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## CANADIAN JOURNALISM.

Canadian journalists—if I may use this dignified title in the broad sense as describing writers for our public prints—include newspaper men and a few others. The few others do not enter into the question to any considerable extent when we are regarding journalism as a means of supporting the roof-tree. Of them a minority of specially endowed men succeed in securing a fair income. The majority find the dignified title of journalist an expensive one to support in this way. In this country there is but a limited market for the wares of local artists, whether of the brush or of the pen. One man, who has had more success than most, told me recently that one year he made eight hundred dollars by hard effort, and he was known to the leading American Magazine syndicates. At best it is a precarious calling.

When I speak of newspaper men I have not prominently in mind the combined editor, proof-reader, exchange slasher, job-printer, foreman and mailing clerk who makes a good living and acquires local influence as the proprietor of a rural weekly. The life of the writer on a busy daily, with its long hours and Bohemian setting, is not the bed of roses which it is pictured by those who regard him as the interesting repository of unlimited self-possession and theatre tickets. None the less it offers a career, a fascinating career, to one who has become saturated with its atmosphere and is prepared to make the sacrifices which it entails.

No recognized qualifying examination is required. Consequently newspaper writing is variously called a profession or a business according to the pretensions of the individual. Preliminary qualification consists in ability to pass a searching oral examination by a city editor, who sees enough applicants to have acquired a critical taste. A written examination comes daily when the paper comes from the press and passes under the blue pencil. A man speedily finds his level. If he discovers that he isn't cut out for the business, he should get out of it; for there is always a crowd in the lower flat, and he may be eminently qualified for something else. If he stays he will find that, in a very real sense, eternal vigilance is the price of safety. There are many chances to sin both by omission and commission, and mistakes count on a newspaper.

Besides being an observing individual with good common sense and a facile pen, a man to succeed should have a good constitution, strong self control, a large supply of energy and ready adaptability. With these qualities and fair luck there is a good chance of a fair income, an insight into practical life and more power than falls to the lot of most men. The life is exacting and absorbing, but it is deeply gratifying to the man who has his heart in it.

A college training is no longer a handicap to an applicant for a newspaper vacancy; but here, as in the other non-academic professions, he will find that his oak framed parchment with its red seal and green ribbon isn't necessarily an immediate passport to fame, and that he has to prove himself. Latterly newspaper readers have come to want not more than the news; they have grown par-

ticular regarding the form in which it is presented to them. The result is an increasing demand for educated men; and Canadian editors have learned that, where they could find a college trained man sufficiently sane to adjust himself to conditions of the business, a cultured mind is a valuable asset to a paper. Once started the college man will do well to remember that he must not only have newspaper ability; he must acquire newspaper experience, and equipped with both he should have a relative advantage as the result of the superior mental training which he has gone through when the way is opened to one of the coveted and responsible positions at the top of the profession.

All this I have learned from men who have been through the mill and who know.

H. A. HARPER, '95.

MONTREAL, March 10th.

## BUSINESS OR A PROFESSION?

The contention that a University education unfits a man for a life of business has been so frequently and so fully discussed that any further words on the subject may seem to be superfluous. But the choice of one's life work is a momentous question, and it seems fitting at this season, when from seventy-five to a hundred of our men are about to be turned loose from the University to do battle with the world, that some serious thought should be given to this great problem.

To say that the professions are already overcrowded is but to repeat what has already been said thousands of times. In the teaching profession, salaries were never so low as they are to-day, and unless one is fired with enthusiasm to reform mankind through the medium of the school, little encouragement is held out to anyone to enter upon this line of work. The medical profession is represented in the city of Toronto by some six hundred and fifty men, whose average salary is said to be about five hundred dollars per annum, and other cities and towns are proportionately well supplied. Yet in spite of this fact, there never was so large a class of freshmen at the Medical School as at the present time, and one cannot but wonder what is to become of them all. In law even a worse state of affairs exists, and the growing tendency among commercial men to settle their disputes without having recourse to expensive litigation is going to make competition in this profession all the more keen.

In view of these facts, one is forced to consider seriously the advisability of entering upon a life of business. But here the University graduate is generally confronted by three difficulties, any one of which might appear sufficient to deter him from taking the step. In the first place, business men as a rule are averse to giving positions to University men on the ground that their education has unfitted them for a business life. Secondly, if one is to get a position at all, one must start at the very bottom, and at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, with a good education, one is very loth to accept a situation in which one is junior to uneducated boys of sixteen and seventeen. Lastly, competition seems to be even keener