

village, and Jane seized the first opportunity of seeing him alone. "Oh Jamie, such a sight as I saw last night upon the meadows—a great thing like a horse, with monstrous white wings and two heads, came flying after me, and—but I will not tell you what he said—oh it was a bogle."—"I saw'd it, I saw'd it last night myself!"—"An' it said, Jonnie Shaw should wed wi' me!"—"An' so she will Jamie, but ye shall not tell my mother aught of all this."—"I winna deario," said the successful lover; "but we maun haste to the dominie's ere the bogle see us again to night."

It was poor Jannie Shaw who sat by the great tree while Lawdie enjoyed his favorite dance. They live not a great way from the village now, and I intend riding out to their cabin one of these days to see the old Highlander, after which you may expect another epistle, giving a full account of him.

## ESSAYS.

FOR THE CASSET.

### MORALS OF LIGHT READING.

Novels are of recent date; little more than a century ago, there was scarcely one to be found; and a few romances were the only works of fiction that were then read, and understood to be the offspring of mere imagination. Within the last fifty years, their increase has been very rapid, and there is at present no species of composition more attentively cultivated, and none received with greater avidity by the world, than that of novel writing.

Many suppose, that if it be true that the present age is more corrupt than the preceding, the multiplication of novels has contributed to its degeneracy. To this we cannot subscribe; but believe, that if they do not promote virtue, they, at least, are not unfavorable to it. If their pictures of nature are not exact, they are still flattering resemblances, and their heroes often afford us the noblest models for imitation. Though there are some exceptions, yet we generally find in them virtue rewarded and vice punished; they exhibit patterns of perfection, and at the same time stimulate a desire to emulate them. While they lead us through all the fairy regions of fancy, they inspire our hearts with noble and liberal sentiments. Virtue, where she is the subject, is painted in such lively colours, that she calls forth our highest admiration; and who can behold a great and virtuous character, even in imagination, without wishing to possess the same qualities? On the other hand, who can behold even a faithful picture of vice, and not feel his spirit recoiling from the loathsome object. For

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As to be hated, needs but to be seen."

And when seen in the dark shades of ro-

manco, destitute of those latent vestiges of virtue, which generally linger on the most abandoned, who but strives to be fortified against the first approaches of each engrossing vice.

But we regret to say that there are novels in which vice is adorned in a garb so fascinating, that it is too liable to be mistaken for virtue. These are dangerous, and should be avoided; but still we cannot condemn novel reading. From abandoned and profligate characters we may often draw useful moral lessons. The votary of pleasure may go through all the varied rounds of dissipation, and may riot in all the sensual pleasures that wealth can bestow, but the closing scene of his profligate life generally exhibits a catastrophe that must forcibly impress the mind of every reader.

Novels and romances are so nearly allied, that they may both be considered in the same view; the former gives a portrait of real life, and the latter is a caricature. In them vice and folly are often more successfully lashed than in the best moral essays. With microscopic properties, they enable us to see spots on the human character, which, without their assistance, would be unobserved.

These works of fiction have often been reprobated for calling away the mind from more useful studies; and we are aware, that an extreme fondness for novels has called down upon them the imprecations of teachers; and that Homer and Virgil have sometimes been thrown aside for the more amusing pages of some interesting novel. But even here, (altho' upon the whole injurious,) they are not without their use. Independent of their moral influence, the reading of them is profitable: many novels are the productions of the greatest masters of the English language, as well as of human nature, and whether they give us a fair or an exaggerated representation of men and manners, their style and taste must tend to improve the reader in those respects. That this kind of reading, exclusive of history, is pernicious to youth, cannot be doubted; but the benefit of a moderate use of them, we believe, is indubitable, especially of those in which the incidents of history are enriched with an interest which solitary matters of fact could never excite in young minds, such as the historical novels of Scott. History gives us a view of the higher orders only; but it is from such works that we are to learn the true character of any nation.

We have few novelists, or fine writers of any description, in this part of America; and we would submit it to the consideration of those who rigidly oppose light reading, whether it is not to the deficiency

of our Press and Pens in this respect, that the listlessness of Canadian youth in matters of literature is to be mainly attributed.

DUNDAS.

## MISCELLANY.

"Various, that the mind of desultory man,  
Studious of change and pleas'd with novelty,  
May be indulg'd."

THE BERMUDAS.—These romantic emeralds on the Western Ocean, so far as climate is concerned, have a most Eden like appearance. All is miniature beauty; far, very far from the wild and natural grandeur of America. The violet is not more unlike to the sturdy oak, nor the pink to a tall pine, nor a grain of sand to one of the huge Andes, than the Bermudas are to that gigantic continent, in its majestic and boundless forests.

Many of the houses in the Bermudas have a little garden, the avenues to which are fringed with jessamine and roses. The pride of China is often planted near the front, and with its green and umbrageous branches, forms both an ornament and a cooling shade. The buildings, which have neither taste nor symmetry, are perfectly white, and when seen at a distance, rising in the midst of green, have an agreeable and pleasant appearance. Within the enclosure round the mansion are fig trees, bananas, pomegranets, and in some cases, orange, shaddock, and limes; but human art has done little; it is the beauty of the climate, that makes December as pleasant as May.

Beneath skies for ever blue, the fig-tree puts forth its lovely blossoms, and the orange and pomegranate spread their swelling fruit. The balmy air is scented by groves of cedar, and in the fields and woods the aloe plant attains the full measure of its growth. Tamarind trees and mulberry expand their dark foliage over the sunny scene; and the tall and slender palmeto shoots up in the valley, with its broad diverging leaf.

Good manners is the art of making easy those people with whom we converse—whosoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred in company.—Swift.