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### An Author's Delusion in Victorian Canada: Richard Maurice Bucke and Transnational Publishing of Popular Science

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#### Résumé de l'article

Au Canada, nous savons très peu de l'expérience en matière de publication transnationale des auteurs de livres traitant de sujets scientifiques. Cette étude examine la publication aux États-Unis et en Grande Bretagne du manuscrit d'un auteur canadien au dix-neuvième siècle : Man's Moral Nature [La nature morale de l'homme] par le docteur ontarien Richard Maurice Bucke. Ouvrage relativement inconnu, ses papiers personnels élucident les démarches à suivre et les procédés entourant la publication d'un livre à l'époque allant de la recherche d'un éditeur jusqu'à la manière dont l'auteur comprend les processus de production et les droits d'auteur. Comme le montre l'examen de la réception qu'a connue le livre, Bucke n'a pas réussi à faire en sorte que son ouvrage scientifiquement orienté soit susceptible d'intéresser le grand public comme il le souhaitait, mais en plus, il s'est attiré les critiques de ses collègues médecins pour avoir tenté de le faire. L'importance que Bucke attache à toucher des lecteurs dans l'Amérique tout entière fournit cependant un exemple supplémentaire de l'existence d'un marché nord-américain tel que décrit par les chercheurs dans le domaine de l'histoire du livre.

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# An Author's Delusion in Victorian Canada: Richard Maurice Bucke and Transnational Publishing of Popular Science

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Abstract: We know little about the transnational publishing experience of authors of books about scientific topics in Canada. This study therefore explores the nineteenth-century publication of a Canadian author's manuscript in the United States and Great Britain: Man's Moral Nature (1879) by Ontario physician Richard Maurice Bucke. Although this book is relatively unknown, Bucke's personal records about this, his first book, provide insights into publishing processes, from finding a publisher through to understanding book production and copyright. As the book's reception shows, Bucke not only was unable to position his scientifically-oriented book for his intended general readership but he also received criticism from medical colleagues for his attempt. Bucke's emphasis on obtaining a North American readership, however, adds further evidence of a continental market described by book history scholars.

Résumé: Au Canada, nous savons très peu de l'expérience en matière de publication transnationale des auteurs de livres traitant de sujets scientifiques. Cette étude examine la publication aux États-Unis et en Grande Bretagne du manuscrit d'un auteur canadien au dix-neuvième siècle: Man's Moral Nature [La nature morale de l'homme] par le docteur ontarien Richard Maurice Bucke. Ouvrage relativement inconnu, ses papiers personnels élucident les démarches à suivre et les procédés entourant la publication d'un livre à l'époque allant de la recherche d'un éditeur jusqu'à la manière dont l'auteur comprend les processus de production et les droits d'auteur. Comme le montre l'examen de la réception qu'a connue le livre, Bucke n'a pas réussi à faire en sorte que son ouvrage scientifiquement orienté soit susceptible d'intéresser le grand public comme il le souhaitait, mais en plus, il s'est attiré les critiques de ses collègues médecins pour avoir tenté de le faire. L'importance que Bucke attache à toucher des lecteurs dans l'Amérique tout entière fournit cependant un exemple supplémentaire de l'existence d'un marché nord-américain tel que décrit par les chercheurs dans le domaine de l'histoire du livre.

#### Keywords: R.M. Bucke; authorship; publishing; book history; popular science

when dr. Richard Maurice Bucke of London, Ontario (1837-1902) decided to write a book about the intellect and emotions, he struggled to find a publisher, especially one that would agree to publish for markets in both North America and the British empire, including Canada. Without any knowledge of publishing processes, Bucke maintained that he had written a book which would appeal to such a wide readership it would be a commercial success for him and his publisher. With support of his own funds, his book was published in 1879 mainly in New York as *Man's Moral Nature*. However, as publishers had predicted, it did not sell and widely met a lukewarm—often critical—reception.

Although this was Bucke's first book, he was well known both as a specialist in mental illness and as a confidant of American poet Walt Whitman. Bucke's international reputation was derived in large part from his publications, for his

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full-time work as a physician and superintendent of a large asylum did not stop him from writing extensively on his medical specialty and on subjects related to Whitman and transcendentalism: his lifetime publication output included about 110 articles, essays, letters, and reports, and nine books—six of them his edited works of Whitman with some in multi-volumes and editions.1 Indeed, Bucke is still recognized for his books, Cosmic Consciousness (Philadelphia, 1901) [Fig. 1] and the first biography of Walt Whitman (Philadelphia, 1883). Affinity with Whitman and the poet's alignment with transcendentalism is clear from Bucke's own books: often grounded in intellectual arguments of the day, they essentially linked scientific with spiritual, or mystical, belief. Bucke's aim was to assist nonspecialist readers in understanding complex, less visible, interactions between science and humanity, and his first attempt to publish a book along these lines was in 1879 with *Man's Moral Nature*. He wrote this book with a general reader in mind, for somewhat contradictory reasons: he wished to announce an important discovery that affected everyone, that everyone might read, but that only experts would understand; to transplant his ideas into better minds than his for further contemplation; and even (rather boldly) to aid in marketing Walt Whitman's book, Leaves of Grass.

In this way, from a modern scholarly perspective, Man's Moral Nature represents popular science. Since the 1980s, however, Bucke and his work seem to have garnered little scholarly interest after wide attention before then among literary scholars and historians for his relationship with Whitman, his career, and his place in the history of psychiatry. Bucke's publications were therefore typically employed by these scholars as primary material for analysis of their content.<sup>2</sup> With the exception of brief discussion by Bucke's leading biographer, S.E.D. Shortt, about the publication process and lack of sales of Man's Moral Nature from Bucke's letters,<sup>3</sup> Bucke's book publishing experience has yet to be examined to increase our knowledge of authors in Victorian Canada who contributed to the popular literature of science outside the country. Significantly, several of Bucke's letters and personal records unusually describe the publication and production of Man's Moral Nature in New York, with two publishers in Toronto and London, England as co-publishers and distributors over the course of two years. Some of the letters about Bucke's publication process, fortunately, are included in archival collections as typed transcriptions from now-lost originals in another correspondent's papers. There are few of any such records for scientific authors in Canada. A notable contemporary exception is the correspondence of John William Dawson. A highly regarded scientist with an extensive publication record, as Susan Sheets-Pyenson has discussed, Dawson toyed with the popularization of science before turning it into a full-blown mission.4 His unique publishing experience calls for separate analysis. Otherwise, most evidence of scientific authors' activity with manuscripts intended for broad readership remains drawn from their books themselves, the context of their publishers, and the context of their scientific fields.6

This study therefore explores Bucke's publishing experience against the background of recent studies of scientific authorship, book history, and trans-

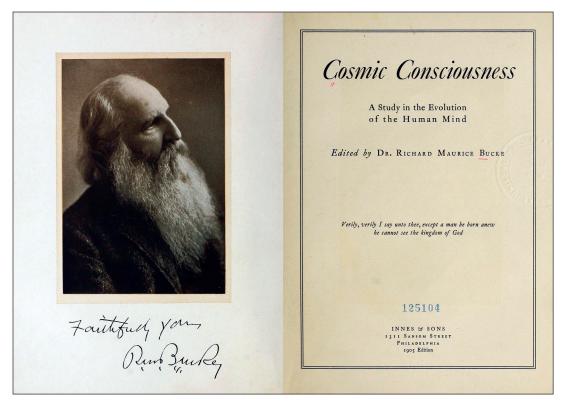


Figure 1. Richard Maurice Bucke, and title page of Cosmic Consciousness. Source: Internet Archive, Duke University Libraries.

national history to suggest that it reflected the essence of the contemporary approach to writing popular science and Canadian trends in transnational publishing at the time. Though sparse, Bucke's letters and records on the commercial process from authorship through publishers highlight in particular the transnational nature of Canadian book publishing in science from this period. As his experience indicates, he followed a trend in aiming his popular science work in the first instance for a North American readership. At the same time, however, to cover all contingencies in a period when copyright acts for Canada were both national and imperial for books published in Great Britain, he wished to have simultaneous publication in England as well as Canada. Bucke's letters also reveal his naivete about publishers and their decision making, timelines, production details, and marketing. Analysis of the reception of Bucke's book among his intended general readers, and among his medical colleagues, reveals how the book failed to have the impact projected by the inexperienced author. Ultimately, as this study shows, Man's Moral Nature was both a commercial and scholarly failure.

#### Studies of Scientific Authorship and Publishing about Canadian Science

Studies of scientific authorship have tended to separate the activity from the seventeenth century to the present into two linear kinds: scientists writing for peers as part of the scientific endeavour, primarily in scientific journals; 7 or scientists writing for general readers, often in books. 8 Increasingly, however, historians

address both kinds of scientific writing and publishing in recognition of the often symbiotic ways in which "knowledge and the sciences have been handed on from generation to generation and from place to place." As well, for the Victorian period, they note that scientists, writers, and science popularizers evolved as distinct occupational activities; that the dissemination of science through the extensive periodical press at the time encouraged active interplay between average readers and science; and that books about science became influential and integral to Victorian culture at all walks of life. <sup>10</sup>

Studies of scientific publishing have also tended to present the publication process linearly, with periodicals and books moving outward from a metropolitan "centre" to a rural "periphery" of scientific community and general readers alike. However, over the past two decades far more nuanced historiography has examined "geographies," "shifting centres," the broader "European periphery," and "networks." Scientific knowledge has spread out in geographic circles from the original metropolitan place and provincial places of the same nation-state to an urban base of publishing and its knowledge producers around the globe. Scientific knowledge has also encompassed centres and margins within science itself. And, it has included centres and peripheries in its communication, creating a "double periphery," between science and popular science in particular; <sup>12</sup> as Jonathan Topham explained in this context, although "periphery" is often conceived as geographical, it has connotations as well of "distance from a central zone in which authority is invested." <sup>13</sup>

Just as the focus on place moved from "center-periphery models" to "multimodal networks of interactions between sites" in histories of science, according to Michael Worboys, <sup>14</sup> so too have studies of formal scientific literature exchanges shown the ebb and flow of publications through space and time, through shared sites of distribution after readers' initial acquisition of books from publishers and retailers. <sup>15</sup> General book history studies have also recently revealed that publications circulated in ways independent of commercial networks established by metropolitan printers, publishers, and booksellers. <sup>16</sup> In related fields of historical enquiry, this focus on circulation, movement, and exchange in global processes that are not contained within nations is known as transnationalism. <sup>17</sup>

It is against this historiographical background that scientific publications about Canada and by Canadian authors need to be considered. In addition, book history studies of scientific publishing provide an overview of the Canadian context. Although scientific publications in the colonial period were published outside Canada, and generally not written by residents, by the nineteenth century, Canadians began to conduct scientific studies and publish many journals in newly established scientific and technical specialties. Thousands of scientific authors published articles in Canadian journals, and Canadian journals of medicine relied on relationships with local publishers. The publication of books about science, however, continued to occur outside Canada. A database of publications in science and technology to 1914, compiled thirty years ago, identified over 58,000 items, about 10 per cent (5,700) of which were books and pamphlets.

While anonymous authorship accounted for about 40 per cent of these database items, <sup>21</sup> books always identified an author. Analysis by Bertrum H. MacDonald of 3,200 scientific books and pamphlets using pre-1901 Canadian publications microfilmed to that point by the Canadian Institute for Historical Reproductions (now *Early Canadiana Online*) reveals that the majority of authors wrote only one. About 43 per cent of all the scientific books and pamphlets were published outside the country, with London, England and New York being the two most popular places: London ranked second after Montreal, and New York ranked sixth in the entire list of locations. These two cities retained these ranks through to 1914, according to MacDonald's later sample of 5,700 books and pamphlets.<sup>22</sup>

Richard Maurice Bucke reflected the approach to writing popular science discussed most recently by historians of science and represented contemporary Canadian trends in transnational publishing, as he eagerly sought publication of a book on a scientific topic within North America for the continental readership and his network of professional colleagues while ensuring it had copyright protection in Canada. His book, *Man's Moral Nature*, was published in New York, with simultaneous publishing and distribution of some copies in Toronto and London, England. This was an ambitious goal and significant accomplishment for a Canadian resident, especially one who had a full-time practice in medicine and administration. Underlying all his extraordinary efforts to get it published, as Bucke himself mused, rested an author's delusion that his book would sell so many thousands of copies that it would be a commercial hit.

#### R.M. Bucke and His Publishers

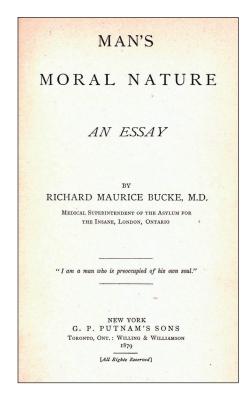
Richard Maurice Bucke's father, an Anglican minister, had moved his family to Upper Canada (now Ontario) from England when Bucke was a year old. Contemporary biographical notices for Bucke (likely submitted by him) highlight his illustrious family connections, who included a former Prime Minister and Charles Bucke, a great uncle who had published books through Harper and Brothers in New York that were long in print. They also indicate that he attended grammar school in London (Ontario), though later biographies emphasized study with his father and in his father's large library. At age 16, Bucke travelled to Nevada as a prospector before returning to Canada in 1858 to train in medicine at McGill College in Montreal. As was customary at the time, he then pursued further medical studies abroad, in England and France, before practising medicine in Sarnia from 1865. Appointed for one year in 1876 as superintendent of the asylum in Hamilton, Bucke then moved to London, Ontario to become superintendent of one of North America's largest asylums for the mentally ill. In 1882 he was appointed the first professor of nervous and mental diseases at the new medical school of Western University in London, following which he was a charter member of the Royal Society of Canada; president of the psychological section of the British Medical Association; and president of the American Medico-Psychological Association (forerunner to the American Psychiatric Association).23 From the time of his asylum position in a small community in southwestern Ontario, Bucke thus developed an international career and reputation.

A few years before taking up the career of asylum superintendent that would last for the next quarter century, Bucke acquired his lifelong interest in poetry, especially the poetry of Walt Whitman. In 1872, after an evening of reading poetry with friends, Bucke had an intensely felt religious experience, lasting only seconds, in which he exulted through physical and intellectual flashes of internal light and fire that a living presence governed the universe, that the soul was immortal, that everyone was guaranteed happiness, and that the foundation for all was love. (Such an experience would become recognized later as a mystical illumination.) His regular employment as superintendent afforded him the security to write. To capture his evanescent experience, he decided to write a book that, in 1879, was published primarily in New York by G.P. Putnam's Sons as Man's Moral Nature: An Essay: according to Shortt, "as the first Canadian monograph on neuropsychiatry it remains a literary landmark."24 [Fig. 2] In it, Bucke attempted to simplify a complex view of the intellect and emotions for a general readership, a task that he (perhaps understandably) found "a perfect nightmare" to write.<sup>25</sup> He maintained that intellectual nature derived from the cerebrospinal nervous system, the moral nature from the sympathetic nervous system. [Fig. 3] His book of 200 pages consisted of six chapters on the moral nature: its limits, its physical basis, its historical development, whether it was a fixed quantity, and the inference drawn from this development about the essential fact of the universe. Bucke ended his book on a high note of optimism: "This, then, is the end, the conclusion of the whole matter: Love all things—not because it is your duty to do so, but because all things are worthy of your love. Hate nothing. Fear nothing. Have absolute faith. Whoso will do this is wise; he is more than wise—he is happy."26 In Shortt's view, this transcendent note foreshadowed the thesis of Bucke's later work, Cosmic Consciousness.<sup>27</sup>

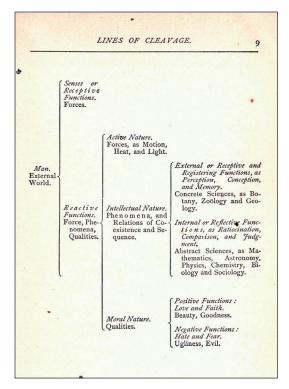
As Shortt explained, both the vocabulary and the neurological issues that Bucke explored to make this conclusion already formed part of medical thought in the 1870s, and the task of describing mental physiology was so difficult that Bucke initially wrote a series of articles for medical readers. The response to his articles strengthened his intent to write a book-length study. <sup>28</sup> Yet, Bucke told his lifelong friend, Harry Buxton Forman—the English critic, editor, and acquisition agent of books for Bucke's library <sup>29</sup>—"I want the book published in a popular manner": <sup>30</sup>

It ought to be some such a book to the public as Richardson's 'Diseases of Modern Life' though scarcely so scientific and more popular. It will be a book for everyone to read but only thinkers and men with a spice of science about them will fully understand it, but the bulk of the book and the most essential ideas in it can be taken in by any thoughtful person.

When the book was published, Bucke explained in a preliminary section that "[t]he Author cannot therefore claim that he writes the book to make the world wiser. He certainly does not write it for money or fame, neither does he look for either as his reward." His aim was rather to transplant some of the problems into better minds: "this would be compensation indeed," he wrote, "not for writing



**Figure 2.** Title page, Canadian edition of Man's Moral Nature. Source: Internet Archive, CIHM 00324, Canadiana.org, in University of Alberta Libraries.



**Figure 3.** Schematic diagram, Man's Moral Nature, 9. Source: Internet Archive, CIHM 00324, Canadiana. org, in University of Alberta Libraries.

the book, which was not a labor and needed no compensation, but for the years of mental travail that these problems have imposed upon him."<sup>31</sup> Bucke also dedicated *Man's Moral Nature* to Walt Whitman, who had inspired the book. Both Bucke and Forman would eventually act as literary executors for Whitman's work, and after Whitman's death, together they published many edited volumes of his writings. [**Fig. 4**]

In just over a dozen letters to Forman between October 1878 and August 1879, Bucke traced the path of his book manuscript through the publication process.<sup>32</sup> On October 27, Bucke hoped to finish his book in the winter; more than this, he expected that if it were read it would "assist in making a market for [Whitman's] 'Leaves of Grass'" (although his book itself alluded only incidentally to Whitman and his works). Based on reaction in Tennessee to one of Bucke's essays ("quite a furor"), he inferred that his book would cause a "GOOD DEAL" of excitement. He proposed to go to London, England to find a publisher with an office in New York in order to have his book published in both countries simultaneously and asked Forman for advice: "MacMillans would suit me if they have a N.Y. house. Smith & Elder are too much in the novel business. Williams & Norgate and Trubner are too scientific." He dismissed the possibility of Williams & Norgate, publisher of scientific books by Thomas Huxley and Herbert Spencer, along with the *Natural History Review*. Trübner and Co. was an English purchasing agent for

# I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO THE MAN WHO INSPIRED IT—TO THE MAN WHO OF ALL MEN PAST AND PRESENT THAT I HAVE KNOWN HAS THE MOST EXALTED MORAL NATURE—

TO

#### WALT WHITMAN.

**Figure 4.** R.M. Bucke's dedication to Walt Whitman, Man's Moral Nature, [v]. Source: Internet Archive, CIHM 00324, Canadiana.org, in University of Alberta Libraries.

the American Surgeon-General's library in the 1870s and may have been familiar to Bucke in that capacity, although by "scientific" Bucke might have meant "scholarly," a term that more aptly described Trübner and his firm. 33 Regardless, at this stage, he clearly wished to position his book for a broad, general readership.

On November 10, Bucke hoped to have his book published by the end of the month. This optimistic date for publication — within two weeks — suggests that "published" for him meant "ready to submit for publication"; indeed, he did meet his own deadline on November 27 by finishing his manuscript, which was "copied out and verified." Only then did Bucke ask for a leave of absence from the asylum to travel to New York to arrange for its publishing. He evidently recognized the importance of New York as the home for many publishers, but his thinking might also have been influenced by the fact that his great uncle's books, *On the Beauties, Harmonies, and Sublimities of Nature* and the two-volume *Ruins of Ancient Cities* had been published in succeeding editions by Harper and Brothers in New York from the 1840s. Nevertheless, a month later, Bucke told Forman about his frustrating trip: the reaction of Appleton & Co., that they "did not want the MSS at any price, would not publish it, would not look at it" was repeated at Scribner & Co., Henry Holt and Company, and the agent's office for Macmillan and Co. "Then," Bucke said, "I began to get mad."

However, before damning the whole race of publishers I made one more trial, viz. Putnam & Co. Saw Putnam himself had quite a talk with him. He promised to have the MSS read and to read it himself, so I left it with him and expect to hear in a couple of weeks what he proposes to do about it.<sup>34</sup>

Putnam must have responded favourably, for on February 26, 1879 Bucke wrote that his book was passing through the press with a possible publication date of April. "I did think it would be out in March," he observed, "but it is a slower job than I expected":

About a third of this book is in type. I am correcting the proof and one of my [asylum] attendants who was a printer in England is helping me to proof read. He is a splendid fellow for punctuation and minute errors in grammars [sic] and such little matters. I expect between us we shall get the book about perfect by the time we print.

Bucke explained how his book's publication was being funded: "We shall stereotype the book. It will only cost me six or seven hundred dollars to publish and the sale of about a thousand copies will make me about square, so that I cannot lose much." He had indicated to Forman on December 23, 1878 that he promised prospective publishers that he would guarantee all costs, and that if he failed to find a publisher he would "get some man to print it and publish it myself," suggesting he understood the value of a publisher, and the difference between publishing and printing. Indeed, although there is no book contract in his extant records, a later letter to Forman on October 31, 1879 made the publishing arrangement explicit: Bucke essentially paid for publication, starting with the stereotype plates and then paying a commission for sales through the publisher's distribution and marketing networks. (Commission publishing was a common arrangement by the 1870s.) Preparing the book in stereotype would make available cast metal plates of type pages for storage, shipment, trade, and subsequent printing, whether at the same location or elsewhere. At the time, electrotype plates had begun to supplant stereotype plates for making books in America; although the electrotyping of typeset pages was slower and more expensive, once a copper skin formed the face of a plate through electrical conduction, the finished electrotype plates were harder. 35 The publisher's choice of stereotype over the more durable electrotype plates therefore suggests that Putnam's did not anticipate much trade or reprinting from these plates of Bucke's book. The lower cost for stereotype plates may also have influenced Putnam's to select this process over electrotype on Bucke's behalf.

Still keen to secure copyright in England, Bucke wrote to Forman two more times in March about it, to help Putnam's make arrangements for a publisher in London. Within a month, after Forman sent instructions to use the Trübner & Co. imprint, Putnam's prepared around 70 copies of Bucke's book with new Trübner title pages: 56 for Trübner, and a dozen for Forman to distribute. [Fig. 5] This procedure was not unusual. Indeed, Trübner had published English editions of Walt Whitman's works in 1860, 1876, and 1881. Typically, as Whitman scholar Edward Whitley has explained, English publishers would distribute imported American copies of the book and "either tip-in their own title page or stamp or paste the name of their publishing house onto the American publisher's title page. They would sometimes take the unbound pages of an American edition and put them in a binding bearing the impress of the British publisher. These editions were limited in number and received limited distribution." Trübner distributed 20 copies of the 1876 edition of Whitman's Leaves of Grass, and in 1881 produced a cheap edition in 25 copies, expanded later that year to 500 copies. Finally, Whitman apparently recalled that Trübner had been friendly toward *Leaves of* Grass. It is therefore not inconceivable that Trübneragreed to distribute Putnam's edition of Bucke's *Man's Moral Nature* because it was on a similar spiritual theme, with a dedication to Walt Whitman, and his distribution in 70 copies with his title page was more than he had done initially even for Whitman.<sup>36</sup> The publishers thus evidently saw Bucke's book as more scholarly than popular for a Trübner

## MAN'S MORAL NATURE

AN ESSAY

RICHARD MAURICE BUCKE, M.D.

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE ASYLUM FOR THE INSANE, LONDON, ONTARIO

LONDON

TRÜBNER & CO.

LUDGATE HILL

1879

265. j. 229.

Figure 5. Title page, Trübner edition of Man's Moral Nature. Source: Internet Archive, Oxford University, Google.

imprint than Bucke had planned. An account statement for Trübner the next year indicates that the distribution at this British firm, too, was through commission. Trübner also reported to Forman in June 1879 that the firm had sent "edition copies" of Bucke's book to six periodicals.<sup>37</sup> Not only was this a common way of publishing an author's book, but by the 1880s commissions accounted for over half of all the contracts of the firm that Trübner and Co. would join in 1889.<sup>38</sup>

The fact that Putnam's met Bucke's demand for a British imprint did not entirely satisfy him. Bucke's fixation on obtaining copyright outside the United States throughout the publication process for his book was strongly influenced by publishing trade practices in North America. His initial encounters with American publishers had already demonstrated that they were not as impressed with his manuscript as he himself was, and then his American publisher not only attempted to reduce costs in production but did not exert themselves to work with publishers outside the United States. Indeed, Bucke's unsuccessful attempts to land a publisher in New York had caused him to fulminate in his December 23, 1878 letter to Forman about the well-known and longstanding problematic copyright situation for authors outside the United States:

But damn the impudence of the American publishers I say. You see that they steal all the books they want from the English and Continental writers and get the books of known men in this way and so do not want to publish the work of a man unknown to the public, no odds how good it is, in every instance I offered to guarantee all expenses but that did not make any difference; they said they did not mind the expense but that they want to publish books that would pay and they said that a book called 'Man's Moral Nature' would not pay, no odds how able it was. I assured them that it would pay but they absolutely insisted that they knew better.

As Bucke knew, copyright was denied by American publishers for authors not citizens or residents of the United States; more importantly, until they recognized international copyright in 1891, American publishers could legally reprint the publications of foreign authors without permission and not pay either the authors or their foreign publishers. Given that American publishers might undercut each other in the trade through such extensive reprinting, some worked together in a kind of self-regulation known as courtesy of the trade, whereby priority in publication and association helped to reduce competition. Regardless, from Bucke's perspective, this trade practice in the United States made it all the more difficult for a new author like himself to enter the market.

Over the next few months, Bucke continued to express greater concern about obtaining copyright outside the United States than did Putnam's. Despite declaring in March that Putnam's were "first class straight forward people to deal with," Bucke increasingly complained about them and their attempt to appease his concern. On May 13, Bucke suggested that Putnam's had "made some damned blunder in their application to MacMillan & Company or else they have been trying to play sharp." He explained: "I never contemplated asking MacMillan or anyone else on either side of the water to take any risk in the book. I am quite willing to bear this myself since I have had the trouble of writing it." Again, this

statement seems to suggest that Bucke expected to pay the full cost of publication. Now that the negotiation with Macmillan had been closed, Bucke had felt it best to adopt Forman's suggestion to send copies to Trübner to obtain a copyright in Britain. But he was worried:

Now tell me will this be a bona fide copyright? The law in Canada is that to get copyright the book must be PRINTED and PUBLISHED in Canada and the person entering the book must swear that it is PRINTED in Canada. If the law is the same in England our copyright will come to grief.

On July 8, Bucke then declared that Putnam's had not wanted to publish his book in England; in fact, the firm may have thought "it was making a great fuss about a small matter to publish the book in two other countries." According to him, whatever the reason, their letter to MacMillan did not agree with the offer Bucke expected. Accepting his role in any misunderstanding, he nonetheless believed Putnam's had deliberately undermined him: "But they published on this side on March 7th, so they must have intended to kill off the English copyright in point of time."

Bucke was correct to wonder about copyright, which was a very complicated situation for a Canadian at the time—especially for a Canadian resident publishing through an American publisher—and he was placed in a difficult position in the 1870s. It would be years before the transformative impact of the Anglo-American Copyright Agreement of the 1890s. As he indicated, the Canadian copyright act in 1875 had added a condition that works be "printed and published or reprinted and republished in Canada." However, the rest of this Canadian copyright condition read "whether they be so published or produced for the first time, or contemporaneously with or subsequently to publication or production elsewhere." In short, plates for books could be made elsewhere, and the fact that Bucke had already stated his book would be typeset in stereotype shows it would be in compliance for a resident Canadian author if produced in Canada with a set of those plates at the same time as production with another set of plates elsewhere. Furthermore, the Act was sufficiently ambiguous that it gave Canadian copyright to a British book under imperial copyright, meaning, as Eli MacLaren has shown, that a lack of Canadian copyright did not necessarily mean a lack of copyright in Canada. 40 Accordingly, over the course of the next year, Putnam's involved Willing & Williamson of Toronto, whose imprint appeared on the copies for sale in Canada. [Fig. 2] Bucke's views on the whole copyright situation were explained more fully when he subsequently wrote to Forman on October 31, 1879 about a new "little book" on Walt Whitman:

what do you think if I try to get Trubner to publish it and send Putnams a set of plates? or sheets? You see I cannot get a copyright by publishing through Putnam—for HE [Whitman] is not the author and I am not an American citizen. Would Trubner publish? and on what terms? With Putnam I pay for manufacturing "Man's Moral Nature" (it came to \$520, say £104) and then I sell to him for \$750 per thousand copies and he publishes. He would probably ask the same terms in the case of another book. Now if Trubner would do as well for me I should gain the advantage of copyright and perhaps I would have a

little better chance of selling my book, there is perhaps more curiousity [sic] about W.W. in England than here. At all events I would have a publisher in N.Y. and Toronto as at present.

In addition to copyright concerns, the publishers' commercial perspective ran counter to Bucke's intuitive and misguided approach to book sales. Although he admitted on April 11, 1879 that he had no idea what its sales would be, he nonetheless declared that his book will be a "hit." He believed it would sell a thousand copies because he knew many people who were anxious to buy it: "These people are scattered all over the States and Canada," he noted, and "I have no doubt myself that in any town where a few copies are sold, a good many more will be bought, that is, I am certain the book will take—recommend itself. This is probably an author's delusion." He expanded on his inflated notions about the significance and reader demand for his book in this letter, declaring it "an announcement of an immense and valuable discovery, affecting every man in a most vital manner." Within the published book itself, however, his address to the reader was more modest: "I merely offer my opinion—I take no responsibility in the matter. The thought is no more mine than it is yours if you read the book and understand it. I no more made the thought than I made myself—it grew of its own accord, and now it can take care of itself; or if it cannot do that, it can do as plenty of other thoughts have done—it can die."41

Publishers' records in Bucke's papers indicate that they were trying to sell this book through to 1883. When he was casting around for an American publisher, Bucke had suggested going to London before other, much less desirable possibilities: "If I fail there I shall have it published by Willing & Williamson of Toronto or get some man to print it and publish it myself."42 By 1880, the advertisement for *Man's Moral Nature* in his pamphlet *Alcohol in Health and Disease* showed three publishers: G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York; Willing & Williamson, Toronto; and Trübner & Co., London, Eng. [Fig. 6] Yet even with three publishers in three countries, sales were poor. Putnam's printed 750 copies in May 1879. After distributing 250 copies to Willing & Williamson, 75 copies to Trübner, and sundry other complimentary copies, they still had 289 copies on hand in August 1879. Their actual sales over the summer were only 53.43 Trübner had 25 copies on hand the next January and sold only four of those in 1880.44 By August 1883, Putnam's sent 210 copies to David McKay, publisher and bookseller in Philadelphia, and their statement in September showed 25 copies sold, with one copy on hand retained as a sample. In November 1883, Willing & Williamson had half their allotment still on hand (127 copies).45 The total sales between 1879 and 1883 was perhaps a third of the print run, a far cry from the thousand copies that Bucke initially thought would be printed and would sell to break even on his own subsidy.

#### Reception of Man's Moral Nature

In the end, it appears that the publishers did indeed know better than Bucke, for *Man's Moral Nature* not only did not sell, it also met a lukewarm reception among general readers and specialists alike. It was Bucke himself who stated on

July 8 that the book was "being very well received here," adding that "some of the ladies seem to like it very much which rather surprises me." Interestingly, in August he then asked Forman to have Trübner send a copy at Bucke's expense to Charles Darwin (whose response is not known). Via Forman, Bucke received a lengthy critique from artist and poet William B. Scott in Scotland. Although Scott wished for more background before Bucke began his argument, and he disagreed with Bucke's notion that the intellect has no control over the moral, he delighted in reading Bucke's view of the perfectability of human nature in "a book like this, so unmistakably the work of a man of scientific genius."46 When Bucke's pamphlet on Alcohol in Health and Disease was published the next year in Ontario, its advertisement for *Man's Moral Nature* contained eleven excerpts from reviews in newspapers, religious and medical journals mainly in Ontario with two from the United States. These were presumably the good reviews to which Bucke had referred. One quotation, from a Detroit publication, New Preparations, conveyed the popular science intent of Bucke's work: "This volume is a treat to the lover of good sense, good science, and good English."47 These "press extracts" appeared as well in biographical publications about Bucke. 48

These excerpts were chosen mainly to indicate the book's ability to stimulate thought and reflection. The full reviews and notices, however, consistently offered ambiguous reactions to Man's Moral Nature: the book's synthesis of earlier theories was somewhat original and praiseworthy, they maintained, but the inferences drawn were confusing and questionable. For example, the notice quoted from Canada Presbyterian described Bucke's book as unlike common compilations, "but a fresh, original and suggestive work" because the author "strikes out new paths for himself." Yet the reviewer remarked on the "startling" part of the focus on the physical basis of the moral nature and noted the ways in which Bucke seemed to interpret "moral nature." Struggling to understand Bucke's viewpoint from the proofs presented, the reviewer believed that "The bearing of these and other arguments upon our author's conclusions will be called in question. But although the reader may not accept the views advanced, he will still admire the book for its suggestiveness and vigorous thought."49 Another reviewer thoroughly summarized Bucke's book and its argument at length in Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review. The essayist did not offer insights into the manner of Bucke's argument, indicating only that with the inclusion of anatomical plates for the sympathetic nervous system the "subject is so clearly treated that any lay reader may easily comprehend it by the aids and helps provided." The description of Bucke's discussion concluded "This is no new theory. We all recognise, and have recognised all along, that this is so—that the highest moral nature is nearest in accord with the truth of things."50

Reviews quoted from medical journals, written by members of the general medical profession—"thinkers and men with a spice of science about them" that he hoped would fully understand—also deemed *Man's Moral Nature* to be unoriginal. A review in *Canada Medical Record* considered Bucke's book to be novel only as a piece of Canadian writing: "In poetry, literature, history and science,

#### BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

OCTAVO, CLOTH, EXTRA, \$1.50,

# MAN'S MORAL NATURE,

PUBLISHED BY

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, NEW YORK, WILLING & WILLIAMSON, TORONTO. TRÜBNER & CO., LONDON, ENG.

MAY BE ORDERED OF ANY BOOKSELLER.

#### PRESS EXTRACTS.

We recommend all who believe with Pope that the "proper study of mankind is man," to read this book.—Hamilton Spectator.

It is such treatises as this which awaken and quicken thought, and open up almost boundless fields for speculation. -- Hamilton Evening Times.

It is a work of thought and altogether remarkable. It is an original work, displaying a wide range of information, a power of acute and independent thought, such as a philosopher ought to possess, and no common ability to embody conclusions in simple words, so as to awaken reflection in the mind of those who may ponder over its chapters.—London Free Press.

Whatever opinion may be held as to the soundness of the views advanced by Dr. Bucke, there is no question that his book is an interesting contribution to the discussion of a very important subject.—London Daily Advertiser.

Without attempting an analysis of the argument we may describe it as the work of a man who writes with intelligence and in a charming spirit of candor. The style is clear and strong and the moral tone pure.—The Christian Register, Boston, Mass.

At every page we are struck by the originality of thought and the felicity of some unexpected illustration, and by them a flash of light is thrown on many subjects which before seemed quite obscure.—Ottawa Free Press.

It will undoubtedly attract attention and give rise to discussion, for it is not at all one of those compilations so common at the present day, but a fresh, original, and suggestive work.—Canada Presbyterian, Toronto.

It is full of suggestive ideas. - Detroit Free Press.

There is no small gratification in reviewing a book so replete with substantial, clever, and courageous writing as is the little volume now before us.—The Canada Lancet.

The book is worth reading even should the peruser differ from the writer, and all must admire the ingenious way many facts are brought in to uphold this material theory of man's moral nature.—The Canadian Journal of Medical Science.

This volume is a treat to the lover of good sense, good science, and good English.—New Preparations, Detroit.

**Figure 6.** Advertisement, Man's Moral Nature in R.M. Bucke, Alcohol in Health and Disease (1880), last page. Source: Internet Archive, CIHM 00322, Canadiana.org, in University of Alberta Libraries.

Canada has produced her several authors in some of whom our young country has an honest pride," this review began, "but never before has any of her sons ventured upon the domain of speculative and practical philosophy." Although the reviewer found that summarizing the book was difficult, in part because Bucke's style was "decidedly laconic," he praised Bucke for making the subject understandable to general and medical readers alike and hoped his discussion would be incorporated into medical textbooks and medical school teaching of physiology.<sup>51</sup>

Reviews in medical journals carefully weighed and criticized Bucke's assumptions and interpretations. The reviewer in *Canadian Journal of Medical Science* opened by questioning Bucke's use of language, for "There are a number of novel ideas put forth in this excellently got-up book, and couched in such unusual language, that, in justice to the author it is necessary to know what is meant by many of the expressions used." The review launched into a philosophical analysis, first of the book's title, and then of particular expressions, for their sense was beyond the author's own definition. The second part of the book, the reviewer conceded, had some novel metaphysical distinctions. Yet he then identified examples of statements lacking proof—for which the reader must accept Bucke's claim that he does not propose to prove anything in this book—or of statements for which the contrary is true. "The balance of the book contains the fulcrum idea of the whole," the reviewer delineated, yet "This is an old doctrine revived." The reviewer provided fuller explanation with respect to medical history before concluding:

Space forbids us noticing other points in Dr. Bucke's book from which many must differ. The reader cannot, however, rise from reading the book without being convinced that the author has honestly endeavoured to arrive at truth in his own way. . . . Unfortunately this has not been done. Yet, the careful collation of isolated truths, and the earnestness seen throughout, commend it to the candid reader as a valuable contribution to Canadian medical literature.

"The book is worth reading," and the compilation of facts admired, the reviewer continued (in the sentence quoted in Bucke's pamphlet), before re-capitulating that "We have endeavoured to give the reader an idea of the scope of the work by criticizing some of the salient points, but nothing short of a perusal of it can do justice to the inventive hypothesis therein set forth in a forceful way." 52

Although it similarly declared that "Dr. Bucke has rehabilitated, in very attractive garb, an old doctrine which has been...propounded by several eminent physiological moralists," the *Canada Lancet* review was more harsh. Maintaining a sarcastic tone, it raised serious concerns about Bucke's employment of nation state, gender, and race as explanatory tools. First, Bucke's reference to nations to explain moral idiocy was questionable:

This appeal to the authority of all nations and all times appears to us but a limping reason to be stationed in the front rank of any argument; for what absurdity or what moral monstrosity, might not be sustained on this authority? Dr. B. must surely be well enough read in his own specialty, to know that witchcraft and demoniacal possession were, until very recently, believed in by all nations" [including jurists and theologians].

After impugning Bucke's knowledge of his medical specialty, the reviewer then snidely remarked "We are not half pleased with Dr. Bucke for telling us that the 'moral nature' . . . of woman, obtains preponderance at the expense of the intellectual capacity" in part by reference to woman's smaller brain. "We doubt if either of these propositions has been established," the reviewer declared before pondering the differences between man and woman based on reproductive systems and sexual drive, to emphasize that "Quantity is not quality." The reviewer then took Bucke to task for his discussion of the Jewish race, "who certainly should feel very thankful to him for the moral altitude to which he has elevated them, and not the less so because they may not, before, have felt conscious of their superior merits." Furthermore, as Bucke infers that the moral nature of Jews is better because their lives are better, the reviewer acidly acknowledged, "We are always thankful for new facts, and this is certainly new to us." In short, the concerns raised by this reviewer imply that Bucke was espousing outmoded views in the 1880s. As with the Canadian Journal of Medical Science review, the Canada Lancet review concluded more positively (again with the statement quoted from it in Bucke's pamphlet and biographical publications), and noted that despite raising these particular concerns, "our readers must not infer that we hold in low estimation the general substance of the work." Not only had the author devoted time and study to the topic, but he had written about it in a style that "though not always elegant, is yet attractive and terse." Significantly, this reviewer, too, placed Bucke's contribution as a Canadian one: "we welcome its entrance into Canadian literature, as a first fruit's offering highly creditable to our young Dominion."53

Bucke's colleagues who specialized in mental illness had much greater difficulty with his book. An advertisement for the Toronto publisher, Willing & Williamson, reprinted the whole notice of *Man's Moral Nature* from *Mind*, a British journal, in which the reviewer praised Bucke's attempt to address his unoriginal subject matter "very ingeniously." [Fig. 7] In addition, the reviewer noted, "Dr. Bucke writes with a singular earnestness of conviction, and even when his arguments are, as they not seldom are, rather fanciful, the spirit of them does not cease to be scientific."54 "Fanciful" more than scientific was how two reviews in American journals also characterized *Man's Moral Nature* as they panned it for being both unoriginal and confusing. One whole chapter "hardly rises above what we usually call the physical temperament of a person. What has all this to do with the moral nature of man?," asked a reviewer in the American Journal of Insanity before declaring "There is to us something very crude and confused in this whole discussion." This reviewer analyzed the "confusion of ideas," suggesting that "The passage is perhaps not quite so clear or frank as might be desired." Of Bucke's keying the development of moral nature to natural selection, the reviewer continued,

We are hardly concerned to follow out this train of thought, familiar enough to readers of modern scientists [sic]. But some of the writer's statements of fact may be open to grave question. We refer to such as the 'superior moral nature' of the living generation of Jews . . . of fat men, as compared with lean, etc.

The review concluded "There is much of this sort of thing, of fanciful rather than scientific character." 55 "This is, in many respects, a rather curious work,"

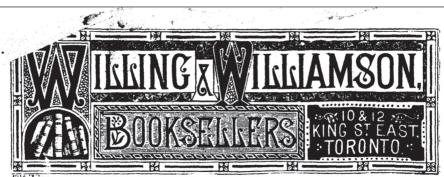
began another review in the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*. While the book seemed to be an expansion of Bucke's earlier articles that "did not appear to call for special notice," its three-part introductory section "savors of affectation," a peculiar arrangement that reflected the reader's sense of the whole book. This reviewer scrutinized several chapters, objecting that one had "faulty and incomplete analysis, the confusion of terms, implying to some extent, also, a looseness, if not confusion, of ideas, and the great expansion and misuse of the term, moral nature." Another was "simply a sort of reversion to antiquated psychological ideas, prevalent in the dark ages, when physiology was unknown, and an attempt to support these exploded theories by an evidently very imperfect knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the nervous system." As if this harsh criticism were not bad enough, the reviewer openly questioned Bucke's knowledge:

The author seems entirely unacquainted with the intimate physiological connections of the sympathetic with, and its dependence upon, the cerebro-spinal centres. . . . We should apologize to our readers for giving so much attention to these points, but . . . these are the views of a very respectable physician, evidently a man of considerable general reading, a leading member of the American Association of Superintendents of Asylums . . . . If any one who reads this cannot see at once how unsupported they are by the really scientific modern physiology, we would simply advise him to recommence his studies or reform his mental constitution.

In short, this reviewer concluded, "we do not think the author has done wisely in the production of this work."<sup>56</sup> As these reviews in leading specialty journals attest, Bucke unsuccessfully attempted to write a popular science book for men of science, to whom he might transplant his ideas. Moreover, all of the reviews, whether in religious, medical, or specialty journals, praised Bucke mainly for his effort. Most tripped over his expansive interpretation of "moral nature" and recognized that other readers would have difficulty with his opinions, interpretations, and statements, even if they found them acceptable in the guise of his intent. As Shortt indicated in his citation of a few reviews from international medical journals, these readers agreed with the basic assumptions of Bucke's book: that the key to understanding the human mind lay in application of concepts from neurology, psychology, and evolution. It is particularly telling that three medical journals in Canada commended the book as a solid contribution to Canadian literature in general and in medicine. Despite its problems, it was important to them to support a Canadian colleague, encourage Canadian writing, and soften intellectual criticism of scientific professionals in Canada who aimed to contribute to larger literature outside the country. Although not examined by Shortt, these reviews foreshadow his later assessment of the book as notable for being the first Canadian monograph on neuropsychiatry.<sup>57</sup>

#### Transnational Publishers, North American Readers of Popular Science

Working alone on his book manuscript from his asylum office in London, Ontario, Richard Maurice Bucke thus ran into difficulties when it came to publishing, especially outside Canada. This activity occurred in an early stage



MAN'S MORAL NATURE. An Essay.
By Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D.,
Medical Superintendent of the Asylum
for the Insane, London, Ontario. 8vo,
cloth, \$1.50

"The author very ingeniously attempts to show that the 'moral nature,' meaning the whole range of properly emotional experience, is probably connected with processes in the great sympathetic system, as the 'intellectual' and the 'active' natures are connected with processes of the cerebro-spinal system. Suggestions to this effect have been made before by various inquirers but nobody has supported the position by so careful a consideration of the phenomena of feeling from the subjective point of view, or has been less disposed to exaggerate the force of the objective evidence (which, from the nature of the case is mainly of a deductive character). The author's view of feeling, as subjectively manifested in the two fundamental couples of opposites—love-hate, faith-fear (faith not to be confounded with intellectual belief) is very strikingly worked out, and so is his view of the special emotions as varying combinations of these groundforms which diverse intellectual representations (which he calls 'concepts'). On the physical side of the case he, at all events, shows that there can be no sufficient account given to the expression of feeling in relation merely to the cerebro-spinal nervous system. Dr. Bucke writes with a singular earnestness of conviction, and even when his arguments are, as they not seldom are, rather fanciful, the spirit of them does not cease to be scientific. The book helps to shed light on the nost obscure and perplexing department of the psychological field."—Mind.

THE SCIENCE OF ENGLISH VERSE.
By Sidney Lanier, \$2.25.

THE MASTERS OF GENRE PAINT-ING. Being an introduction for the study of Genre Painting. By Frederick Wedmore, with 16 illustrations, \$2.00. COWPER. By Goldwin Smith. English Men of Letters Series. 85c.

A thoroughly appreciative biography of the poet . . the melancholy tenor of his life is treated with great truth and delicacy, and the critical remarks on his share in English literature will commend themselves to those best qualified to form an opinion.—Bookseller, London.

LIFE OF THE PRINCE CONSORT, By Theodore Martin, volume the fifth coucluding the work. With portraits \$2.25.

THE ENGLISH POETS. Selections with Critical Introductions. By various writers and a general introduction by Matthew Arnold, edited by T. H. Ward, M.A., 2 vols. \$3.50.

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF THOMAS HENRY BUCKLE. By Alfred Henry Huth. 1 vol. 12mo. Cloth, \$2.25.

THE READER'S HANDBOOK OF ALLUSIONS. References, Plots and Stories. By the Rev. E. C. Brewer, LL.D., 1170 pp. half bound, \$4.00.

DAWSON (Principal). FOSSIL MEN AND THEIR MODERN REPRE-SENTATIVES. 8vo. \$2.00.

MEMOIRS OF MADAME DE RE-MUSAT. Complete in one vol. 12mo. Cloth, \$2.25.

PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT IN THE BRITISH COLONIES. By Alpheus Todd, Librarian of Parliament, Ottawa. 8vo. \$5.00.

CEREMONIAL INSTITUTIONS. Being Part IV. of the Principles of Sociology. By Herbert Spencer. 12mo. Cloth \$1.35.

SCIENCE PRIMERS. Introductory. By Professor Huxley, 35 cents.

Post free on receipt of Price.

## WILLING & WILLIAMSON,

12 KING STREET EAST, TORONTO.

**Figure 7.** Advertisement, Willing & Williamson, The Bystander (July 1880): last page. Source: Canadiana.ca, CIHM.8-06586-7.

of Bucke's career, when the author was extraordinarily impatient to become published—as Bucke himself recognized: "like all authors, at all events in case of their first book, I am satisfied that my book is going to sell and be a success."58 Although he understood the distinction between printing and publishing, he did not fully appreciate the work of publishers. He wanted to work through them for copyright, distribution, marketing, and sales, but he tended to downplay their role in all of these things and to misunderstand their need to make a profit for their firm. His naivete led to confusion and then anger. As well, he focused his search on one city only, New York, to find a general publisher for his rather esoteric work. (Though interestingly, G.P. Putnam's Sons was a main publisher in New York up to 1914 for Canadian scientific monographs, second only to Appleton.)<sup>59</sup> As Bucke sought to publish his book "in a popular manner" for a wider audience, he overlooked Philadelphia even though he was probably aware that renowned publishers in medicine had become well established there. Indeed, after four years of slow sales, Putnam's itself sent hundreds of copies of his book to a Philadelphia bookseller. Perhaps also owing to a medical connection, Bucke was initially prepared to consider Willing & Williamson in Toronto, a Canadian firm recognized for distributing medical books, if he could not find a publisher in New York. It was Bucke's more experienced and knowledgeable friend, Harry Buxton Forman, who smoothed the way to the publisher for his book in London, Trübner, and who himself received copies of Bucke's book for distribution.

Bucke's experience reflects that of a medical practitioner writing while engaged in busy medical practise. Since few records exist for these specific kinds of authors in Canada in addition to a lack of records for those engaged full-time in scientific pursuits, any generalization about publishing experience—especially transnational publishing experience—would be problematic. Authors' book prefaces sometimes offer fleeting insights. For instance, in his Manual of the Principles of Surgery, Based on Pathology for Students, published through Lindsay & Blakiston in Philadelphia in 1866, physician William Canniff of Belleville, Ontario, implied that the distance between his home in rural Ontario and his publisher in metropolitan America caused some concern: "Not having personally superintended the work through the press," he noted apologetically, "there may consequently be found a few blemishes which the printer and proof-reader could not feel at liberty to remove."60 The reason for Canniff's choice of publisher outside the country must be inferred, but it is likely he understood Philadelphia as the intellectual capital for medicine in North America, home to many well-established publishers that specialized in medicine and allied fields. Established in 1843, Lindsay & Blakiston was one of them, publishing extensive lists of medical books until the twentieth century before being absorbed by general publishers. <sup>61</sup> Not only did Canniff seek a wider distribution in the Anglo-American world of medicine in this way, but reviewers in this world reacted favorably: the New York Medical Journal, for example, noted that his book "does credit to the industry, practical knowledge, reading, and good sense of the author."62

Since Man's Moral Nature was Bucke's first book, and Principles of Surgery was

Canniff's only medical book, these two books may not represent even their own substantial publishing experience. Indeed, Canniff is one of the few medical practitioners to leave personal papers, and these records—like those of Bucke—contain much more information about his historical book, *The Medical Profession in Upper Canada, 1783-1850*, which was published in Toronto in 1894 by William Briggs. Unlike Bucke, Canniff chose an important Canadian publisher for what was essentially a work on local history: Briggs was Book Steward for the Methodist Book and Publishing House, then the largest publisher in Canada, which became Ryerson Press in the twentieth century. Similarly, another of the few medical practitioners to leave records of their book publishing experience was Gordon Murray: later in the twentieth century he, too, would have two autobiographical books for general readers published initially in Canada through Ryerson Press, and then in England through a specialty publisher.

In short, the reception of Bucke's first book shows that ultimately it was both a commercial and scholarly failure. Sales were poor enough, at one-third of the print run, as to confirm Bucke's own feeling that he suffered an author's delusion about the potential success of his work. Reviewers did not stimulate more interest, as they consistently pointed to the lack of originality of the concepts, the confusion that abounded in discussion of the concepts, and the problematic writing. Specialist reviewers excoriated Bucke for presenting unsubstantiated and outmoded views of physiology and of whole groups of people. The most praise routinely given was for Bucke's efforts. Most significantly, *Man's Moral Nature* achieved recognition by some Canadian reviewers who viewed the book with some pride as a contribution to an emerging Canadian literature, written by Canadian residents, to be encouraged in a "young" country within the continental North American market.

Nevertheless, a few observations about transnational publishing of popular science in Victorian Canada arise from this study of Richard Maurice Bucke and *Man's Moral Nature*. Some of them relate first to the activity of science, no matter the historical period past or present. As with other such authors, perhaps, Bucke did not publish books to seek financial gain. Indeed, he subsidized the publication himself and would need to sell a thousand copies to break even on this expenditure. Furthermore, he emphasized that he aimed mainly to "transplant" his ideas into better minds than his own, to make sense of a complex subject. Because he sought neither recognition for his theory of the emotions among his medical colleagues, nor their applied use of his book, he was determined to publish through a general publisher in New York.

Readership of such popular scientific books, regardless of their reception through reviews and sales, is of interest from the perspectives of science and location. That readership might be projected—and exaggerated—by practitioner authors with scientific aspirations is seen in Bucke's insistence that he had potential readers all over North America on the basis of a few personal contacts. He believed as well that his book would generate great excitement: from his self-diagnosis in this view, in accord with his medical specialty, he was indeed

suffering from a writer's delusion. Certainly, the reviews of his book by colleagues who specialized in mental illness attested to this delusion, with his "fanciful" interpretations, "affectation," and "confusion of ideas" that were all unexpected for his professional stature in their field. This frame of mind intensified Bucke's inability to comprehend that the business of a publisher is commercial, not intellectual. Despite his offer to different publishers to "guarantee all expenses," he was infuriated at their response that such a book would still not pay to publish it. Such annoyance and impatience was not unusual in his profession, however. Over the next century, medical practitioners often loudly maintained that their investigative and synthesizing scientific work was done freely for society and should be freely produced and distributed by publishers for the betterment of society.65 In many ways, Bucke's practitioner-oriented views of publishers in the 1870s as printers with add-on credentials (especially when he could subsidize his own publication) reflect the much later views of Gordon Murray in the 1960s, just as both these two Canadian doctors greatly underestimated the market for their books in both centuries.

It is not clear from Bucke's experience that such Canadian authors wrote and published their books with anything other than an established publisher and a larger audience in mind; in other words, they went to the economic centre of the North American continent as much as to the intellectual centre. When book authorship and the publishing business were still emerging in Victorian Canada, it made more sense for authors of books for general readers to publish with established and recognized publishers in New York, to reach Canadian readers as well as Americans. More importantly, it is likely that a North American readership was a prerequisite of American publishers whose main concern was the market for these popular scientific books. Indeed, this requirement was a prominent feature of all North American publishing in the last decades of the nineteenth century. As scholars have affirmed, Canadian authors, whether literary or not, participated in a continental trade in publishing. In fact, by 1876 by far the greatest value of books exported from the United States was to Canada (close to 60 per cent), eclipsing the longstanding transatlantic trade between the U.S. and Europe. 66 The American market for Canadian writers at this time not only included Canada, but the centres of this market were in New York and other cities in the northeastern United States. Hence, those who wished to earn a living as writers, illustrators, editors, etc., moved from Canada to these publishing centres, as literary scholar Nick Mount has emphasized, "from the margins to the centres of a continental literary culture."67 As well, as MacLaren points out in his book about copyright and the Canadian book trade, literary authors within Canada refused to give their manuscripts to a Canadian firm because they were financially rewarded by publication in the United States; furthermore, the agency system of publishing in Canada and the copyright law meant that for decades "publishing Canadian literature would paradoxically depend on finding an American publisher."68 Closely tied to financial success was wider distribution and circulation, factors that were just as, if not more, important to scientific authors.

Unlike some literary counterparts, and later medical authors, <sup>69</sup> however, Canadian scientific authors in the Victorian period did not—could not—move away from their sphere of professional employment and activity but instead had to negotiate with book publishers from a distance. They sometimes felt that they operated at a disadvantage. As he fretted over acquiring copyright for his book outside Canada, for instance, Bucke sent many letters to both his American publisher and his English friend. His attempts to circulate his ideas as widely as possible in book form involved three publishers in three countries, all based in urban centres some distance from London, Ontario. This process did not follow a linear "periphery to centre" movement; rather, it shows that in this way Canada shared the experience of many other nations that relied on metropolitan sites of publishing that were geographically located outside their own country.

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#### **Endnotes**

- See section B, "Published Works," in Richard Maurice Bucke: A Catalogue Based Upon the Collections of the University of Western Ontario Libraries, ed. Mary Ann Jameson (London, ON: The Libraries, University of Western Ontario, 1978), 24-42.
- See section I, "Biographical and Critical Writings on R.M. Bucke," in Richard Maurice Bucke: A Catalogue, ed. Jameson, 113-18; Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), ch. 6; S.E.D. Shortt, Victorian Lunacy: Richard Maurice Bucke and the Practice of Late Nineteenth-Century Psychiatry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), xvi.
- 3 Shortt, *Victorian Lunacy*, 78-91; S.E.D. Shortt, "Bucke, Richard Maurice," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), XIII: 122-6, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bucke\_richard\_maurice\_13E.html.
- 4 Susan Sheets-Pyenson, *John William Dawson: Faith, Hope, and Science* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), ch. 9.

- Jennifer J. Connor and Bertrum H. MacDonald, "Writing in Canada, Publishing in the United States: the Experiences of Four Scientific Authors in the Victorian Period," (presentation, Canadian Association for Studies in Book Culture and Bibliographical Society of Canada, Ryerson University, Toronto, May 2017). Bertrum H. MacDonald is currently examining the papers of J.W. Dawson from the perspective of Dawson's publishing experience.
- 6 Bertrum H. MacDonald and Jennifer J. Connor, "Science, Technology, and Medicine: Constructing Authorship," in *History of the Book in Canada, Vol. 2, 1840-1918*, eds. Yvan Lamonde, Patricia Lockhart Fleming, and Fiona A. Black (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 183-6; Bertrum H. MacDonald, "Crossing Borders: The Smithsonian Institution and Nineteenth-Century Diffusion of Scientific Information Between the United States and Canada," in *Science in Print: Essays on the History of Science and the Culture of Print*, eds. Rima D. Apple, Gregory J. Downey, and Stephen L. Vaughn (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 92-5.
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- 8 For example see essays on Charles Darwin and Victorian culture in Timothy Lenoir, ed., Inscribing Science: Scientific Texts and the Materiality of Communication (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Nina Baym, American Women of Letters and the Nineteenth-Century Sciences: Styles of Affiliation (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Bernard Lightman, Victorian Popularizers of Science: Designing Nature for New Audiences (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); James A. Secord, Visions of Science: Books and Readers at the Dawn of the Victorian Age (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).
- 9 Marina Frasca-Spada and Nick Jardine, "Introduction: Books and the Sciences," in *Books and the Sciences in History*, eds. Marina Frasca-Spada and Nick Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4. Aileen Fyfe, for instance, argues that the history of popular science and religion in the Victorian period might differ from expert science and religion in order to concentrate her study on the period when popular science publishing was developed: see *Science and Salvation: Evangelical Popular Science Publishing in Victorian Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 3. See also *Science in Print: Essays on the History of Science and the Culture of Print*, eds. Apple, Downey, and Vaughn.
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- 11 David N. Livingstone, Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003); David Clifford, Elisabeth Wadge, Alex Warwick, and Martin Willis, eds., Repositioning Victorian Sciences: Shifting Centres in Nineteenth-Century Thinking (London & New York: Anthem Press, 2006); Faidra Papanelopoulu, Agustí Nieto-Galan and Enrique Perdiguero, eds., Popularizing Science and Technology in the European Periphery, 1820-2000 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); Brett M. Bennett and Joseph M. Hodge, eds., Science and Empire: Knowledge and Networks of Science Across the British Empire, 1800-1970 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); David N. Livingstone and Charles W.J. Withers, eds., Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Science (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
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- 13 Jonathan R. Topham, "Rethinking the History of Science Popularization/Popular Science," in Popularizing Science and Technology in the European Periphery, ed. Papanelopoulu, Nieto-Galan and Perdiguero, 1.
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- 19 Jennifer J. Connor, "Publisher Ownership, Physician Management: Canadian Medical Journals in the Victorian Era," Victorian Periodicals Review 34, no. 4 (2010): 388-428.
- 20 R. Alan Richardson and Bertrum H. MacDonald, Science and Technology in Canadian History: A Bibliography of Primary Sources to 1914 (Thornhill, ON: HSTC Publications, 1987).
- 21 For fuller discussion, see MacDonald and Connor, "Science, Technology, and Medicine: Constructing Authorship," in *History of the Book in Canada, Vol. 2, 1840-1918*, eds. Lamonde, Fleming, and Black, 178-81.
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- 23 Shortt, Victorian Lunacy; Shortt, "Bucke, Richard Maurice." For contemporary biographical notices, see "Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D.," Canadian Biographical Dictionary and Portrait Gallery of Eminent and Self-Made Men: Ontario Volume (Chicago and Toronto: American Biographical Pub. Co., 1880), 596-8; "Bucke, Richard Maurice, M.D.," A Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography: Being Chiefly Men of the Time ..., ed. Geo. Maclean Rose (Toronto: Rose Pub. Co., 1886), 565-6; "Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D., C.M., F.R.S.C.," History of the County of Middlesex, Canada (Toronto: Goodspeed, 1889), 747-8. Bucke has been the subject of a film and most recently included in an exhibit of the London Asylum for the Insane: see John Kent Harrison, Director, Beautiful Dreamers (Canada, 1990); Restoring Perspective: Life and Treatment at the London Asylum (2009), https://www.lib.uwo.ca/archives/virtualexhibits/londonasylum/index.html.
- 24 Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 23, 78; Shortt, "Bucke, Richard Maurice."
- Western Archives, Western University, London, Ontario, AFC 20, Dr. Edwin Seaborn fonds, AFC 20-S5: Historical Research, SS4 Richard Maurice Bucke, Files 92-93: File 92: R.M. Bucke to Harry Forman, 4 July 1878; also quoted in Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 80. For fuller discussion, see Artem Lozynsky, Richard Maurice Bucke, Medical Mystic: Letters of Dr. Bucke to Walt Whitman and his Friends

- (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), 35-41. Some whole Bucke letters were published in Lozynsky, *Richard Maurice Bucke, Medical Mystic* and were verified against the originals within the former Richard M. Bucke Collection at the University of Western Ontario; other letters were quoted in Shortt, *Victorian Lunacy*. Letters reprinted and quoted in these two published studies are noted hereafter where applicable.
- 26 Richard Maurice Bucke, Man's Moral Nature: An Essay (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons; Toronto: Willing & Williamson, 1879), 200.
- 27 Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 90-1. For a summary of Bucke's discussion in Man's Moral Nature, see Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 85-91.
- 28 Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 78-80.
- 29 Harry Buxton Forman would be uncovered as a forger, along with his colleague Thomas Wise, with the publication in 1934 of John Carter and Graham Pollard, *An Enquiry into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth Century Pamphlets* (London: Constable, 1934). See also John Collins, *The Two Forgers: A Biography of Harry Buxton Forman and Thomas James Wise* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 1992). Bucke figures large in Collins' biography thanks to the extensive correspondence, visits, and familial ties between the two men; according to Collins, the letters housed at Western University in London, Ontario provide all the details about Forman's domestic life: see 286-7.
- 30 Western Archives, Seaborn fonds, AFC 20-S5-SS4: Bucke to Forman, 27 October 1878; also quoted in Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 80.
- 31 Bucke, "Advertisement," in Man's Moral Nature, vii.
- 32 Unless otherwise noted, all these letters from Bucke to Forman are available in Western Archives, Seaborn fonds, AFC 20-S5-SS4, cited in full above, and this discussion cites only their dates. The description of letters from Bucke to Forman in Jameson's catalogue explains that they were enclosures, transcripts typed from the originals in the collection of Maurice Forman; after the sale of Forman's collection in 1972, the location of the original copies by Bucke is unknown. Consequently, according to Jameson, "these typescripts thus may possibly be the only extant record of the letters"; see her *Richard Maurice Bucke: A Catalogue*, 44. Owing to their provenance, these letters were moved from the Bucke Collection to the Edwin Seaborn fonds; their institutional reference then underwent further refinement in the finding aid. I am grateful to Anne Daniel, Associate Archivist, Western University Archives, for her help in locating these letters in the new fonds and confirming some of their contents.
- 33 Wyndham D. Miles, A History of the National Library of Medicine (Bethesda, MD: National Library of Medicine, 1982), 31, 60; S.L.-P, "Trübner, Nicholas," in Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), XIX: 1189-90. Trübner had served as one of "the most important" agents in London for American publishers as well: John Barnes, Bill Bell, Rimi B. Chatterjee, Wallace Kirsop, and Michael Winship, "A Place in the World," in History of the Book in Britain, Vol. 6, 1830-1914, ed. McKitterick, 612. See also Michael Winship, "The National Book Trade System, Part 4: The International Trade in Books," in A History of the Book in America, Vol. 3: The Industrial Book, 1840-1880, eds. Scott E. Casper, Jeffrey D. Groves, Stephen W. Nissenbaum, and David D. Hall (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 151-2; and Leslie Howsam, Kegan Paul—A Victorian Imprint: Publishers, Books, and Cultural History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 141-3.
- 34 Western Archives, Seaborn fonds, AFC 20-S5-SS4: Bucke to Forman, 23 December 1878; reprinted in Lozynsky, Richard Maurice Bucke, 53-7.
- 35 Michael Winship, "Manufacturing and Book Production," in A History of the Book in America, Vol. 3: The Industrial Book, 1840-1880, ed. Casper, Groves, Nissenbaum, and Hall, 45-6. See also Philip Gaskell, A New Introduction to Bibliography (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 201-6.
- 36 Edward Whitley, "Introduction to the British Editions of Leaves of Grass," Published Works, The Walt Whitman Archive, https://whitmanarchive.org/published/books/other/british/intro.html.
- 37 Western Archives, Western University, London, Ontario, AFC 203, Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke and Family fonds, Correspondence, Box AFC 203-1, AFC 203-S1-SS1-F27, From Trübner & Co., Publishers. -- 1881: "Terms for Publishing Books on Commission"; and Western Archives, Seaborn fonds, AFC 20-S5-SS4: Trübner & Co. to Forman, 25 June 1879. Extant records of Nicholas Trübner include

- publication books 1851-1897 and account books 1854-1893 held at University College London Special Collections for Routledge. I have not examined them for evidence of Bucke's publication.
- 38 Howsam, Kegan Paul—A Victorian Imprint, 131, 135, 137. In 1889, the firm became Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co.
- 39 Jeffrey D. Groves, "The National Book Trade System, Part 3: Courtesy of the Trade," in A History of the Book in America, Vol. 3: The Industrial Book, 1840-1880, eds. Casper, Groves, Nissenbaum, and Hall, 139-41; Barnes, Bell, Chatterjee, Kirsop, and Winship, "A Place in the World," in History of the Book in Britain, Vol. 6, 1830-1914, ed. McKitterick, 612.
- 40 Eli MacLaren, Dominion and Agency: Copyright and the Structuring of the Canadian Book Trade, 1867-1918 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 62. See also George L. Parker, The Beginnings of the Book Trade in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 184-5. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for helping to distill this complex situation.
- 41 Bucke, "To the Reader," in Man's Moral Nature, ix-x.
- 42 Western Archives, Seaborn fonds, AFC 20-S5-SS4: Bucke to Forman, 23 December 1878; reprinted in Lozynsky, *Richard Maurice Bucke*, 53-7.
- Western Archives, Bucke and Family fonds, Correspondence Box AFC 203-1, AFC 203-S1-SS1-F24 From G.P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers. -- 1879-1883: Account with Putnam's for Man's Moral Nature, 30 August 1879. There do not appear to be any records about Bucke's book in the extant archives for G.P. Putnam's Sons, which do not include the decades between the Civil War and the 1890s. See the finding aid by Emily Minehart and Meg Hixon, G.P. Putnam's Sons Records 1891-1937, Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; and George Palmer Putnam Collection, 1813-1888 (mostly 1853-1855) C0685, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University.
- 44 Western Archives, Bucke and Family fonds, Correspondence Box AFC 203-1, AFC 203-S1-SS1-F27 From Trübner & Co., Publishers. -- 1881: "Terms for Publishing Books on Commission."
- Western Archives, Bucke and Family fonds, Correspondence Box AFC 203-1, AFC 203-S1-SS1-F24 From G.P. Putnam's Sons, Publishers. -- 1879-1883: G.P. Putnam's Sons to Richard Maurice Bucke, 13 August 1883; Account with Putnam's, 1 September 1883; Box AFC 203-1, AFC 203-S1-SS1-F21 From David McKay, Publisher. -- 1883: David McKay to Richard Maurice Bucke, 1 August 1883; account history, 15 November 1883; and Box 203-1, AFC 203-S1-SS1-F29 From Willing & Williamson, Publishers. -- 1880-1883.
- Western Archives, Western University, Bucke and Family fonds, Medical and Cosmic Consciousness Studies, Box AFC 203-14, AFC 203-S6-SS2-F2: William B. Scott to Harry Buxton Forman, 24 August 1879. William Bell Scott published "The Year of the World: A Philosophical Poem" in 1846.
- 47 Advertisement for *Man's Moral Nature: An Essay*, in R.M. Bucke, *Alcohol in Health and Disease* (London, ON: William Bryce, 1880), [inside back cover].
- 48 "Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D.," Canadian Biographical Dictionary, 597-8; "Bucke, Richard Maurice, M.D.," A Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography, 566.
- 49 Review of Man's Moral Nature: An Essay by Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D., Canada Presbyterian N.S. 2 (July 18, 1879): 598.
- 50 P.E.B., "Man's Moral Nature," Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review 5, no. 1 (July 1880): 51-9; see 53, 59. An earlier notice in this magazine stated that reflection on daily experience will convince everyone that Bucke was right: W.D. LeS, "The Moral Nature and Intellectual Power," Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review [3] no. 1 (July 1879): 104-5.
- 51 Review of Man's Moral Nature: An Essay by R.M. Bucke, M.D., Canada Medical Record 7 (June 1879): 244-5. Bucke's book would be cited in a medical article to support the supposition that diseased organs supplied by the sympathetic nervous system provide a physical cause for moral and emotional disturbances: see T.K. Holmes, "Puerperal Mania," Canadian Practitioner 10 (October 1885): 289-90

- 52 Review of Man's Moral Nature: An Essay by Dr. R.M. Bucke, Canadian Journal of Medical Science 4 (September 1879): 271-5.
- 53 Review of *Man's Moral Nature: An Essay* by Richard Maurice Bucke, *Canada Lancet* 12 (September 1879): 30-2.
- 54 Advertisement for Willing & Williamson, Booksellers, "Man's Moral Nature: An Essay, by Richard Maurice Bucke, M.D.," *The Bystander* 7 (July 1880): [last page]. The review was published in the British journal Mind os-V (1 January 1880): 151.
- 55 Review of Man's Moral Nature: An Essay by Richard Maurice Bucke, American Journal of Insanity 36, no. 4 (1880): 530-3.
- 56 "Bucke: The Moral Nature," review of Man's Moral Nature: An Essay by Richard Maurice Bucke, Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease 6, no. 3 (1879): 514-18.
- 57 Shortt, Victorian Lunacy, 91.
- 58 Western Archives, Seaborn letters: Bucke to Forman, 28 March 1879.
- 59 MacDonald, "Publishing of Canadian Scientific and Technical Monographs."
- 60 William Canniff, A Manual of the Principles of Surgery, Based on Pathology for Students (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1866), iv.
- 61 Jennifer J. Connor, "Stalwart Giants: Medical Cosmopolitanism, Canadian Authorship, and American Publishers," *Book History* 12 (2009): 210-39.
- 62 "Canniffs" [sic] Principles of Surgery," Canada Lancet 4 (July 1872): [advertisement at back].
- 63 As Canniff was successively a student, faculty member and dean at Victoria College, a Methodist institution, the relationship between author and publisher also resides in this religious affiliation. See Jennifer J. Connor, "To Advocate, To Diffuse, and To Elevate: the Culture and Context of Medical Publishing in Canada, 1630 to 1920," (Ph.D. diss., University of Western Ontario, 1992), 155-7, 299-300; Janet B. Friskney, "Beyond the Shadow of William Briggs Part II: Canadian-Authored Titles and the Commitment to Canadian Writing," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada* 35 (Fall 1997): 173-5.
- 64 Jennifer J. Connor, "Between Two Markets: Gordon Murray, Ryerson Press, and the Publishing of Medical Autobiography in the 1960s," *Book History* 23 (2020): 237-268.
- 65 See, for example, the complaints about publishers that were issued routinely from a high-profile American physician-editor, George M. Gould: Jennifer J. Connor, "Writing Medicine: George M. Gould and Medical Print Culture in Progressive America," in *Science in Print*, eds. Apple, Downey, and Vaughn, 107-29.
- 66 Winship, "The National Book Trade System, Part 4: The International Trade in Books," in A History of the Book in America, Vol. 3: The Industrial Book, 1840-1880, eds. Casper, Groves, Nissenbaum, and Hall, 148, 152, 154; Barnes, Bell, Chatterjee, Kirsop, and Winship, "A Place in the World," in History of the Book in Britain, Vol. 6, 1830-1914, ed. McKitterick, 611-12
- Nick Mount, When Canadian Literature Moved to New York (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 13. See also MacLaren, Dominion and Agency, 3, 12, 166.
- 68 MacLaren, Dominion and Agency, 12, 166.
- 69 Connor, "Stalwart Giants."