pointing to such names as Washington Irving, Cooper, Longfellow, Bryant, Prescott, and Motley. If some cynic of the present day were to propound the query, "Who has ever read a Canadian book?" what response should be returned? Still there are some excellent Canadian works, the seeds of which will one day be a vigorous national literature, but which now lie hidden away, and like the grains of wheat in the cerecloths of an Egyptian mummy, still retain the vital principle, and only await the lapse of time, a more mellowed soil, and more of the sunlight, to grow up into a fair and fruitful intellectual harvest.

A nation without a native literature is like a body without a soul. In the rudest times, the people of the British Isles, as well as those of Western Europe, had a literature of their own, and only awaited the advent of the printing press to give it permanency, and secure for it the recognition of the world. Until it assumed a more artistic shape in after days, it was composed of the kindred elements of poetry and legend, with here and there a group of historic facts, softened down by time, and tinged with many a hue of the imagination; but still it was as much a part of the life of these nations as the air they breathed; it kept each of them combined, watchful, sometimes warlike, and in most cases progressive. And these results were achieved by holding up before the memory the deeds of the past, and by appealing to one of the most powerful passions that sway the human mind—that of emulation.

If then, in the era of the troubadour, and the tournament, most of the European nations could lay claim to a literature of their own, even though this literature were oral and not written; if at the present day, the United States have won for themselves an honourable niche in the temple of letters, why is it that the Canadians have not yet struggled further than the portal? The answer is simple, but it is humiliating, they have refused that encouragement to talent at home, which is one of the essential elements of success abroad; and if a writer may have done well, they have never stimulated him to do better. To acquire fame beyond the Province, is to reflect credit upon the Province itself, but fame, even within its boundaries, is dealt out with a sparing hand; not perhaps so much from lack of the power to appreciate, as from utter indifference to anything done in the way of authorship by those of its citizens who launch their literary barque on the treacherous waves of local popularity.

One of the principal causes which militate against a native Canadian literature, is the vast swarm of publications which the United States send across the borders every week; they are expected with intense anxiety, and their contents eagerly devoured by Canadian readers. Such broadsheets as the *New York Ledger* exercise a most demoralizing effect on the minds of youth by exciting their passions, unsettling their imaginations, supplying an unhealthy mental stimulus, and last but not least, perverting and corrupting their moral sentiments. It would be

absurd to decry native patronage of foreign literary excellence; but such pestilential trash as the *Ledger* and its kindred should receive not the support but the execration of the reading public of all communities. How can the perusal of such publications administer to the intellectual cravings of the reading public, and how do they effect such a task? How, but by means the most prurient and most reprehensible. The novel, as it was understood by Goldsmith and Sir Walter Scott, was as much a medium of instruction as entertainment; it had an aim, and that aim was to paint in its real colours, that rare and varying picture which we call human nature—to bring out in truthful lights and shadows those virtues and vices of which the best of us are composed—in a word, to direct and not to mislead, to purify not to vitiate. Do publications like the *New York Ledger* pursue a similar course? Their mission is to supply morbid food to depraved appetites, and what they serve up is as foul a compound as ever seethed in the witches' cauldron.

To judge, by the number of vicious novels that now find readers wherever the English language is spoken, one would be led to believe that the public taste of the days of Waverley and of our own time are widely different things; but such is the fact, and the extravaganzas of Miss Bradton find favour where *Ivanhoe* and the *Bride of Lammermoor* lie dusty and neglected. Time, however, will set this right, and we are sure, will also bring to light many a work of merit, the production of Canadian talent—but on the other hand, posthumous reputation is but a sorry recompense, a poor incentive, to sustained effort; and when we think of such a reward, we are compelled to remember the case of Burns, who, had he received in life the half of the money spent after his death, in commemorating him, might have lived to a green old age, and given to Scotland and the world the productions of a more matured genius.

That there is an abundant field for a Canadian national literature there can be no doubt; that workers can be found is also beyond question; but then arises the query—will they be rewarded for "bearing the burden and heat of the day?" The experience of the past is against; such a probability, but there are strong reasons for hoping that the tide has begun to turn. It is in the power of the people of the Province to hasten the day when Canadian books will find readers, not only within but beyond the boundaries of their country. So far, the intellectual classes of Canada would seem to have the same sort of respect for their authors as actuated the Italian who preferred to be sent for a long term of years to the galleys, rather than read the history of his own country written by Guiccardini.

THE POWER OF HUMBUG.—An individual who opened a small tavern near the field of Waterloo, says an American, was frequently questioned as to whether he did or did not possess some relics of the battle, and he invariably and honestly answered in the negative. But he was very poor; and one day while lamenting to a neighbour not only his poverty, but the annoyance to which travellers subjected him, his friend cut him short with, "Well, make one help the other—make some relics."—"But what can I do?" inquired the poor man. "Tell them that Napoleon or Wellington entered your shop during the battle and sat down in that chair." Not long after an English tourist entered the tavern, and, inquiring for relics, was told the chair story. The chair was bought at an incredible price. The next comer was informed that Wellington had taken a drink, and the Wellington tumbler was sold. The third arrival gazed with breathless wonder at the nail on which Bonaparte had hung his hat; the fourth purchased the doorposts between which he had entered; and the fifth became the happy possessor of the floor on which he had trodden. At last advice, the fortunate tavern keeper had not a roof to cover his head, and was sitting on a bag of gold in the corner of a deep pit formed by selling the earth on which the house had stood.