

around which cluster the glories, traditions, struggles and progress of Great Britain—the 49th. What the agencies are which are turning the national countenance towards Canada as turns the sunflower to the sun, I cannot pretend to explain. Undoubtedly they are partly economic, but the destiny of the race is subtler

than economics. Whatever it is, the Guiding Hand which led our stock from their primitive settlements of the Caspian, through vicissitudes, trials, struggles and complications to the present epoch, is now pointing through the setting sun at Canada, as the new home for the Saxon race.

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### THE CLAIMS OF CLASSICS.

BY PROF. G. A. H. FRASER.

THERE is a well known passage in the Vicar of Wakefield, where the Principal of the University of Louvain makes the following remarks:—"You see me, young man, I never learned Greek, and don't find that I have ever missed it. I have a doctor's cap and gown without Greek, I have ten thousand florins a year without Greek, I eat heartily without Greek, and in short," continued he, "as I don't know Greek, I do not believe there is any good in it." Of the assaults made upon the ancient classics by modern linguists, scientists, and so-called practical men, a vast number may be reduced to much the same terms as those employed by the sapient Principal. Such attacks, as well as others of a more plausible exterior, have been received by classical men often with an apologetic urbanity which has only encouraged fresh aggression; more frequently with a silent indifference which, interpreted as arrogance, has elicited louder outcries and more unmeasured denunciation. Their moderation has passed for a tacit acknowledgment of the weakness of their cause, and the good-humoured and amused silence with which they have borne a vast quantity of unintelligent detraction has been construed some

times as the presumption of a groundless self-confidence, sometimes as the voiceless impotence and dumb despair of the followers of a lost and hopeless cause. Meanwhile the general public, having as little inclination as capacity to decide in the disputes of specialists, has evinced its customary willingness to accept readymade opinions, especially such as are most loudly and persistently advocated. The heathen who "thought they should be heard for their much speaking" were mistaken only in that they measured gods by men: in addressing their fellow-mortals they were well aware that to voice a theory frequently and stridently enough, was sufficient to secure for it a measure of belief and a body of adherents. The world at large then has evinced a regrettable inclination towards the vociferous apostles of iconoclasm: and has been very ready to substitute the real for the ideal, success for beauty and money for truth. It may not be out of place, then, to sketch, in barest outline, a few of the claims of classics, not merely to tolerance, but to prominence, if not pre-eminence, asserting their educational importance without disparaging that of any rival branch of study.