

partments of literature, and that fictitious literature exerts a powerful influence on the morals and taste of a nation."

If this powerful influence was exerted on the side of morality and truth, we would rejoice; but that this powerful influence created by the study of the fictitious works extant, is leading a vast portion of society into vice, we have no doubt; these works are filled with wild legends of by-gone ages, heroic exploits of former times, supernatural events, relating to witches, wizards, and hobgoblins, and vagaries of the imagination in general.

A faint idea may be gained of the extent of fictitious literature now in circulation, by reference to Mr. Mudie's Library of London, which contained in 1858, 215,054 volumes, 87,480 of which were devoted to fiction.

And in the Athenæum Library, of Providence, United States, consisting of 19,300 volumes, nearly one half (9214 volumes) are devoted to fiction.

The love and taste for fiction is on the increase—all classes of the reading portion of society are drifting into its use, and the lowest class of fictitious literature is greedily sought after and read with delight, it is, in many families, the Bible of the first day of the week, and the text-book of the other six.

It must require minds exalted above moral infirmities to digest the romantic trash that now floods many of the parlors and libraries of the day.

It is said that one age leaves its impress upon another; and it may be, that the Grecian and Roman age, of fabulistic literature, has left its impress upon the nineteenth century of the Christian era. And if we are to go on, year after year, publishing romantic trash, by thousands of volumes per annum, until the end of the present century, what a flood of forgeries and lies will be transmitted to the next century.

Libraries of Useful Books.

Should be found in every community where a few families are gathered together.

It is admitted that "Knowledge is power," whether wielded right or wrong. That all knowledge should be of the right kind, and used in a proper manner, is all-important. To speak of procuring an enlightened education, and proper knowledge of mankind and things, in these times, without the aid of good books, is simply to talk nonsense.

Then to procure good books and cultivate a habit of reading them, is the bounden duty of every good citizen of the world.

The establishment of libraries, connected with communities and schools, are of comparatively modern date; and their influence upon society is be-

ing generally felt. Among the vast number of works issued, many are of a high order, while many others are entirely unfit for use; but justly fit to be committed to the *index expurgatorius*.

Notwithstanding the great number of excellent works extant, and annually being issued from the press, there is a great dearth of books among the mass of society. We often wonder how it is, that the mass of Provincial society is so intelligent, when we consider the great want of books that generally exists. However, we account for much of it, on the borrowing principle, and on the conversational powers and unwillingness to communicate, orally or by reading, that generally prevails.