

literature and science. There would be no necessity for a library like this, if there were not readers of the works that it contains; and unless it was absolutely necessary to gratify the public taste, it would be absurd and ridiculous for any man of sense to dream for a moment of its establishment. I regret that I was not one of those who first conceived this happy idea; but I rejoice that it has been acted upon, and I congratulate you on the success that it has hitherto obtained, and which justifies our most sanguine hopes for the future.

The two objects that I have mentioned, and the attainment of which this institution will greatly promote, are not the only good effects that it will produce. I could enumerate many more, but the limits of this discourse will not permit me to expatiate upon them. I shall, therefore, confine myself to those to which I have already adverted. I hope I shall be able to prove to you that the advancement of our literature absolutely requires that we should cease to look up so exclusively as we have hitherto done to the literature of Great Britain, as the model of our own, and that a more intimate acquaintance with that of other countries will not only enlarge our ideas, but as I shall undertake to show you, will even preserve the purity of our language. It hardly requires an argument to prove that this institution will raise our intellectual reputation, at least among those who might receive their impressions from the misrepresentations of foreign travellers. As to men of real knowledge and sound judgment, they are not to be worked upon by the ephemeral productions of those writers; availing themselves of the benefits which this library offers to them, they will see nothing in it but what might naturally have been expected from the progress of mental improvement in our country.

When I speak of misrepresentations of foreign travellers, I do not mean to advert to those who, conscientiously attached to the constitution and government of their country, view our republican institutions with a prejudiced eye, and represent them in a false light to their countrymen; these have their excuse in the *amor patriæ*, an honourable feeling, in which we do not less indulge than other nations; much less shall I take notice of those, who, laying hold of some national peculiarities differing from those to which they have been