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A FURTHER WORD ON CANADIAN LITERATURE.

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IT might seem admissible, in order to obtain a hearing, to introduce this subject under some disguise, if a second consideration did not make it a question whether an amused curiosity about what can be said next on the matter has not been aroused in the public mind. We shall soon be able to compile a bibliography of what has been written about Canadian literature, more voluminous than the literature itself. And the different sentiments expressed in these writings, which I am venturing to swell, but only in the least degree, might be distributed among three classes, which shall be briefly indicated.

It would be interesting to know if all countries, ambitious like ours for a literature, have undergone in early stages such self-conscious throbs of pride and despair. They must be largely attributed to the circumstances of our being and growth; inasmuch as we did not exactly rise up out of wildness and barbarism, we are without naïveté. But that which we lack in the beginning shall become ours in the end, for self-forgetfulness springs from earnestness and abandonment from devotion.

Meanwhile the cries of the Proud and the Despairing are equally obstructive. To the ranks of the former belong the men and women

whose ideals in art are accommodated to their means of earning their daily bread. They become editors of magazines and writers on newspapers. They have long columns at their disposal, and they "puff" that they may be "puffed." They publish literary monthlies and determine to live by art; but they do not determine that others shall live likewise, and therefore they make no provision for the payment of contributors. It follows that their contributors are of that class to which writing is not a chief concern. It follows too that the editor falls into a certain position of dependence upon those who gratuitously furnish him with their work. And an unholy alliance is thus formed between them, while the public suffers or becomes indifferent.

When a magazine devoted purely to art is established among us on the same principles as the best magazines in England and the United States, a standard will then be formed and a more reliable public taste. The negative quality of such things as are now received with congratulations, will then make their reception a proper disregard and silence. And may not only those who are quite without discernment be set aside, but may there be for every industrious Gottsched an inexorable Lessing.