

perhaps wounds the feelings of him who has been so fortunate as to give the public a good production, but yet who is so unfortunate as not to be able to please that particular individual who is writing criticisms. We do not so much blame our daily papers for any unfairness in this respect, unfairness which is often the result of carelessness and haste, as we do the one whose particular business it is to write notices of these performances for this, our college paper. It is his opinion in this matter that is taken as nearly infallible by the many readers of the *STUDENT*. Should his judgment err greatly in respect to the merits of any certain performance; or should he, as has often been the case, be influenced by any partizan spirit or partial feelings, he may be the means of doing considerable mischief. How much it behooves us then, to guard carefully both tongue and pen in this matter of criticism.

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Somebody is complaining because we publish religious articles in the *STUDENT*. We admit that it is not just the thing, but thought "Antipas" ought to have a fair show, and in regard to "studying on Sunday," we wanted to excuse our Seniors, and adopted the modest plan with which somebody wants to find fault. We never could do anything right.

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#### LITERATURE AS A PROFESSION.

The man who makes literature a paying profession possesses talents of pre-eminent quality. Sheffield says,

"Of all those arts in which the wise excel  
Nature's chief masterpiece is writing well."

And if writing well be the masterpiece, *summa ars artium*, then must he be a master mind who can follow literature as a profession, win honor by it, and make it a remunerative occupation. The primary qualifications necessary to become a successful *litterateur* are, in the first place, a retentive memory,—a memory that can

hold fast to the great stores of knowledge which he may glean from every department of literature, science and art,—and secondly, a keen imagination that can, so to speak, embody and vivify thought, and describe scenes and characters so that they will be brought before the mind of the reader as real and life-like. He must be so constituted that he can think and express his thoughts with exactness, and never be satisfied to let anything pass from his hands until he has most critically re-examined and revised it. Buffon and John Foster were sometimes wont to spend hours upon a single sentence before they could make it exactly please them, and Dickens says of himself that he has spent hours in searching for a single word with which to round off a period. It is such critical, even fastidious, taste as this that the successful writer must possess,—a taste that will be satisfied with nothing short of perfect elegance and exactness, both in sentiment and style. The author should have patience to revise, if necessary, and even rewrite his manuscripts again and again, until he has so thoroughly corrected or re-arranged the thoughts and language in them that they shall approach exactness in every particular. Especially must this be the case with the young author who has yet a reputation to build up. Besides a large amount of native talents he must possess in addition a patience and will that may enable him to plod slowly and never be satisfied to do anything that cannot be well done. The advice of Rogers to a young poet are words of counsel to every young aspirant to literary honors: "Aspire to go down to posterity as a diamond, rather than as a caldron of coals or a heap of bricks and mortar." Let him who would aspire to authorship consider always that a superficialist never rises above mediocrity in literature. A person may be a speedy writer, and yet be a successful author; but his success does not, as many young writers seem to suppose, depend upon the readiness with which he may be able to write, but upon the faith-