

trolled and guided by logic and a severe regard to truth. Now, writing history is supposed to be that demanding least genius and least skill ; but, if I have correctly defined the qualifications of the historian, it is evident that he who is to succeed in that branch of literature must possess, not only a large stock of mental endowments, but have learnt by long practice how to make best use of them. The wide disparity there exists between annals and history any one will immediately feel who will read together the volume our Society has published on Jacques Cartier's Voyages, and Mr. Parkman's Chapters on the same subject, in his "Pioneers of France in the New World." Any accurate observer can write a book of annals, but a life has to be devoted to literature ere such masterpieces are produced as Macaulay's "History of England" or Prescott's "Ferdinand and Isabella." The charm of such books depends as much on their style as on the information they convey, and such style is not so much the gift of nature as the product of art, and not therefore to be looked for in the writings of men who are wearied with physical toil, or immersed in the sordid cares of business.

Writing is a profession, and good writing seldom comes from any but those who practise it as such, and whose whole thoughts are set on literary pursuits. There are, no doubt, notable instances of men who have attained high rank in literature, and who yet followed other avocations. Roscoe was a Liverpool merchant, but he failed ignominiously in business. Charles Lamb was a clerk in the India House. John Stuart Mill and his father held similar posts. Arthur Helps was Secretary to the Privy Council. Anthony Trollope has or had an appointment in the Post Office Department. Greg is in the English Civil Service. And yet all these men have written most excellent books. But they are or were men whose avocations simply absorbed so many hours of the day without filling their minds

at all times with cares and with thoughts hostile to calm reflection.

There is another class of writers in old countries which is wanting here—men of highest culture and wealth, and who, if they chose, could devote all their leisure to literature, but often prefer to unite literature with politics. We find three notable instances of this class in the late Lord Derby, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Disraeli. All these have written books which would be accounted good, even if not the productions of British Prime Ministers. We, in Canada, have had Premiers and public officers of no mean talent or literary skill, but I fear the claims of political life are more exacting and harassing here than in Great Britain ; and in the class of men who possess both culture and wealth we are lamentably deficient.

But, though literature is sometimes seriously followed as a pastime, it is generally pursued as a trade by men who earn their bread by it. Such a class, however, can exist only where there is a market for their wares, and such a market there certainly is not in Canada. The newspaper editor is paid ; and his lieutenants, who scour the streets to pick up scraps of gossip, are paid also ; and our magazines do their best to pay a pittance to their contributors ; but in Canada no man could live on the money product of other literary work than that of the newspaper press. A colonial publisher knows his own interest too well to give anything worth while for a manuscript which, if he publish it, will be likely not to meet with sale enough to cover cost of printing. A Canadian book is sure, with the stigma of a colonial imprimatur upon it, not to circulate beyond the confines of the Dominion ; and, therefore, when a Canadian writes a meritorious book, like "Todd's Parliamentary Government," or Heavysege's "Jephthah's Daughter," he seeks a publisher abroad.

It is not, therefore, because we have not