

PREFACE.

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THE author of the following Letters is not a learned, but a shrewd and thinking man. He became interesting to me as being the brother of a man whom I have long esteemed, and who, amidst the various hardships of his humble lot, found means, by reading and reflection, to cultivate remarkably the natural powers of his vigorous and ardent mind, and to court the Muse of his native country with very considerable success:—Mr John Johnstone, at Craighouse, in the parish of Hutton.

When Mr Walter Johnstone, some years ago, was going to Prince Edward Island, I gave him some assistance as the brother of my old friend, and as a person who, I thought, would likely do credit to my opinion of his natural sagacity and talent. I have been abundantly repaid for any friendship that I then shewed him, by his addressing his Letters to me, and acknowledging my attention to him in so grateful and flattering a manner.

My favourable opinion of his mental ability is, I think, fully justified by the specimen of it which is exhibited in these pages. There is a meagre "Description of Prince Edward Island" (which I have seen) published a few years ago at Bristol, and honoured with the approbation of the late Governor Edmund Fanning, Esq. with a Map of the Island prefixed. But the Description contained in these sheets is of a quite different kind, and surpasses any account which I have ever seen of that interesting part of the New World. It is, every thing considered, a meritorious production, as it discovers an accuracy of observation, an ingenuity and an acuteness of thought, and an unfettered flow of lively and forcible language, worthy of a more practised and renowned traveller. The objects of description are judiciously selected, and are often set before "the mind's eye" in a very graphic and picturesque manner.