

have I ever consciously violated towards those who would themselves observe them the established rules of the profession, such as that which protects the writers of unsigned articles, not libellous or otherwise criminal, from personal attack. Of course, if you are assailed by ruffianism, whether on the street or in the press, you must defend yourself, otherwise ruffianism would have everything its own way. I trust that I have also done the little that was in my power to help forward the growth of our national literature without distinction of opinion or party. Something has been said of my attention to style. I have tried to remember that I was before the public, and have endeavoured to turn my work out in such a shape that it might not be wholly discreditable to the Canadian press. But it is almost useless to put into our transitory productions, which are read to-day and thrown aside to-morrow, the labour requisite in the preparation of a work of literary art. Even a monthly, reviewing current events up to date, though it may not be written inconsiderately, must be written fast. After all, the great secret of style in a journalist is to make up your mind distinctly what you have to say, to say it, and to have done with it. Amongst the various arrows that have been discharged, there is one which is a little galling. I have been kindly represented as fancying I have a mission to elevate the tone of the Canadian press. Now I cordially abhor all missions, and I am sure it never entered my mind to undertake anything so ambitious as to elevate the tone of the public press. I have quite enough to do in elevating my own tone. I have stood a zealous and devoted soldier in the ranks of more than one great cause. It is my pride and my happiness to think I have done so, but I have also shared the excitement, sometimes the over-excitement, of the fray. I am conscious that, in the hour of conflict, I have written many things which in a cooler mood would have been modified or expunged; and if I were to try to elevate any one's tone my sins would rise in judgment against me. The chairman and the writers of the letters have, I repeat, spoken words regarding me which are too kind. It is here, however, if anywhere, that I must look for sympathy and approbation, for I am a journalist or nothing. There are people who say that to be a journalist and

to be nothing are things not incompatible. I have candid friends who say, 'Why do you go into journalism? You ought to write a book; the only way to make yourself immortal and to become a benefactor to society is to write a book.' Well, considering the ponderous contents of our bookstores, and the voluminous catalogues which bookworms, such as I am, receive, perhaps the title of a benefactor of society might be claimed, in a modest way, by the man who does not write a book. I suppose it may be true that, as a student, I did set out in life to write a book. I suppose that was my manifest destiny, but, like other manifest destinies, it was not fulfilled. I was taken away from my college early in life, became mixed up with public men, and was at length drawn into the press. So I became a journalist, and a journalist I have remained; though I came to Canada not with the slightest intention of going on the press, least of all on the political press, which for some time, in fact, I steadfastly eschewed. I thought only of making a home for myself among my relatives; but I was drawn in by the current of national life which began to flow after Confederation in the intellectual as well as in the political sphere. I do not complain of my lot. It is perfectly true that the works of a journalist are ephemeral; they go into the nether world of old files and are forgotten. But does not the same fate befall a good many books? Look at the back shelves of any great library. What a necropolis of the immortals is there! There, amidst inviolate dust and cobwebs which are never disturbed, sleep great masters of the civil law who were once as gods for their wisdom. There sleep the authors of many a system of philosophy which now has no disciples. There sleep the authors of many a system of science which has been superseded a hundred times by the advance of modern thought. The fact is, that to be immortal you must not only have an undying genius, but an undecaying subject. Shakespeare, Homer, Cervantes, had undecaying subjects, but some doubt whether even they are now what they were to their contemporaries. We all wish to survive our ashes in a certain sense, but not to one in millions is it given to be really immortalized by literature. We may all hope to survive in the lasting effects of an honest life, and to no one, perhaps, is a better chance