

of description. And although there are some to whom this part of the writings of this author has been objectionable; yet it cannot be denied that publications of this description require a conceptive faculty, and a force of genius beyond any other kind. In the details of history, and in the description of natural phenomena, we can see and admire the deep research, and correctness of the writer, or the elegant taste of the scholar; but these are tied down to plain matter of fact accounts beyond which they cannot proceed. In this way their scope is circumscribed, and if they pass the bounds they incur the charge of inaccuracy, perhaps subject themselves to the imputation of ridicule. With the poet or novelist however who passes this boundary, the case is otherwise. He rises into the airy regions of imagination; rises as it were above the occurrences of life; and removes from the scenes and subjects of this globe, embodying in his descriptions another world, and peopling it with creatures of his own imagination endowed with feelings and faculties which were never "dreamt of in our philosophy." Both the authors above alluded to have succeeded in this kind of writing in an eminent degree. They have not only distinctly and minutely detailed the actions, and described the qualities of these creatures of their own imagination, but they have interwoven them in "the subject matter" of their writings, connected them with their details, and made them ministering agents to the developement of the plots of their stories.

The captious critic may blame, and the "surly cynic" may sneer at the introduction of this MACHINERY—this "*seria mixta cum joci*"—this combination of accounts of supernatural beings, historical details, and delineations of characters who have been. But even this has its use. The times are now past and gone when the nursery tales of Hobgoblins operated influentially on the mind through life. The age of superstition has vanished from the land, and the prevalence of Christianity united with the mental improvement consequent on the diffusion of education, precludes all dread that too much credence will be given to supernatural descriptions. The happy infusion of them, therefore, which pervaded some of the former writings of this author can only have the effect of adding to the amusement they afford, and of exciting a desire to peruse them among readers who perhaps would not otherwise do so. Let it also be kept in mind that in attending to the accuracy of his details he describes his characters as they really were; he not only makes them speak the language of the times they lived in, but while stating the events of these times, he also shows to what causes the living characters of these days ascribed those events.

In the numerous productions which are universally ascribed to the pen of this justly celebrated author we find some discriminating features which decidedly mark their difference from the writings of other Novelists. The scenes he describes are laid in some certain part of the country. The events refer to particular periods of time, and he faithfully details the manners and customs of the inhabitants of those parts at that era. Hence they may be justly ranked in that class denominated Historical Novels. And although he was not the first who introduced this kind of writing, his labours have much increased and materially enriched our stock of them; and the marked approbation