

## A Prefatory Word

THE story told in the present book owes something to the past, in its picturing of the present, as its predecessors have done; though in much less degree. The artist, as I hold, may gather from any field, so long as he sacredly respects what other artists have already made their own by the transmuting processes of the mind. To draw on the conceptions or the phrases that have once passed through the warm minting of another's brain, is, for us moderns, at any rate, the literary crime of crimes. But to the teller of stories, all that is recorded of the real life of men, as well as all that his own eyes can see, is offered for the enrichment of his tale. This is a clear and simple principle; yet it has been often denied. To insist upon it is, in my belief, to uphold the true flag of Imagination, and to defend the wide borders of Romance.

In addition to this word of notice, which my readers will perhaps accept from me once for all, this small preface must also contain a word of thanks to my friend Mr. Sterner, whose beautiful art has contributed to this story, as to several of its forerunners. I have to thank him, indeed, not only as an artist, but as a critic. In the interpreting of Fenwick, he has given me valuable aid; has corrected mistakes, and illumined his