

knowledge of human nature, we are so old fashioned, that we must doubt whether they possess the potency which can disarm real sorrow of its sting, dispel the dark clouds that overshadow the habitations of woe, or calm the agony of guilt, when remorse and shame storm the bosom. There are many hours with some people, when the well framed fiction, the pointed wit, the fascinating delineations of the author of *Waverley* and some of his compeers may be very advantageously employed. When, after laborious study, or the fatigues of practical exertion have exhausted the mind and wearied the body, it may be a refreshment to both to spend an hour with such masters as Scott, and our own admired Cooper. But when this hope of relaxation and refreshment, is converted into a dependance for substantial aliment, or permanent remedy in disease, it becomes dangerous. Those green and shady spots that skirt the highway, may frequently invite the weary traveller, and may afford him much of comfort, but if he linger long upon them, his journey will be very unprofitably prosecuted: if he reposes there for a length of time he will find that his limbs grow stiff, he will lose some relish for the prosecution of his way; perchance reptiles may sting and poison him, and that which might have been a momentary gain becomes a permanent evil. If none but those whose minds were well stored and whose time was laboriously filled, read works of fiction there would be less danger in them, or rather we may say there would be a less sum of usefulness subtracted from their influence. With a great proportion they constitute the only kind of study. Their evident tendency is to promote a morbid sensibility, and a disrelish for those authors, who not only enlighten the understanding but animate and guide the heart as well as regulate the passions. At any rate we have been most sadly mistaken if "when the whole head is sore, and the whole heart sick," they have power to allay the anguish of the one, or the throbbings of the other. A little dullness of the spirits they may overcome, and they may fill up an hour of languor, but when real sorrow tortures the bosom and in the absence of that comfort which nothing but religion can give, and the spirit of the Gospel can convey, it is in vain to tell us that *novel reading* can relieve the distress. When the tenderest bonds are severed and the grave closes upon departed loveliness and worth, when the soul sighs under the sense of human corruption, and the consciousness of guilt corrodes the peace, who will prescribe, who will expect to find the tale of fiction either a palliative or a cure? When "the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint," another Physician must be sought, another balm will be required.—*Auburn Gospel Messenger*.

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How to reconcile the foreknowledge of God with the free-will of man, is a problem which the wisest have confessed their inability to solve; and his secret counsel, whereby he has constantly decreed, in his everlasting purpose, according to his foreknowledge, to save the elect, and to condemn the reprobate, is justly numbered amongst the most abstruse doctrines of theology. These are depths which we cannot fathom with the short line of human reason. "Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for us. We cannot attain unto it." Yet, when men bewilder themselves in these labyrinths, and pervert the practical lessons of the blessed charter of our hopes, by their curious subtleties upon these difficult points of our faith, into unmeaning precepts, with which it is either impossible or unnecessary for us to comply; we are bound in charity to