

INTRODUCTION.

The pleasures and advantages of Literature and Science have been often and eloquently set forth, even from the days of Aristotle—(himself the famous ancient Colossus of both Literature and Science)—down to the times of our own Verulam, the no less famous modern Colossus, who—(combining the fascinating familiarity of Socrates with more than the dignity of Plato)—boldly exposed the barren sophistry of the schoolmen, and pointed out the only true methods of investigation and reasoning, both in science and philosophy. Since that glorious era many a rare and able pen has felt a pride in extolling the pleasures and advantages of Literature and Science; and not only so, but many have also taken the most effectual means of disseminating and extending the opportunities of enjoying those pleasures to all sections of the community, by the establishment of public Libraries.

Books are the universal exponents of all that is great and good. If it be objected that they are also the means made use of by wicked and designing men to sap the religious and moral foundations of society, we may answer—that this objection can only apply to the fleeting and ephemeral literature of the periodical press, and the trashy novels which maintain but a short-lived existence even among the ignorant and degraded—and has no reference to those works which compose the entire bulk of either public or private Libraries. Those