

sufficient strength and maturity, needs a certain nursing. Such "nursing" must not be confounded with direct patronage, whose influence is in the main destructive of healthy growth. What is requisite is a certain increased ease of circumstance—less that is antagonistic, more that is appreciative, an increased culture, a receptive public. Yet in a sense it is also true that the artist must create his public. As with most things in the range of human experience, the solution lies in a paradox—as there can be no creative art until there is a public that can understand, so there can be no understanding public until individual creative effort has awakened in the public the power of appreciation.

We stand in the parting of the ways. The young scion of New Zealand national life has begun to awake to a knowledge of itself. Already, and for some time past, the self-consciousness of the nation has asserted itself in the political sphere. Whatever may be thought of the legislative activity of New Zealand, whether its tendencies be for good or for ill, it interests us here as a sign which marks a stage in a nation's independent life. The sap has risen in the tree. We are even in a measure past that stage; the tree has begun to put forth leaves. New Zealand has shown through her sons that the power of the pen is also hers. But as yet the literary instinct has been content to express

itself through the forms of the Old World, to appeal to a distant public. Is there to be flower, is there to be fruit? The conditions are favourable, material there is in abundance; have we also the men?

If the question is to be answered as we wish, two things are necessary: a public must be educated to an appreciation of the possibilities before a national literature; a field must be opened in which those who will create a national school of literature may exercise their powers. Granted that the ideal is distant, granted that as yet only a short first step can be taken upon a path which leads through countless difficulties to a goal which still recedes, yet no steep is inaccessible to those who keep their glance alternately upon each forward step and on the summit peak, and wisely overlook what lies between. Let us be content then with a first step upon the road; let us plant that step surely and firmly, leaving each difficulty to be surmounted when it is reached.

THE NEW ZEALAND ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE, if it be true to its name, if it be truly New Zealand in matter and in manner, if it serve to focus all that there is of literary power in this colony, is the first step upon the road. There is before such a Magazine a mission and a responsibility. It goes forth with good omens of success. May those omens be fulfilled!

EDITORIAL NOTE.

WE take this opportunity of thanking the many friends who have so kindly undertaken to assist us by contributions and subscriptions in our endeavour to found a truly Colonial Magazine. More especially do we feel ourselves indebted to the New Zealand Natives' Association and the New Zealand Literary and Historical Association for their promises of support and co-operation. We venture to think that this initial number, despite imperfections and errors—for which we now apologise—will still be found to contain the promise of such a standard as shall be satisfactory to those who believe in the possibilities of a long

and successful life for a New Zealand Illustrated Magazine.

As our desire is to encourage Colonial Literature and Art, we shall be pleased to give the most earnest and careful consideration to signed contributions which in any way are likely to be of general interest to our readers. We hope that many of our old Colonists who are so well able to furnish us with contributions dealing with the "days of yore," will help us in this connection.

And finally, we have to ask the reading public to favour us with a share of that support which they so readily give to the Magazines of the Old World.