

may do for our future literature can scarcely be predicted. Our literary men will not look to it to relieve them from pecuniary pressure in their arduous labour; but it will justify its existence if it enlists public sympathy in its service and secures for the author the honour and reward of his work.

In the following pages we record the literary achievements of the past two years\* and, in commending the industry and ability of the writers, we would bespeak for their work a larger measure of public recognition, and a more generous and encouraging support.

#### HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

The chief interest in Canadian history, it is almost trite now to say, has hitherto centered in the French régime, the heroic incidents of which Mr. Francis Parkman has anticipated Canadian writers in depicting, though his charming narratives, to which he is about to add the thrilling story of Wolfe and Montcalm, reconcile us to the thought that the period has found its first and best historian in an American. That the mine, however, has only just been opened, the reader of our early annals, who knows the wealth and variety of the materials which await industry and research to be brought to light, must be fully conscious; while to the novelist and dramatist the ground may be said to be as yet unbroken, if we except Mr. Kirby's *Le Chien d'Or*, a romance of the highest excellence, which is far too little known to the people of Canada. But of the later, and perhaps not less heroic, periods of the country's history, Canadian writers have in the main a monopoly. And here native literary activity, in a commendable degree, is now showing itself. "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war;" and the records

of settlement in the Upper Province and the story of the struggling pioneers are finding historians to deal with them, and readers curious and interested to devour what they have written.

"History repeats itself," and the Canadian *littérature* has in the story of the United Empire Loyalists a tale to tell, such as the American historian has had to narrate of the refugees from oppression who peopled the New England Colonies, and whose struggles in the then wilderness of the Atlantic seaboard find a parallel in the same war with nature in the case of their descendants in Ontario. Unfortunately, in Dr. Egerton Ryerson's *The Loyalists of America and their Times*, though it was the design of the now deceased writer that his work should be "an historical monument to the character and merits of the fathers and founders of my [his] native country," the author has occupied himself too much with re-telling the story of the settlement of Massachusetts and of the doings of the Puritan Fathers, and has not devoted that space to the incidents of settlement in Upper Canada which for our own people would have had an entrancing interest, and been the most acceptable contribution to our native history. Nevertheless, the work we first chronicle in this department has many claims upon Canadian readers, and the author's enthusiasm in his subject and years of industry in compiling his materials, though he has not made the best use of them, deservedly entitle his volumes to notice and commendation.

In Mr. Rattray's *The Scot in British North America*, we have a most important contribution to our native literature, in a department of exceptional interest to students of national life and character. The first two volumes of the work have appeared, and they contain a mine of informa-

\* Our space will only permit of extracts from the Review in History, Biography, and Belles-Lettres.