

ardens"—there behold the Literary Artists! Inspiration sits throned upon their brows—for it must sit there, or they will lose their four dollars a week, to pay their board, which they draw for the authorship of the "Greatest Romances of the age." And well do they deserve their high emolument! Look at this manuscript. It is a translation of "*Les Mystères de Paris*;" and "Sir Walter Murph"—a *Yorkshire* knight, has just been translated into Murphy! "Ex uno disce omnes." We look no further.

We should not after this be surprised to see the scene among the clerks of "*Jacques Ferrand*," in which M. Chalomet is especially facetious, transfigured into a lively dissertation on Calomet and Jalop!

So—say we with hearty good will—the distinguished Literary Artists are worthy of their hire—of their share of the profits. It is low—*pars minima*—infinitesimally small, no doubt—but they are low also, they are "the smallest of all possible small beer." But now for the question. What do these things profit the public? The mighty public—the much be-praised—much be-thanked—much be-footed public! "Behold! O, ungenerous and thankless public," cry out Dickens and James, Marryat, Lever and Lover, Bulwer, Ainsworth, Alison and W. Israeli, "We have toiled for ye, and ye have not paid. We have piped unto you, and you have not danced—we have mourned unto ye, and ye have not wept! It is not fair that our brains should be your slaves. They were meant to be your masters." Behold on the other hand who cry, "You have pampered yourselves on the intelligence of the land. You have made your brains the tools of a trade—the tools must be used! Besides this, there is our dear Public to be taken into account. Long have you locked up the fountains of public knowledge. Seats, and coteries, and circles, alone you would have allowed to drink from the pure fountains of Literature—open them to all—"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" So cry the respondents. The reply is not wanting. In all human society there must be classes, distinctions, ranks; some must be rich, some must be poor. In most wheat fields grow up the tares—with all wheat there is chaff which must be winnowed away. So in Literature. Now the rich classes have the means of a careful education—a thorough education. One that not only instills principles, but gives the fine faculty of taste—the power of discerning between good and bad—between beauty and deformity. So, though the dross of Literature is, for them, as for all who read, mingled with the ore—the chaff blended with the wheat—they have the faculty, the acquired power, of discernment, which acts the part of the winnow-

ing machine—which removes the unclean from the clean—the dross from the ore—the chaff from the wheat.

But Cheap Literature arrays itself in the specious guise of a public benefactor. It runs into the peasant's cot—the labourer's hut—and serves in hours of leisure with some to occupy the time. But here there is almost universally to be found only such an education, as without any moral aim—without instilling any principles of religion, or rules of civil conduct, merely aims at teaching, and that barely too—to read and write. With such, need we say, that it is not possible there should be any evidences of taste—any power of discerning between beauty and deformity? Such being the case, it is not hard to imagine labourers and farmers going to the cheap book-stores. And what does the dealer? Why he finds that among the educated classes—the standard works of authors of known reputation find a ready sale. But such works as those of "Henry William Herbert," "John H. Manceur," and "Professor J. H. Ingraham," are rather a drug in the market. So he reads some of the newspaper pulls on the back of them, and effects a sale. These works, and only these—trash that no press of any respectability should ever have put forth—then become the staple of the intellectual food of the poor. We are aware that it is not so in Scotland or England—there the cheap publications are not issued by every twopenny half-penny newspaper press. They are got out by respectable dealers—they are issued under the surveillance of literary and scientific men—and whatever may be their prevailing tone, Liberalism or Conservatism, they are works which are calculated to improve and to ameliorate. But look at our free and enlightened neighbours. Behold their cheap publication presses groaning far and wide throughout the land. It is true, they reprint the best English publications. But, for the most part, in the hurry of competition, they get them out in such wretched style that they are literally not readable.

We except from this sweeping censure, the Harper Brothers, Carey and Hart of Philadelphia, and latterly the New World Office. But the rest are Vandals of the worst description—Goths, Visigoths—they overrun everything with barbarous mistakes. Their typography is a blur, their ink, smut—their compositors appear to have stood on their heads—and they themselves are cheats—villainous cheats of the worst kind! Witness the publication of the first part of "*Tom Burke of Ours*," as an entire and complete work! Then what do they issue?—Herbert's—Manceur's—Ingraham's, mawkish and contemptible tales; and a thousand others too numerous and too worthless to be mentioned.