

Canadian books come within the domain of literary art, the journalist would have a strong case against the literary man were the one (the latter) to be taken and the other (the former) to be left.

Of course our contention in this matter is wholly influenced by the circumstances of the country. As yet Canada can scarcely be said to have a distinctive class of literary men—we mean those who pursue literature as an art, and who have done anything that, in a cosmopolitan sense, ranks them as authors. It may be, and we would fain hope, that Lord Lorne's project will help to create this class. In this prospect, if the scheme is not premature, His Excellency's aim is worthy of all encouragement, and this Magazine would be untrue to itself if it said a word to discredit it. But we have to be on our guard against literary ambition,—perhaps also, to speak with respect, against Court patronage of letters,—and we should be loath to see any stimulus applied to our young literature that was unwholesome in its influence and barren of good results. Hence our unwillingness hastily to commend the scheme, and our desire that if the society is to be established, it shall be on a solid and enduring foundation. Nothing will better ensure this than the conviction in the public mind, that the institution is to be of practical service to the country, and a bond of union among all active, well-equipped workers for its intellectual advancement. And here a word of comment may be allowed us as to the selection of names for enrolment among the members of the Society. The absence of women from the Literature Section will at once be noted, and is an omission likely to create prejudice as it is sure to be considered an injustice. Literature is of no sex; and in Canada its most ardent friends, and not the least successful of its workers, are and have been women. The readers of this Magazine will instantly recall the names of three or four of our lady contributors who deserve place on the roll of the Society, and whose nomination would have done it honour. Again, from the English literature branch, we miss the names of not a few of 'the other sex,' whose non-appointment to the Society will lead many in wonderment to ask on what principle its members have been chosen. The query, by its naturalness, will illustrate what we have

said as to the probabilities of the scheme awakening jealousy. Unless founded on the broadest lines, and to include writers who are sensibly aiding to mould the thought and give impulse to the literary life of the country, whether in books or through the press, the Society will be likely to fail in securing public commendation and find its successes in a harvest of jealousy and disfavour. We are aware that the appointments to membership in the Society have been made at the instance of those whom His Excellency has been pleased to take into counsel. Lord Lorne is therefore not personally responsible for the omissions from the list. It would be ungracious to speak of any who are of "the elect" as having, in one or two instances, slender claim to the honour. On the whole, in all the departments, the selection has been a fitting one; though, as we have said, there are notable omissions from the English Literature Section. Mr. Le Sueur's name, for instance, does not appear on the list; and if there is a man in Canada entitled to the honour, and who by achievement and reputation, both as a thinker and a writer, deserves to sit in the highest seat in a native Academy of Letters, it is the able and learned gentleman we have named. Of Mr. Rattray, whose name we also miss from the list, we might speak with equal warmth and justice. There is no native writer who has higher claims to appointment on the Society than the scholarly and accomplished author of *The Scot in British America*, or one whose life has been more actively and usefully spent in the literary service of his country. In connection with Mr. Rattray, we would naturally look to find on the roll of the Society the name of the author of *The Irishman in Canada*, a work which so high an authority as *The By-stander* remarked "has received praise and deserved it." Mr. Davin, both by his intellectual gifts and by his contributions to the English quarterlies and the Canadian periodical press, surely merits a place in a Canadian Academy. Mr. Dent, we should also fully expect to see honoured in any gathering of Canadian *littérateurs*. The omission of the names of other Canadian writers, who have substantial claims to enrolment in the Society, will also occasion surprise. Where, it may be asked, are the names of Dr. Scadding, Fennings Taylor, Martin Griffin, Dr. Canniff, Dr.