

## OUR TABLE.

ARMOUR AND RAMSAY'S LITERARY NEWS-LETTER,  
AND GENERAL RECORD OF BRITISH LITERATURE.  
NOS. I.—IV.

PLACED, as we are in this Colony, at so great a distance from the fountain head, whence issue the streams of British literature, it cannot be expected that more than a small portion of its waters—the mere spray, as it were—should ever reach us; and to this “consummation so devoutly to be” regretted, the comparatively low ebb of the literary taste of the Province, has undoubtedly contributed in no small degree. In this respect, the last few years, we are happy to say, have witnessed a rapid improvement. We venture not to determine whether an increased supply of, or increased demand for, such wares as these, gave the first impetus to this advance; but many of our readers must have remarked the manner in which they have acted and reacted upon each other; the increased demand producing a further supply, and this fresh supply, again, giving a renewed impulse to the demand.

Even yet, however, not a title of the teeming productions of the British press can be imported by any sane bookseller, and works have thus often reached a third or fourth edition in England, almost before they were even heard of here. To this disagreeable state of things, the appearance of the serial, named at the head of this notice, has put a complete end. In the four numbers now before us, a list is given of all the works published in Great Britain during the first half of the present year, amounting altogether to nearly twelve hundred. “Lector in search of a Book,” has not now, as formerly, to undergo, in pursuit of a work on any particular subject, as many adventures as might have served Mrs. Hannah More’s “Cæcilia.” He has but to run his eye over this list, select the work that answers him best, and send the title to any bookseller; in a few weeks (when Henson’s Aerial Machine, or Cunningham’s Balloon plies regularly between London and Canada, we suppose we might say, in a few days) the book lies on his library table. Without the very circulation of the works themselves, no better mode could be devised of keeping the Canadian public *au courant* of the literature of the day. We had designed to have no-

ticed a few of the books in this list which have attracted most attention in the literary circles of England, but intractable space forbids this for the present.

The second part of the News-Letter contains a catalogue of works lately imported by the publishers, and, from its extent and variety, will prove very useful to intending purchasers.

The third part announces the publication, during each current month, of the consecutive portions of these various cheap Colonial editions published by Messrs. Armour & Ramsay, and to most of which we have previously referred. Murray’s “Colonial Library” in particular, has won our repeated commendation; and each new issue has confirmed the favourable opinion expressed. Mr. Murray, the veteran publisher, carries out vigorously his announced intention of furnishing a series of excellent works at a cheap rate, and we trust that his exertions towards the improvement of our Colonial literature, will not pass unrewarded.

One of the Colonial editions mentioned under this head, however, we have not previously noticed, we mean the National Atlas, now publishing in monthly parts. The plates, which have been executed by Messrs. Johnston of Edinburgh, may be considered as the finest specimens of map-engraving extant, whilst the minute accuracy of the geographical details, is fully worthy of this beautiful mechanical execution. As to the merits of the descriptive letter-press, the warm recommendation of Sir David Brewster is a sufficient guarantee of its excellence. We must specially advert to the maps of “Physical Geography,” which contain, within the compass of a single plate, more information than is often to be obtained, by wading through many of the huge quartos which profess to treat of this subject.

The fourth and concluding part of this useful publication, contains a synopsis of the literary *ou dits* of the day, gathered from various trustworthy sources. Those who expect nothing more in this little serial than a dry catalogue of books, will find themselves most agreeably disappointed by this feature; for the selections given will afford them, we are certain, much interest and amusement.