

ter, to devote their powers to such subjects, as chime with the popular taste. Others, who could scarcely be accused of sensitiveness, but who preferred *not* to be abused, have been induced, because not allowed to be profound, to endeavour, at least, to be popular. In this way, the world has been unjustly deprived of men of eminent capacity, not less ambitious than others of intellectual power and renown. They were led to consider *popularity*, as a sure test of literary merit. Hence their aim was not to appeal to the *earnest* feelings of man's heart, not to excite his love for the beautiful and *true*, but to pamper his insatiable appetite for novelty, and thus, by pleasing the generality of readers, promote their own vanity, and selfish ends. Such, perhaps, might not have been the characteristics of writers of *fiction*, had critics, laying aside the "littleness of personal hate," been inspired with that superior generosity, which would have prompted them kindly to point out their errors and imperfections, and, at the same time, pay due regard to their many excellencies. But when criticism proved the medium, through which a writer gave loose reins to the "wantonness of wit, and acrimony of malice," no one can deny, that it was a great hindrance to the increase of authors of sterling merit, especially when the love of detraction was carried to such an extent, as to have caused the demolition of many productions, well worthy of being preserved. It is by no means surprising, that some preferred writing such works as ensure present fame, to spending their lives on compositions which only elicit invective and satire.

Fortunately for literature, there have been those, who willingly resisted, and boldly bore the brunt of the attacks of criticism, rather than seek that fleeting popularity, which, doubtless, they could have attained by misapplying their powers. Elevated with the love of literature, they nobly disregarded personal interest, and faithfully fulfilled the responsibilities imposed by genius. *Reputation* was not the aim of their exertions; their object was to elevate the intellect of man, to refine his taste, and cause him to draw a deep pleasure from the observation of the fair and godlike in nature. To such men,

"Who scorned delight and loved laborious days,"

Fame has atoned for the shattered nerve, the jaded spirit, the wearied heart; verily, they have had their reward. If fame did not *immediately* answer to their call, in *after days*, it abundantly repaid them for this deficiency.

Many, eager to attain to the goal of glory and fame, have unhappily for their own feelings, been compelled, by the superior merits of their competitors to leave the course. Of men of this character, the corps of critics, in former times, was principally composed. Such men, however, should not allow their minds to be blinded by disappointment. Refined feelings and pure motives, invariably lead to

generous actions. Endeavouring to forget their own vain attempts, they should view with pleasure, the high aims of others, and delight in aiding their efforts. Instead of being envious of their success, they should take pride and pleasure in giving them due honour, and seeing them faithfully accomplish their utmost wishes.

But what is more surprising than all, is to see *him*, who has been labouring in the field of literature, and has tasted the sweets of science, who has become acquainted with the deep mysterious wonders of nature, and has experienced her soothing and enrapturing influences, to behold such an one, turn against another, who has offered himself as a fellow labourer. We expect to see such men attract each other, as two magnetic needles; moved by one impulse, and actuated by the same principle. Our disappointment, then, is proportionately increased, when we reflect upon such an one's accustomed reception, which may likened to that of "a strange dog entering a kennel, pre-occupied by many others, who, immediately attacked and worried by the rest, either by boldly defending himself, or pertinaciously refusing to quit, eventually obtains a domiciliation, and becomes an acknowledged member of the fraternity." An observer might be led to imagine, from the strange conduct of established authors, occasionally exhibited towards youthful and inexperienced writers, that they held in reverence the trite old maxim, "*familiarity breeds contempt*." It, however, is rather the effect of weakness; and "exactly resembles the conduct of certain mothers, who, though assuredly without hating their daughters, are sometimes unwilling to behold them assume, even when authorized by their age, the privileges of womanhood. They, in fact, dislike to observe any symptoms of the approach of that moment in which they must pass away like shadows from the stage, in order to make room for individuals they cannot help regarding in some measure, as rivals or intruders." But how much more honourable and high minded to see the older occupant in the fields of literature, looking smilingly upon the endeavours of the new-comer, with eyes open to his budding youthhood, bestowing judicious praise upon his excellencies, and clearing from the way, all obstructions to his energetic co-operation in the delightful realms of *poesie*, or the fairy land of romance.

The reader will, by this time, *if he did not before*, readily perceive that criticism, when employed by reviewers to parade their unsparing wit or malignant sarcasm, at the expense of authors, is, in most instances, hostile to their peace, but when used, as it should be, to convey a just opinion of a work to the public, it is useful, both to the author and the reader.

Remember then, oh, critic! that while you have a sacred duty to perform on the part of the public, you should also show due regard for the delicate feelings of the author. We counsel you for your