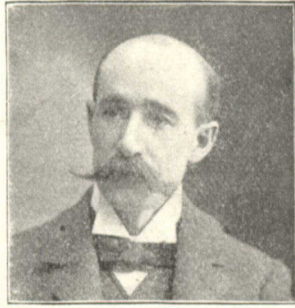


maker have a message to tell—he can lay no claim to the title of *vates* or seer, which the ancients considered a necessary office of the poet.

It is rather difficult to define what is meant by message. Pleasure all works of literature must give, and some say that *that* is the real aim of true literature. But this is too narrow a conception, unless that pleasure produces some thought which tends to the elevation of the ideals of life in the reader or hearer.



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That the maker of a work of literature have a message is a necessary requirement, but an equally important requisite is that this message be delivered in proper form. Browning fails, mainly because he paid too little attention to form, while, on the other hand, the devotees of art for art's sake go to the other extreme. Now, it will not do to excuse crudeness in work by an apology for the youth of the author, or by inveighing against criticism, whether latter-day or old-time. How many of the present day authors would willingly pass through the severe apprenticeship of seven years, which Guy de Maupassant is said to have served under his master Flaubert? Seven years, and everything produced in that time was destroyed. But Maupassant stands out as the prince of story-tellers. And just here let me say, that it seems to me a pity to see so many of the youthful attempts, of even renowned authors, reprinted and sown broadcast over the land. These "sins of youth," as they may properly be designated, add nothing to the fame of the author, though an acquaintance with them may form a necessary step in the study of his evolution. On the other hand, nothing would be lost to the world were these, and many more, buried in oblivion. We might then hope to compass some of the really good literature there is in the world.

I have elsewhere made mention of the crying need for criticism in Canada. It is a pleasant duty to note that our chief magazine is doing something along this line. But I think that when *The Canadian Magazine* has the battle so well-nigh won, the duty to hew to the line becomes all the more imperative. And yet I can well understand what plaintive petitions are made to editors and managers, which would all but melt a heart of stone, and there are publishers who want a *quid pro quo*, a good notice for a good advertisement. It, then, becomes almost imperative to pay a competent