

books of unquestioned repute, and unimpeached morality, and such as are universally perused, and never even secluded from youth.

It is a trite but true observation that "delicate people are people of the mastiest ideas," which holds good as well with regard to licentious minds, as to dirty ones. From the interpretations such minds may give to phrases and words, it is impossible to shield even the purest and the holiest truths, and it is labour in vain to hunt for words to which their gross ideas will not affix latent meanings that none but themselves dream of. Perhaps it offends the nicety of your feelings, or your ear, that I should write "breeches," instead of "small clothes," or "inexpressibles," that I should call a bayd, "a bawd," and not a "procuress," or that I should print "damned" instead of d—d.* You would probably like to see my pages chequered with dashes, and stars, and blanks, forgetting that there is ten times more bawdry, (aye, you may stare, but I hold it decent in such cases to call a spade, a spade,) in the dashes and stars of one duodecimo of Sterne, an author who is a favourite with old and young, than in the most licentious publications of the present day. You would wish to banish from all writings every playful wandering of the fancy, every allusion to that commerce of the sexes which is the grand bond that holds the world and society together, the inspiration and the theme of poetry, the source of all happiness terrestrial, nay the sacred means which the deity has consecrated for propling his celestial regions with beatified souls, and for which he has much and minutely legislated. You would desire that every word should be weighed and every letter considered, for fear some forward miss, or prurient master, should find food in them for precocious fancies that would make your sanctity shudder to think of. Away with such mawkish, such puling, such boarding-school affectation. Away with such mock-modesty, such mockery of holiness. I write neither for boarding-schools, nor for conventicles; neither for Sunday-schools, nor for tabernacles; neither for boys nor girls; I desire not to be registered amongst the saints; nor to be extolled by hypocrites. But I write for men and women, men of sense, and wo-

* Altho' Voltaire may not be supposed the most unexceptionable author to quote on such a subject, yet an observation of his is extremely applicable to the subject in discussion, and to the exterior mask of starched-purity that is attempted to be worn in this place by an host of hypocrites and concealed libertines. "La pudeur" says he, "s'est enfuiee des cœurs, et s'est réfugiée sur les lèvres;" adding, "plus les mœurs sont dépravées, plus les expressions deviennent mesurées, et on croit regagner en langage ce qu'on a perdu en vertu."