

might even have suffered from his poverty, had it not been for his appointment to the Consulship at Liverpool by his friend, President Pierce.

Lowell is independent, but not from his fine poetry and essays, however.

Whittier is a bachelor, and lives beneath his own humble New England roof on \$500 a year.

O. W. Holmes has not made \$25,000 from all that he has written. He is rich, but his wealth comes from his knowledge of medicine, and by inheritance.

J. G. Holland is generally thought to be an author who has amassed wealth from his writings. His books have sold as largely as those of any other American author. He may be worth \$200,000, but a large part of this he has obtained from his partnership in the Springfield *Republican*.

George William Curtis is dependent upon his salary from the Harpers. He never made \$5,000 a year with his pen.

Parton makes about five thousand a year from fugitive writings, and finds it hard to get on.

Bret Harte depends upon fugitive writing for subsistence, and never has a dollar ahead.

Gail Hamilton never received \$6,000 in her life for her work.

T. B. Aldrich, J. T. Trowbridge, R. H. Robinson, and T. W. Higginson, depend upon fugitive writing, and are anything but rich.

From these figures it will be seen that authors receive less pay for their work than any other class of professional men. I have enumerated above only some of our first-class writers—persons whose names are familiar in every household. If they receive such meagre compensation for their literary labors, what may a merely good writer expect? Almost nothing. In this country cheap literary work may be had by the bushel almost, for the printing of it. The country is flooded with merely good writers, and every year the number increases out of all propor-

tion to the population and general demand for their work. Some editors, and in particular those editing magazines, receive double the number of manuscripts that they were wont to two or three years ago. *Scribner's Monthly* received in 1871, 1,040 manuscripts; in 1875, 2,429; and in 1876, the large number of 3,209. With other first-class magazines the increase is nearly in a similar proportion. This one example will serve in general to illustrate the fact. Some allowance must be made for the increase in population and in the popular demand for reading matter; but no increase in population or demand would warrant such an increase in the number of authors as the above figures would seem to show. The Harpers now receive for their three periodicals, the *Magazine, Weekly, and Bazar*, from five to six thousand manuscripts yearly. Of these only a small portion receive a place in their columns, while the remainder find a grave in the waste basket. And yet, in the face of all these discouragements, and with small prospects of success, and for a mere pittance or nothing men and women will continue to write as though to be an author were the *summum bonum* of life. Young men and young women dream of authorship as the highest end of their ambitions and aspirations. Young B. A's., and B. S's., and all the rest of the B's. and D's., whatever else may be their profession, deem it fitting that they shall do something *pro bono publica* in the way of literature. Some times they succeed, but oftener they but add to the heap of refuse in some editor's waste basket. Does this profit a man? *Financially*, we have seen that it does not; and as to the *honor* which one may win by it, methinks there is quite as small incentive to work in this age and country where all "the young critics of the age, the clerks, apprentices, etc.," as Fielding would say, may in some respects become authors.

Let every young aspirant to literary renown ponder these facts before he enter