

TO THE INTELLIGENT READER.

Perhaps there is no branch of literature with which the Canadian mind is less acquainted than poetry; and it is not without a good deal of self-sacrifice that an author can venture to publish any work, however small. Perhaps this is the case with all new countries—that the finest of arts should be cultivated last, as every author who has appeared in public has had to lament of the apathy of the public mind in this direction.

The writer can candidly say that from no vanity to become an author has this work its appearance in public. The contents were written at different times, in various places, as the circumstances inspired the author's mind, without the slightest view of ever appearing in a book; but my health having failed very seriously some months since, I was obliged to resign my labors in preaching the Gospel, and resort to the pen as the only alternate means to support my family. The amazing success which my smaller works have met with, has given me confidence to publish these poems that have been accidentally kept from the fate of a great number of others that I consigned to oblivion, though many possessing equal, if not superior merit, to these that have happened to have a different fate. Whether the eye and heart of a poet would accredit them to be the pure production of the muse or not, the author does not pretend to determine; but this the writer may say, that from childhood some wonderfully strange influence would involuntarily take possession of the intellect and the heart, and carry them away into mental and emotion regions that I cannot account for, except it be attributed to some cause of such a nature. But whether these productions possess the true nature of poetry or not, they are the unaffected emotions of a mind and heart always moved by the nature of the subject that he has in hand, without any regard to the things themselves being meritorious or otherwise.