

published, and without a doubt, contains a much greater proportion of these than most of the periodical publications in Britain. This circumstance, however, is here stated merely as a *matter of fact*, and is not adduced as a proof of its superior excellence. Had fewer original pieces been admitted, it is by no means improbable that its intrinsic merit might have been the greater; as well chosen copies from other works may be more valuable, than compositions that have never been published. Had originality of matter been all his aim, the editor might easily have satisfied himself; as he has materials in his possession that might have filled several volumes, without taking a single line from any printed work whatever. But as the avowed intention of this miscellany, is to select from other performances, as well as to give new matter, he thinks he should have been to blame, had he not attempted in some measure to comply with the terms of his proposals. This he has done as to this particular to a *certain degree*, though, were he himself to judge, not so much as he ought to have done; but he thinks he perceives, that others put a higher value upon mere originality as such, than he does; nor will he presume to set up his own judgment as a standard for others, but will endeavour to accommodate himself in every innocent compliance, as much as he can, to the desires of the public. No part of the office that falls to his share as an editor, is half so disagreeable as that of rejecting pieces, that persons from the best motives have had the goodness to send him? and nothing but a strong sense of duty to his readers, could induce him to take it upon himself. The writers of these pieces, it may be supposed, eye them with a parent's fondness. One naturally feels a reluctance at the thought of giving pain: should the judgment in these circumstances be swayed a little by good nature, it ought to be considered as a more excusable weakness, than a stern severity. Yet the editor fears, that many of his correspondents will think there is little room for accusing him of this weakness, while others will say he is guilty of it to an unpardonable degree. Of this he does not complain, nor of the contradictory requests of his different correspondents, some of whom condemn in the severest terms, those pieces that others talk of with rapture; while in their turn they disapprove of the performances, the others have highly applauded; so that, like the man with the two wives, who weeded out of his head alternately the black hairs and the white, were they permitted to go on, he should soon have none, or were he to listen to both parties, he would be reduced to the necessity of presenting a book, like Sterne, of blank pages, as the only mean left of avoiding offence. Of all this the editor does not complain, because every one who assumes the office he bears, must expect a similar fate. Knowing therefore, that it is impossible to please alike every taste, he will go on to select, to the best of his judgment, such pieces, whether originals or copies, as shall seem to have the best chance of forwarding the views announced in his prospectus; ever paying due attention to the friendly hints of those who think he errs, and relying upon the public indulgence for overlooking unavoidable defects.

It is with infinite veneration he remarks the number of typographical errors that have slipped into this work. Of the circumstances that have oc-