

general character and object. Both are intended to present in a ridiculous aspect, and correct, by the force of ridicule, the faults and follies of the age in every department of life, Political, Social and Domestic. Each has numbered among its contributors men of genius, and been illustrated by the pencil of the ablest caricaturist which his nation has yet produced. Both are immensely popular, are exhibited in the shop windows, are special favourites in the family, and quoted in every circle. But what a difference the two indicate in national morality and taste. There is not a number of *Punch* which a clergyman might not with propriety lay upon the bed of a convalescent, as an innocent and beneficial relief to the tedium of the sick chamber. There is not a number of its Parisian rival that a christian father could permit his wife and daughters to see. Its best picture would probably be representative of the comic aspect of a married woman's intrigue with her paramour, successfully concealed or awkwardly exposed; her own child being the agent in either case. Its best joke, a witticism at which French ladies and gentlemen may laugh together, but which if a lady should not understand a gentleman must not explain to her. Surely this is not one of the things which they do better in France.

I would here wish to correct a widely prevalent and mistaken impression regarding our popular literature. Namely, that it is largely composed of that which is pernicious rather than beneficial. I have frequently heard it said both on the platform and in the pulpit, that bad books were more extensively read than good ones, and that infidel and immoral publications have a circulation that a better class of periodicals cannot attain. This I am happy to say is not true but the facts are precisely the reverse. My authority is Baine, and I quote from a work which has been twice recently eulogised by the London *Quarterly Review* for its trustworthy character. It gives the following statistics. In 1864 the periodicals issued in London were as follows:

MONTHLY.—Religious, scientific, and literary Magazines, .	186,900
Temperance,	293,000
Useful and entertaining,.....	337,000
Magazines of a higher class,	244,000
Highly embellished and costly serials,.....	363,000
Total monthly,.....	3,609,000