

Poems of Milton, the Sacred Melodies of Byron and Moore, and many of the finest Dramas of England and France, might, by the same combination of genius and self devotion, have been produced in this or any other country. The History, Poetry and general Literature of the world, are now open to us as they were to them; and except where peculiar associations and minute local knowledge are required, the daring and imaginative spirits of Nova Scotia may learn to imitate, and possibly rival, the great masters by whom they are taught. A Novascotian could not have written Pelham, or Waverly, because the one describes a state of society of which he can form but vague ideas, and the other exhibits an acquaintance with the traditions, customs and topography of a distant country, that he could scarcely acquire. But what should hinder him from producing any of the countless and beautiful tales with which English Literature is rife, and that owe their celebrity to the faithful portraiture of the human heart—the illustration of those virtues, passions and imperfections, which have distinguished man in every country and in every age?

If it be said that wealth and leisure are essential to the acquisition of scholarship, and the production of works like these, may I not ask if many of the finest scholars of Europe have not been miserably poor; and if many of the noblest productions of her Literature, have not been created by men laboring under disadvantages, from which the majority of our countrymen are comparatively free? We cannot have access to the splendid libraries of the old world; but, by combination and perseverance, we may provide ourselves with such as shall be extensive and respectable, and bring within the reach of all classes of the people, more books than were ever read by thousands of those who have distinguished themselves by the productions of the mind.

As regards the Sciences, though we may lack many of the facilities for study and experiment that abound in older countries, still, the materials of all science surround us on every side,