

way, all the better because they were not introduced too frequently. We have 'made an effort' to recal these characters, and as the book comes up once more before us, we are willing to award to the author a degree of power in the execution of his story which would have been well employed in a better service. It is at best but a delineation of the good and evil passions of our nature, the evil predominating and disgusting us in their details. It, however, did more for its author's repute, to our thinking, than did that voluminous mass of sameness and extravagance—'David Copperfield,' pronounced by many critics to be his best, and the more interesting because it was a correct autobiography of Dickens himself. This statement may or may not be correct; we have heard it brought forward with equal assurance at the appearance of every work of his, and as he could not have been at once an ill-treated schoolboy, a charity child, and an ill-used stepson, with aunt and other attached friends to take care of him, we must reject the truth of the latter assertion as well as the preceding ones, and believe that the author draws more upon his own imagination than his matter of fact admirers imagine him to do. We are indeed trenching upon untried ground, when we presume to pass such disapproval upon Davy Copperfield. Before we read it, except in detached portions, we heard it lauded by a multitude, many in their extravagant praise going so far as to envy any one who had such a pleasure in store as the perusal of it. But we were not so sanguine, we were slightly acquainted with it from reading snatches here and there in some chance newspaper, and were not anxious to attempt the task. But in an idle week, far away in the country, amid bright scenery of land and water, where occupations were few and books at a premium, we encountered David Copperfield 'complete in one volume,' as the booksellers say, and thought it a good opportunity to begin a task long contemplated. It was finished at last, but now when a few more years have shewn how impatient even trifles can make us, we wonder at the courage that enabled us to read from beginning to end. Had there been a dozen chapters instead of the ponderous Alexandrine mass through which we waded, the book would have been good, but a dozen chapters would have embodied the whole pith and merit of the story. David's mere personal history is interesting and well told, a few of the characters he encounters are eccentric and amusing, but the majority of them—Heep, Dartle, Micawber, and others, are blots and obstructions to the work. We never were so tired of any book that came within our reach, and even now when we recal the weary way in which we spent that long bright summer day in one of the loveliest portions of Nova Scotia, poring over a book wherein we were eager to find something to admire, we are almost ready to retract what we have written in favour of its author, so strong is the recollection even of the ennui we experienced. We care not for the measure of indignation we shall meet for holding such opinions. They are, however, the honest convictions of an unprejudiced mind, and we are only