

# THE CANADA EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY

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## THE WORK OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CANADA.\*

REV. PROFESSOR CLARK, D.C.L., PRESIDENT.

IN approaching the subject of my address, "The Work of the Royal Society of Canada," we naturally think, on the one hand, of the constitution of our society, of the sections into which it is divided and the work appointed for them to accomplish; whilst, on the other hand, we as naturally look back on the eighteen years of the life of the society, and ask what it has done; and forward to the future, and consider what work lies before us. It is possible that we may form a more favorable estimate of our own achievements than others do. We cannot be unaware that there are those who profess to think little of our society and its work. This need not surprise us; it is nothing new. No association can admit everybody to its membership, and, however judicious may be its elections, those who are passed by will have their fling and their jibe at the bad taste which has neglected them. As we have said, there is here nothing new. There is no greater literary society in the world than the French Academy; yet we know what Piron tried to think of it, and how he showed this in the words

designed by him to form his epitaph.

Well, we can bear such words with equanimity, we can even appreciate the wit of our critics, when we look upon our comparatively short yet not inglorious history.

There are many benefits derivable from an association such as that to which we belong, and some of them are of a character very real, yet so indefinite that it is not quite easy to describe them. May I not here fall back upon the language of the wise man—language which at least has stood the test of time? "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." I think there are some among us who will testify that we have derived from these meetings stimulus and sympathy which we carried back with us to our work with advantage to ourselves and to those whom we taught and influenced.

I cannot claim to have been one of the most regular of the fellows of this society, but I can say that, whenever I have been present here, I have regretted my omissions in the past, and have resolved to be

\* Extracts from the address of the President, Reverend Professor Clark, delivered in the Assembly Hall of the Normal School, Ottawa, on the evening of May 30, 1900, the Vice-President, Dr. Frechette, in the chair.