

and morality, I should be apt to think that it would tend to enforce their most important precepts, and, by bringing their errors to the test of practice, in the imitation of real life, would be a safe and ready means to improve both. It is certainly not a fair mode of attack, which in the present case is by many practised. They lay hold of some pictures of vicious conduct, which incidentally occur in the necessary grouping and contrasting of characters in the Drama; and seem to consider the exhibition of vice, however censured or punished by poetical justice, as hurtful to the audience. Now this must arise from a narrow mode of thinking. If we go into the world; the scene of the most important virtues, we must behold vice; will not therefore the view of it, in its true colours, exhibited in a well regulated Theatre, rather serve as an antidote than the contrary? I might here mention that many dramatic pieces, on religious subjects, have been represented on the stage, with unbounded applause, while they contained the most sublime truths of christianity, enforced by all the powers of eloquence, adorned with all the charms of poetry, and supported by the fascinating effects of appropriate scenery and skilful acting.—It would, perhaps, be useful to bring forward such pieces in Canada.

Public spectacles among civilized nations have generally been encouraged and numerously attended; and have always been supposed to have so great a share in forming and supporting national character; that their nature and peculiarities in different countries have become an interesting subject of consideration in all historical enquiries. Hence also appears the propriety and necessity of the previous examination of whatever is to be exhibited upon the stage. The British Government have accordingly assumed a right to scrutinize all performances intended for the Theatre, though every other species of composition is sacred from the touch of power, till it come into the hands of the public. This being the case, political objections to theatrical representation dwindle into insignificance, in the present view of the subject; and we are left to contemplate its probable utility alone. In an English Theatre, there ought to be at least three different gradations of places and prices. This has ever been customary in Britain; it renders the entertainment accessible to all ranks, and facilitates the preservation of good order. It has also the still superior effects of moulding and supporting the national character, of infusing, as it were, into a great body of the community, sentiments of patriotism, magnanimity, and justice; and of conferring upon the lowest individual present, a temporary importance, peculiarly grateful to humanity. Thus, over the ruins of the City Theatre, we might be permitted to exclaim with equal pathos and propriety, as the Poet has done over the ruins of the City Alehouse,

Vain transitory splendor! could not all
 Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
 Obscure it sinks, not shall it more impart
 An hour's importance to the poor man's heart!

It may be thought fanciful, but I confess that the three classes of persons in a Theatre, are in some measure associated in my mind with