

or we learn by example to avoid the snares and elude the arts displayed to us of seduction. Romance is then in your opinion the best school of virtue; and fiction's imaginary characters the fittest for imitation in real life. Alas! were those the deepest read in novels to speak their minds fairly on the subject; they would own that this species of reading was what proved their virtue's earliest bane, and the final ruin of their morals. The highly coloured scenes of sensual enjoyment, with which such works abound; and which form indeed the principal attractive to all such noxious publications, were what inspired their first relish for criminal delight; gradually undermining, and at length wholly upsetting their native innocence. Men of pleasure, skilled in the arts of seduction, always consider her as their easiest prey, whom they observe most fond of reading novels. So that it is proved by daily experience that these imaginary descriptions, instead of putting us on our guard against the snares of vice, only lay us more open to all its captivating and demoralizing influence when really turned against us.

The great misfortune is that such dangerous works, considering the general relish for them, are of such easy, and, to an infinite degree, variable manufacture. The regions of fancy are unlimited; and the scenery and objects they afford appear and vanish at the call and caprice of their beholders. Hence we find men and women, young and old, beating up for fame in this, if I may call it, literary department. And sure it is, their insect tribes now flutter in their May.

What has greatly contributed of late to this general perversion of taste, is the control, which our metropolitan publishers have acquired by the nature of their business over the productions of genius; which, without the previous sanction of the trade, that never considers them in any other light than as a ready money making concern to some of its speculating members; can never, when edited at the author's private cost, obtain that run, which every ignorant bookseller, assisted by his brethren, can give for a time to the most worthless performance. Thus Midas is made the judge of Apollo's lays, and you may laugh as you will at his stupid decision; and point in derision at his projecting ears; while he regardless of every thing else, contemplates in ecstasy his growing treasure.

It is this well known advantage, which publishers possess, of giving to the works they have a personal interest in disposing of, a wide and ready circulation, that makes most authors apply to them; often yielding them up, from a thirst after fame; the whole golden fruit of their learned labours. Many too are compelled to submit their compositions to such incompetent judges, from their want of the means of publishing for themselves; and to wait with anxiety their approval, more from a wish to gain celebrity, which they cannot, but through these acquire, than from the meanly interested hope of some compensation for their trouble, and the ceding of their right to the profits accruing from their writings in behalf of the selfishly condescending and interested purchaser.

Such unluckily are at present the only porters of Parnassus; who alone have the power of admitting or rejecting whom they please, and he must be a strong or subtle genius indeed, who can force or win his way to the celebrated mount without their permission. Of all those, however, whom they think proper to let pass; they omit not trumpeting forth the names in a manner quite astounding; though their hopeful favorites almost all, in their vain attempts to climb the slippery steep, have sunk and disappeared, before the echo of their praise had ceased yielding to her promoters the monotony of their responses.

How much is wanted at present, when only a *Mevins* or a *Davius* can look any where for patronage; such a club of truly learned, disinterested and honorable critics, as flourished in the beginning of the last century! Such alone are fit to take charge of the sacred portals! to distinguish aspiring merit, and encourage her onward steps: to reject all vain and worthless pretenders to renown; and direct those subordinate menials, who now usurp their superintending functions, whom they are to admit, and whom to exclude. Thus again might we soon hope to see appearing works that would do honour to the human genius, and benefit mankind.

THE FOLLOWING LINES ARE ADDRESSED TO OUR POETICAL ROMANCERS

PINDUS ENCHANTED.

✕  
O rise at last some classic genius bright,  
And cheer the haunts of Pindus with his blaze!  
For all in gloom is wrapt the tuneful height;  
Save where amid the thick incumbent haze  
Some flaring meteor flitting mocks the gaze;  
And dazzled leaves in deeper seeming night;  
Though steep the path and intricate the maze,  
That to the summit guide th' aspiring wight;  
By few successful tread in noonday's clearest light.

No more harmonious from the lofty steep  
Is pour'd the stream of melody divine;  
That all in rapt'rous ecstasy could keep  
The list'ning throng; or tempt the strain to join.  
Hence all are fled, with Phœbus and the Nine  
Th' immortal band, th' enchantment dark to shun.  
And now monotonous in northern whine  
Three minstrels chaunt their endless ditties sung;  
And with their rustic tales our ears incessant stun

For greed of pelf they ply their rhyming skill;  
And tax each passenger, who stops to hear.  
Into the mind leved maxims they instil;  
And pour th' immoral fiction on the ear;  
Making to rash impression'd youth appear  
As virtue vice, inuring forms portray'd;  
While at their eager dupes they secret sneer;  
And count well pleas'd their earnings ready paid  
For passing glimpse allow'd of wanton feats display'd.

For wanton still, and graceless feats they choose  
Of barb'rous Goth, or Infidel, their theme:  
Not to instruct their audience, but amuse,  
Do they pretend, with idle fancy's dream  
The same the subject, varying but the scheme;  
Some love-sick maid and deep enamour'd swain.  
Struggling through obstacles their bliss supreme,  
The free enjoyment each of each to gain;  
And, right or wrong, at last their object to attain.

Her right, ally'd legitimate, to hold  
The subject mount, as erst in Gothic time,  
These dullness sent, t' assert; her champions hold;  
And of her breeding bands the leaders prime;  
Amid her sheltering fogs the cliff sublime  
They scan secure no Twickenham bard was there,  
Back with his sounding scourge these elves of rhyme  
To drive discomfited; nor pitying spare  
The vain, though sordid crew; to perch so high who dare.

Nor jealous less, and envious found, than vain  
These ever with each other ill accord.  
Not friendship, honor, virtue; only gain  
Can pleasure to their grov'ling minds afford.

The mite, that's added to their neighbor's hoard,  
They grudging, deem deducted from their own  
Hence, each abhorring, and by each abhor'd,  
In common cause though join'd, they're rivals grown;  
And but agree to drag th' outstripping partner down

Yet, high aloft though genius now reclin'd  
In slumbering France, no vigil seems to keep;  
Let such beyond the murky range, assign'd  
To storied goblin ne'er advent'rous creep.  
Above their sphere should they presuming peep:  
And with their tattle rouse th' indignant too,  
With giant-jerk hurl'd down the slippery steep,  
They'd soon their vain pretensions all forego,  
Lost in oblivion's gulf, so deep that yawns below

Nor let their fellows perk so high their ears,  
And bray so loud, though of the Zebra breed,  
Wild and intractable, that loudly jeers,  
And rocks with nimble hoof the hunter's speed  
Should they profaning graze the Delian mead;  
Or drink polluting the Pierian spring;  
From tighten'd bow with whizzing arrow freed,  
There are, th' insulting herd who straight can bring  
Flat to the ground, and forth the loathsome quarry fling

O, hasten back, ye bright æthereal choir,  
By all the wise and good your wish'd return  
Ye, who have tun'd your strains to Phœbus' lyre:  
And for his bays could filthy lucre spurn!  
With virtue's purest glow whose bosoms burn;  
Whose lays, divinely sweet, her love inspire;  
Cheering our weary steps on life's journey:  
And, while they warn us from th' absorbing mire  
Of vice, unceasing bid to deeds of worth aspire.

Ye British bards, admitted 'mong the train  
Of Phœbus, O return, to grace your Isle  
Nor let, to fame these new pretenders vain.  
From virtue's path our heedless youth beguile  
Bid dullness at her triumphs cease to smile,  
Hersons your vacant seat usurping so:  
And idle folly with her fictions vile,  
Her dreams absurd, and vacant laugh forego!  
Your stern rebuke would spare a world of vice & woe

Or is it, say, by rigid fate ordain'd  
That Britain henceforth downward must decline  
From all her learning's height, meridian gain'd;  
And cease the wonder of the world to shine?  
Alas! such dire misfortune, Rome, was thine:  
Down reeling from thy noontide glory's sphere,  
Thou all thy blazing honors did'st resign  
To dismal night; and desolation drear  
Forbade thy prostrate might her laurel'd head to rear

ON OUR PREFERRING ALWAYS THE FUTURE TO THE PRESENT.

✕  
Spatio broi  
Spem longam recesses Dum loquimur fugerit invida.  
Ætas; carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero,  
Hor. Ode u. lib. I

Strike off immoderate hope from a life so short, Even  
while we speak, the moment envious of our bliss is fled.  
Seize then the present, nor ever trust in the smallest de-  
gree to the future.

To live long is the general wish of mankind; and if but happy, to live indeed for ever. Not one courts death but in the hope either of being freed from some misery he endures, or of attaining to some good which he has set his heart upon. This wish for life betrays itself in our constant enquiries concerning one another's health; in the satisfaction we express at hearing our friends are well; in our congratulations on the subject, and wishes that they may long continue so; and, above all, in the sacrifices we make, when sick, in order to bring about a recovery. It then appears that there is nothing on earth which we would not part with, in order to effect a cure, and thereby to prolong our existence.

Yet, notwithstanding all this value which we set on life, we seldom prize much that portion of it, which we actually enjoy; but are always parting after the future. The present not only never satisfies, but, on the contrary, tires and disgusts us.—We are always wishing it past, from our impatience to get at what is yet to come. Can any thing in the eye of reason be so inconsistent and unwise, as