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TO OUR READERS.

EVERY day furnishes additional evidence, that, in the Canadian Provinces, literature, and the more elegant refinements of the age, are forcing themselves into that position which the permanent prosperity of the country demands, and which their importance to its enlightened character warrants them to hold; and this, in spite of adverse circumstances, which, among a people less energetic in spirit, might well be supposed to quench, rather than to brighten, the Promethean fire. It is not too much to anticipate that the dawn which is now breaking is only the prelude to a glorious day. There is a strong desire to learn among the whole mass of the population—and this is, in fact, an appetite that “grows by what it feeds on.” The mind which has once tasted of the fount of knowledge, will not be satisfied with a sparing draught, for once having felt its power, nothing can repress the wish to dip deeper, and yet more deeply into the waters of the sacred spring.

It appears to us that, hitherto, the character of these Provinces has been sadly misunderstood, if not partially misrepresented. Until lately, it has been held as an incontrovertible axiom, that to attempt the publication of aught else than political journals was akin to madness—a needless waste alike of time and trouble. We do not seek to disguise the fact, that this belief was the offspring of the knowledge, that encouragement had been given with a sparing hand, or absolutely withheld from almost every glimpse of literary spirit that had broken in upon the gloom. But such a circumstance may be attributed to many reasonable causes. In a country which has scarcely emerged from the childhood of its existence, it would be unfair to look for any thing like a general appreciation of the benefits derivable from the free circulation of books and magazines. The vast majority of those inhabiting the colonies, are emigrants from other lands, who have left their home behind them, that they may command a wider field for the industry which is expected to raise them to comparative independence. Of these comparatively few could command leisure for the purposes of reading—and even if the inclination were wanting, it would be unjust to blame them—nature requiring that the material system should be first provided for, and the children, surrounding their parent's knee, however much he might desire to cultivate their minds, had first to be supplied with bread. With the diminution of the necessity for constant labour, the appetite for the refined pleasures of the soul, as a natural consequence, increase. With those who rise every morning to a day of bodily labour, or mental anxiety, it is scarcely reasonable to expect that reading should be much attended to; but even they can scarcely fail to become inoculated with the spirit of research, as one neighbour and then another begins to gather round him the rich stores of