

POETRY AND GOLD.

Years ago when we first read "Evangeline," and before we had seen the little Village of Grand-Pre, and the vast meadows which stretch to the eastward, it seemed to our weak imagination that an additional interest would be awakened in the poem if one could only sit and read it near the Gaspereau's mouth where the English ships rode at anchor. So we gratify our youthful desire on one of those mornings during the breathing spell between final examination and Commencement Day. Near by men were industriously digging out old wells in search of the buried gold of the Acadian farmers. We were not averse to the search being rewarded just at this time, and so largely awarded as to surfeit the seekers. But we came as we went—bankrupt. Does every place have its story of wrath buried by former inhabitants or by some practical "Captain Kidd?" Those who have a mania for seeking this kind of "hid treasure," usually die penniless and pitifully miserable.

"OF MAKING BOOKS THERE IS NO END."

Ours is pre-eminently a book-making age. It is estimated that over 5,000 new publications are issued in a year in England; and more than a million volumes are sent annually from the press of Germany. The publication of standard works in cheap form is not an unmixed good. The quantity of reading done tends to increase beyond what can be well digested. Robert Hall said of Dr. Kippis, "He piled so many books upon his head that his brains could not move." What in the world will the poor student do who lives 2000 years hence? If he aims to know a little about everything, he must abandon the hope of knowing everything about something, and *vice versa*. Think of twenty centuries of history to be read in addition to what brings us up to the present. And then the tendency with historians seems to be to go more minutely into details the later on they come. There will

have to be an ecumenical council for the purpose of winnowing the world's literature, so as to prevent men from growing frantic in sight of the Alpine Mountains of human learning they are supposed to scale. What a mammoth bon-fire the chaff would make! But until that council is held, every man must winnow for himself; or, better, let the wise get wiser heads to select for them. College libraries would be doing better service if young men were to a larger extent directed in their reading by those placed over them as instructors.

ATTENTION.

Alexander Hamilton, to whose fragrant memory a statute was recently erected at New York, was a man of wonderful intellectual power and marvelous versatility. To an intimate friend he once remarked: "Men give me credit for genius. All the genius that I have lies just in this; when I have a subject in hand I study it profoundly. Day and night it is before me. I explore it in all its bearings. My mind becomes pervaded with it. Then the effort which I make the people are pleased to call genius. It is the fruit of labor and thought." This agrees substantially with statements which come from many leading men in literary and scientific pursuits. It is Newton's "patient thought" paraphrased. Evidently the greater the number of objects which occupy the mind, the smaller the amount of energy that is applied to each; so that owing to lack of concentration there results neither enjoyment nor success. From that man who has attained such a degree of training as enables him to devote himself exclusively to some one subject for the time being, we may expect what will enrich the stores of knowledge and wisdom in the age in which he lives. To gain the power, known as *attention*, is one of the most important ends of a course of study; and it should be sought earnestly by those who hope to achieve anything through mental exertion.

RYE.