

love of culture, and are more or less actively giving it expression. With regard to the latter, the present writer has had exceptional opportunities of judging, and during a ten years' connection with our national magazine, no circumstance has impressed him so much as the increase of that class who are paying court to literature, and are doing excellent work in supplying articles for our periodical press. It may be said that the worth of this work is slight and of light weight as literature, but it is the stepping-stone from journalism to letters, and a necessary stage in the evolution of mind. In this view, Canadian literature owes no small debt to such periodicals as the *Revue Canadienne* and the *Canadian Monthly*, though recognition of it may not be more fervid than that given to foster-mothers in general. So far as the public are concerned, however, recognition of the contemporary value of this work is a duty, the more imperative because it is done without fee or reward. In the absence of the pecuniary stimulus to exertion, and in the face of the losses which authors and publishers have sustained in Canada, in endeavouring to catch the ear of the public, it is not surprising that the literary status of the country is as yet not a high one. What it might, and speedily would be, were literature more recognised as a profession, there is much to indicate, and nowhere is this more observable than in the pages of the periodicals we have referred to, where writers are represented whose work, had it the inspiration which public recognition and its attendant pecuniary reward might supply, would quickly burgeon out into goodly proportions and secure for itself merited fame. But the real aid these magazines afford to the future literature of Canada is of itself little recognised: as quarries where each writer is fashioning the stones to take their indi-

vidual place in the future edifice of our literature, their service is well-nigh incalculable. And how greatly do they stimulate the thought and increase the intelligence of the community!

These are times of unusual mental conflict, and no man is a believer in the *ipse dixit* of another. The age is perhaps too critical, but its scepticism and analytic habit are an education in themselves. People are reading more, but they are also thinking more. In every department of research is this the case, and had we a school of competent criticism, and a few leaders of thought who would enter more sympathetically into the mental engrossments of the masses, the benefits of the thirst for reading would be enhanced, and a healthful direction given to the forces of the native intellect. The press, over the country, might be more helpful than it is: in the cities, at least, we might look for more intelligent reviewing and greater effort to do justice to our native writers. In one notable instance, that of the most prominent journal in the country, book reviewing is little else than a farce, and the aid given to the nascent literature of Canada is of the feeblest and least encouraging character. The absence of a high-class literary weekly, with a generous department of critical opinion, is equally disadvantageous. Nor is the influence of those who have enjoyed the training of a University much more helpful. The atmosphere of culture that exhales from our college halls cannot be said to be very penetrating. Education, undoubtedly, has made rapid strides, but the results, in the main, of a college training have not yet shown themselves in much original and creative work. The conventional professions, no doubt, have been enriched by the Universities, but the profession of letters has not been so aided. Other and more lucrative