the historian and biographer are not "read of all men." Of the masses there are many whose education is achieved, not by reading, but by the sense of sight. To those the influence of public monuments is not less real than that derived from books. Hence we would urge, that the education of the eye, picked up in the highways and byways, should not altogether be neglected. Who shall say, for instance, what incentives to patriotism the Volunteer's monument in the Queen's Park has not inspired? What other lessons might not our youth learn from the chiselled block, in the classic groves of University Park or within the cloistered walls of the College itself.

We are not much enamoured with the casts and pictures in the theatre and galleries of the Education office; but there can be little doubt that, to a large class of sight-seers, they prove of undoubted interest and attractiveness. Better by far are the portraits at Osgoode Hall and the House of Commons, Ottawa. To the sociologist and the student of history these portraits are of no small interest, for they help materially in reconstructing the past and in enabling one to judge of character. In their way, these are of value. Of like value, to our mind, would be the public monument raised to commemorate worth and give wing to aspiration. Only on the score of expense could monuments be at a disadvantage, though, contrasted with other modes of keeping green the memory, the larger outlay incurred in their erection would be worth the sacrifice. They would be a priceless boon to our descendants. By their use posterity would be relieved of the fulsome biographer, and literature would recover her respect for truth. Could we limit biography to a statue in bronze, who and what would not be the gainer?

G. Mercer Adam.

CRITICISM.

During the year one meets with a good deal of literary criticism. Some of it, marked by keen insight and hearty appreciation. On the contrary, much of it is singularly barren and shallow. It is apparently impossible for some critics to reach any clear, distinct, individual judgments; their method is simply to place a writer beside a well-known figure of literature, and then with their chalk and tape-line ascertain the fact that he is of less stature by an inch than the epic poet; slighter of build than this dramatist, less finely proportioned than this master of lyrical song. Meanwhile, what the man really is in himself, entirely escapes attention. The points in which he differs from others are clearly indicated; but the qualities which make up his individuality are completely overlooked; the critic's method has no place for that sort of adjudication. I have become so thoroughly weary of this mechanical beating of the air that when I came upon the phrase, "Mr. Jones lacks Brownings' intensity and dramatic force; he has none of Wordsworth's tranquil insight into the universal element in nature; nor does he possess in any degree the Tennysonian faculty of melodious expression," I close the book or the magazine and turn to something more promising. I know there is nothing to be learned from that kind of criticism.

This method is particularly irritating when applied to poetry, to which unfortunately it is more frequently applied than to any other form of literature. There are many people apparently whose capacity of appreciation is not large enough to include more than one object, or a class of objects. If they like the dramatists, they can see nothing in the epic poets; if they admire Wordsworth, they can discover no poetry in Byron; if they love Whittier, they must foreswear Longfellow. The sympathetic imagination which opens the door to creations as far apart as those of Wordsworth and Dante Gabriel Rosetti, is by no means a common possession, and it is the lack of it which defines so sharply the range of appreciation in many people, and sets narrow limits to their intellectual companionships. I do not envy the man whose zeal for the fresh, virile verse of Burns will not permit him to enjoy the finely chiselled, weighty lines of Walter Savage Landor. Life is large enough for both; poetry is too great to be bound by the limitations of individual taste and experience.

There are excellent persons who live by one poet, who find a single chapter sufficient for their needs, and leave the great book of universal experience uncut. No one cares to quarrel with such a one so long as he does not attempt to impose his limitations on the rest of us; it is only when he declares that because Burns is a genuine poet, therefore a singer of such different tones as Landor cannot be, that we feel disposed to hint there is a defect in his scale that deprives him of some of the deepest notes, and that his world is possibly smaller than the universe.

A genuine poetic nature is catholic: it will have its decided preference, its spiritual affinities and kinships; but it will be quick to recognize excellence under all forms, and to detect the melody that may thrill the most unexpected combination of sounds, and will find its laureate for each of them. For such a nature Spencer will dream, Milton set his vision to the organ music of his mighty line, and Herrick scathe the blossoms of May as he fingers his mellow pipe.