

posers and artists. Statistics which can be relied upon prove, that whatever may be the vicious and debasing indulgences of many, these, in the great centres of population are by far the most popular of the amusements, of those, who have money to spend and time to devote to recreation, both in Great Britain and America. In this connection it would be improper to omit the revival of athletic sports both innocent and healthful, which are daily growing in popularity with all classes, and are worthy of encouragement, not only for their physical benefits, but as tending to cultivate manliness, kindly feeling, mutual respect and self-government. In speaking of the moral tone of our literature there are two comparisons which may be made—with that of the past and with that of other nations. Sir Walter Scott relates that he borrowed from an old lady some novels which he knew had been the most popular reading of the time of her youth. He declares that they were so immoral he could not finish their perusal, but returned them half read. Yet they had been the avowed and favorite reading of the Clarissas and Pemellas of the preceding generation. No gentleman of the present day would permit such books to enter his house. In comparing English with Foreign popular reading almost as great a contrast is seen. By English, I wish to be understood as intending, works in the English language, whether published in Great Britain or America, and forming, as so many do, part of the current literature of both. Admirers of Goethe may find in his "Wilhelm Meister," the most widely read of all his works, wonderful mysteries and lofty teachings that others cannot see in it; but this every one who reads it must see in it, *reeking impurity*. If Dickens or Thackeray, Hawthorn or Irving, had introduced into any of his fictions *one scene* as licentious as scores which the great German depicts he would not only have blasted his reputation with his countrymen and women, but have found it impossible to induce any first class English or American publishing house to issue his work. Of French novels I need say nothing. But let us for a moment place the past volumes of the London *Punch* and Parisian *Charivari* side by side and see what light they throw upon the respective morals of the two nations. The two periodicals are precisely similar in