

NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.*

Books, we know,
Are a substantial world, when pure and good,
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.

WORDSWORTH.

No. IV.

CONTEMPORANEOUS AMERICAN NOVELISTS.

BY C. H.

The daily increasing flood of Cheap Literature must bring home to every reflecting mind, the question—What profit have we in these things? We suspect that the "Harper Brothers," the "New World," "Burgess & Stringer," and the "Yankee Office," with one voice would exclaim, "None whatever!" But, newspaper puffs and their own fulsome advertisements to the contrary notwithstanding, we firmly believe that these publishers, in making a "great revolution in publishing," were not the disinterested patriots—the benevolent philanthropists—which they represented themselves to be.

They looked for "small profits, quick returns," and "increased circulation"—but their cry was "Pro Patria!" Let us remind them that "*Dulce est pro patria mori*!" if they fall, they fall gloriously. And if the day should indeed come, when the overwhelming masses of Pamphlet novels, found unsaleable, whether bedecked in green or blue, or red, or yellow, cumbering the shelves of those unhappy Booksellers, should break, at one snap, both their business and their hearts, we would say over them, in elgine prose, referring to such books as those we are now about to review: "Peace be unto their ashes! May the Lethe from which they sprung misbegotten, again and forever roll over them the waves of forgetfulness—may the folly of collected editions—the vain-glories of gilded calf or of green, gold be-printed cloth, or the fanciful prettiness of illustration, never be perpetrated upon them!" They are stubborn

stuff—too strong for a whole generation of publishers. Before their blighting influence "Murray's" and "Colburn's," would have withered into bankruptcy; and shall it be hoped that by the same agency, newspaper offices shall be saved? Beneath their dead weight, Paternoster Row, Ave Maria Lane, Albemarle Street! all—all would have sunk into oblivion, and shall "Congress Street" be thereby saved? "Impotent conclusion."

This is one view of the question—What profit have we in these things? Let us next regard the authors, or rather "the distinguished literary artists," as they are called by the impartial, candid Press of the United States.

Pitiable is the picture to which in our imagination, we turn. We behold, No. 30 Anne Street—we see gathered there great crowds of bonfers of all descriptions, bullying, badgering, bellowing for cheap literature. "Cheaper than ever!" "Cheaper yet!"—the hawkers cry—"Only 12½ cents a number!" Then arises a rumour that Harper gives twice as much matter for 6½ cents! Hey-day! Off they scamper to Harper's. There's a run on his bank—when it is found that the New World has come down to six cents, and back flock the purchasers of "The most remarkable novels of the day"—"The Prize Book of the Season"—the works of "The greatest living authors"—to save the ½ cent! But you have not yet beheld the whole picture. Step into the Printing Office—through it. Now into this den, in the "man-

* 1. CHRISTINE; A Tale of the Revolution—by John H. Maneur, author of "Henri Quatre, or the Days of the League," &c. &c. New York: William A. Colyer, No. 5, Hugue Street. 1843.

2. ARNOLD; OR, THE BRITISH SPY: A tale of Treason and Treachery—by Professor J. H. Ingraham, author of "Lafitte," "The Child of the Sea," &c. &c. Boston. 1844.

3. DIDDY WOODHULL; OR, THE PRETTY HAYMAKER: A Tale—by Professor Ingraham. Boston. 1844.