

STEWART'S LITERARY QUARTERLY MAGAZINE.

DEVOTED TO

LIGHT AND ENTERTAINING LITERATURE.

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No. I.

INTRODUCTORY.

IN introducing the first number of this Magazine to the notice of the public, it is but meet we should explain the reasons which have prompted us to launch our little craft upon the world of literature:—

We have often wondered and regretted that New Brunswick, with a population of nearly 300,000, did not furnish one local literary periodical, monthly or quarterly, devoted to pleasant and instructive reading. We have depended too long on our "American Cousins" for reading of this kind, and trusted too little to our own energies and efforts. As a consequence, the rising generation has thrust into its hands many publications of a very questionable moral character, and not at all adapted for the instruction of British youth. In most of the cheap Yankee literature which finds its way into our Province, there is a deep morbid hatred evinced of everything British, and every opportunity taken to stigmatise our country and constitution, and exalt unduly everything American. This should not be. Wholesome nourishment should be provided for the impressible young mind, and every reasonable care taken to keep from it all that is noxious, or likely to prove injurious to its mental and moral development.

We are not to be understood as saying that all American publications are objectionable; far from it. We allude only to the cheap novels—the trashy weeklies and immoral monthlies—which, we regret to say, have too many purchasers among the young of our city. It is these we condemn, and would, if we could, prohibit altogether. There are many respectable and talented periodicals in the United States, which we are pleased to see imported, and read by our youth; but it is to be feared that this class of reading has fewer charms for the young than the pernicious cheap literature which panders to the worst passions of the human mind,

and undermines its virtue, by giving to vice a gloss and glitter that is false and fiendish.

The reading of "Dime Novels," and other books of that ilk, has wrought incalculable injury to many a bright and promising lad. Tales of bucanears, murderers and highwaymen: of "fast young men," and "gay and festive gamblers," deaden the moral sensibilities—familiarises the mind with crime and lead it on to moral ruin. It is true there are no highwaymen now with mask and pistol, demanding "your money or your life!" nor blood-thirsty pirates, compelling unfortunate victims to "walk the plank!"—but if our youth cannot find work of this kind to do there is something else for them: they can learn to drink and smoke and swear and swagger in the truest dime novel style, and become the heroes and haunters of bar and billiard rooms. That numbers have been ruined in the way indicated is beyond question, but how many, eternity only will reveal! It behoves everyone to use his influence to free his country from the vice breeding literature with which it is now flooded.

At least such is our belief, and, for the reasons stated we have resolved to use our influence and that of others, to help forward as far as we can this good work. Whether the means we have adopted are the best that could be devised to secure the objects sought, we must leave to time to demonstrate. Believing strongly in the old maxim, that "where there's a will there's a way" of doing good, we have resolved to make an effort for the promotion of the mental, as well as the material, interests of our youthful compeers. Our Magazine, whatever it may be otherwise, will have at least the merit of being wholly original, and the work chiefly of young men belonging to our own Province, who have spent, in study and self-improvement, the spare time that many, more favorably circumstanced