

the multitude of her votaries has reduced our literature. Now for the scheme of the philosophic Smith, to remedy all existing evils,—the unsparing conflagration of books. Heap up the pile higher and higher yet. Bring forth every record of past author or ancient learning,—every remnant of monkish lore,—of pagan poet and christian historian,—Chinese sage or Provencal minstrel,—the stereotypes of the Penny Magazine,—the quaint designs of Chaldean manuscripts:—higher yet! higher,—bring them from their musty repositories, from the shelves of the fashionable library, from the dark recesses of the monastery. Let the one flame consume them!—The lofty strains of the Children of Fame,—the sweet breath of Grecian and Roman minstrels,—the starry thoughts of our own immortals,—they are all a blackening heap of ashes! And now, hey for originality!—for the fresh morning of literature, the new dawning of the arts,—for the bursting into life of the bright fountains of inspiration,—the matin song of resuscitated nature.

By removing (in accordance with this scheme) the works of all past authors, we destroy at a blow all the chains that weighed so heavily on the wings of genius, and the authors of the present day may commence a new era, embodying all their thoughts in the unlaboured and natural forms that first suggest themselves, in the unadulterated purity of the first conception. The old landmarks have been removed. The gleam of the ancient beacons is extinguished, and we are to embark on a new and untried ocean, untroubled or perplexed by the old charts that so long guided the wanderers over its now trackless bosom.—The crowns that for ages have been twined round the peaks of Parnassus and Olympus, are rent from their brows, and our children shall point out some equally fair and glowing spots of earth, as the future head-quarters of genius,—the destined source of the yet unborn founts of inspiration; and on us, mayhap, and our efforts, shall future generations breathe the same language of intense and impassioned admiration that we and our cotemporaries freely lavish on the memories of the unforgotten departed; and far away in the depths of untold time, the philosophic “Smith,” of that distant period, may be found gravely propounding the necessity of adopting a scheme like the present, for the remedy of similar evils.

Years, long years must elapse, before a Colony, situated like Canada, can cause her voice to be heard in the literary world. She can offer but little inducement to the wise and learned of her glorious mother to forsake the classic fields of home for a sojourn in her wild forests; and the materials of which her own native and acquired population is composed, render it unlikely that many of her hardy children will be clothed with the bright mantle of literary inspiration. We have already glanced at the natural effect of the life of a struggling new country, endeavouring to support a thrifty and industrious population, and warmly devoted to the “*Querenda pecunia prima est*,” on the cultivation or development of learning or the arts. As soon would we suppose such a people would devote time or attention to matters not immediately affecting their pecuniary or political prospects, as that the chorus of the soft-eyed muses would desert the mossy vales of Tempe, or the fair slopes of Olympus, for a permanent residence in the bustle and turmoil of the Royal Exchange, or the pleasant retirement of Chesham or Smithfield.

But there are other causes, apart from the ordinary avocations of the people, which materially affect the literary prospects of these Colonies. The very nature and character of the land itself, its past history, its former inhabitants, all conspire against its literary success. Almost every one of the European or Eastern nations, that has furnished a proportion to the general array of authors, has contained within itself the ordinary materials for the formation of a national literature. Tradition, legend, tale, and song, have sent down from the floating shadows of the past, rich and exhaustless stores of mingled fact and fiction, from which the successive writers of ages could draw, as from a vast historic reservoir, and weave from their sparkling fragments the rich chaplets of their own creative and combining powers. Strongly tinged with the spirit of its early superstitions is the literature of every land, with the peculiar physical characteristics of its vales and mountains, and above all, with the influence which early events exercised over the minds and destinies of its first inhabitants. The achievements of unforgotten heroes, almost incredible and impossible as they seem to modern eyes, magnified through the mists and vapours of past centuries; the struggles for