

worry him for the universe; but some things you can't help, and this, in the midst of all my happiness, makes me miserable.

No. XXVIII.

LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR.

GENTLE READER—

I cannot bring myself to pay so poor a compliment to your taste, or my own performance, as to entertain a doubt that you had no sooner taken up this book, than you became so interested in it, as not to lay it down until you had read it through; nor am I less assured that you felt great regret that there was not more of it. Understanding, tolerably well, the working of your mind, from a long study of the operations of my own, I venture to anticipate a very natural question you will ask, as soon as you have perused it, namely, "whether the author had any other object in view, in writing it, than merely the amusement of a leisure hour," and hasten to gratify your curiosity, by assuring you that I was most undoubtedly actuated by another, and, as you will presently see, a better motive.

Had you had an opportunity of lifting the anonymous veil under which my diffidence finds a shelter, and circumstances had permitted me to have the honour and pleasure of your acquaintance, during my recent visit to Europe, you would have found that, although I am one of the merriest fellows of my age, to be found in any country, yet I am a great approver of the old maxim, of being "merry and wise," being, after my own fashion, a sort of laughing philosopher,