

tage of any helpful, competent criticism to test its value or to point out its shortcomings. Still more unpleasant was the task when, in addition to the duty of exposing worthless school manuals, and of pricking the bag of pretentious authorship, we had first to take by assault the entrenchments of a number of literary *banditti* who, using their professional position to become scouts for a book-house, sallied periodically forth to levy tribute on the schools, and, metaphorically, to waylay and impound the profession as hostages for the benefit of their individual fortunes. Addressing ourselves, however, to the herculean task, and in the public interest seeing the necessity for undertaking the work, we have endeavoured, so far as our ability served us, to perform the duty thoroughly. In the execution of our work, as it was hardly possible for us to fail to do, we have frequently given offence, even to the friends who supported us. Pursuing our work with independence, and first being loyal to duty, this was perhaps unavoidable. To be helpful in the work, the critic's pen should, of course, be free; though truth in his hands need be no weapon of offence. How hard it is always to recognize this, we ourselves but too well know. Yet with truth we may say, that we are conscious of never having written with malice, though occasionally we may have written with heat. We have, of course, been critical; but this we were of deliberate purpose; for our aim was not only to interest and perchance instruct, but to give a character to the magazine as an organ of critical opinion which would win respect for its utterances and do credit to the profession it represented. But with these ambitions, we have desired neither unwisely to puff, nor unjustly to condemn: our aim has been to manifest the spirit of fair play towards all, and to aid in rightly representing the literary progress of the day in connection with education. We are glad to believe that that progress has been a substantial and encouraging one, and that the future of educational book-making in Canada never promised better than at present. The quantity and quality of the work shew the

most marked improvement, even within the past two years. Our most judicious publishers, however, are not always successful in the choice of aspirants for the honours of authorship; in such cases the results of their work have occasionally called for severe criticism. This criticism has not always had to concern itself with the scholarship and intrinsic worth of the books reviewed so much as with their literary form, which, in the bulk of instances, has, from want of care and experience, been frequently faulty and inchoate. Our criticism, however little welcome it may be at the time, will, we trust, be a factor in the process of improvement, and that the future issues of the native press may receive permanent benefit from our efforts. In this, we doubt not, our readers will fully sympathize.

INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL JOURNALISM.

WE have read with regret the valedictory leading article of one of the most valued among our English exchanges, the *Educational Chronicle* of London and Manchester. Its editors claim that "when the *Chronicle* has ceased to exist, no educational journal will be published in England which is not the organ of some organization or institution which has interests distinct from those of education." This looks as if, apart from mere class interests, there exists in England a deplorable apathy on the subject of education. The promoters of the CANADA EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY have reason to congratulate themselves on the wider support accorded by its friends to a serial whose aim has been to advocate the interests of education, *per se*, apart from those of classes or cliques, of partizan leaders who subordinate educational interests to politics, or of members of the profession who discredit it by questionable commercial alliances. We know that the teaching profession and all interested in the elevation of our educational system have recognized the manly and independent course thus taken from the outset, and though this magazine has not the