

the three branches of our Constitution. I would particularly insist upon the propriety of having a Gallery; to which Shakspeare himself has addressed the chief part of his wit and humour. Poets always depend much on that part of the house, for the expression of natural feeling and unbiassed judgment; and the applause of the Gods has ever been the first object of their vows, and the best omen of future celebrity and support. While our Theatres shall continue to be conducted upon this enlarged and liberal plan, they will surely support and encourage rational freedom; and native genius, old plays and old prices will still prevail over the partial rage for foreign novelties and extravagance. It has been well remarked by Dr. Aiken, speaking of Shakspeare, that the characteristic English manliness of thought has been greatly indebted to him for its preservation, amid prevailing luxury and fashionable frivolity. Were it possible, by means of a well regulated English Theatre, to draw some of the French Canadians to the representation of some of his best pieces, the effects would doubtless be salutary, by tending to impart those feelings so much in unison with British hearts. To encourage their attendance, and to promote those beneficial consequences, I would recommend that considerable attention should be bestowed on procuring scenery appropriate and striking. This will not appear insignificant or frivolous, if we once reflect, that the first objects of Canadian imitation have been our dress and external behaviour. It would certainly tend to the same laudable purpose, if the Music and occasional Songs between the Acts, were suited to the subjects and sentiments of the Play; and, besides, this would in some measure supply the place of the ancient chorus, the entire neglect of which has been much regretted by many lovers of the Drama. It is almost unnecessary here to remark, that striking scenery, and appropriate music, would do much to render an English Play intelligible, even to people whose knowledge of the language were very imperfect.

It is now proper to make a few observations respecting the probable influence of a well regulated English Theatre, upon knowledge in Montreal. In the present low state of education among the inhabitants of all descriptions here, every institution that would have the least tendency to diffuse instruction, ought surely to be encouraged. Whenever we mention, in terms of approbation, the establishment or encouragement of a Theatre, in this place, we are apt to be interrupted with a remark, that we have more need of a College, or of additional Schools. This I would readily grant; but then we must always conform our conduct to existing circumstances, and ought to be satisfied for the present, if we could obtain, without any extraordinary effort, what may, in some degree, be used as a means of instruction, while it has the pleasing form of amusement. Besides, if the partial spreading of a particular kind of knowledge be effected by a well regulated Theatre, such an establishment would only be the forerunner of others, for the general cultivation of all the Arts and Sciences.