

CENTRE FOR EDITORIAL AND INTERTEXTUAL RESEARCH
(*CARDIFF CORVEY: READING THE ROMANTIC TEXT*)

Project Report

Number 7

**BRITISH FICTION, 1800–1829:
A DATABASE OF PRODUCTION AND RECEPTION
Phase II: *The Flowers of Literature***

Jacqueline Belanger, Peter Garside, Anthony Mandal, Sharon Ragaz

PUBLISHED annually to cover the years 1801–09, *The Flowers of Literature* consisted primarily of extracts from what were perceived to be the year's most popular publications. The extracts were drawn from a range of genres, including poetry, travel writing, biography and prose fiction. Initially *Flowers* was jointly edited by Francis William Blagdon and the Revd Francis Prevost, but in 1804 Blagdon became the sole editor.¹ Brief critical comments of a few lines on individual titles are provided at the end of each volume, in the form of an 'Alphabetical List'. Each issue also had an 'Introduction' outlining the 'State and Progress of Literature, Foreign and Domestic' for the year in question, which afforded the editors the opportunity to make general observations on genres such as the novel and on specific texts selected for inclusion in the volume. In terms of novels, it was often the case that a work would be discussed twice, once in the Introduction and again in the list at the end of the volume.

This miscellany format itself does not necessarily make *Flowers* unique for its time. However, the fact that the works chosen for inclusion were the subject of critical commentary by named individuals means that the *Flowers of Literature* occupies an unusual space somewhere between a literary review and a record of a more personal, anecdotal reception of Romantic-era fiction. The authorship of the critical commentary on the year's selected publications can be attributed initially to two individuals (Blagdon and Prevost) and, after 1804, to Blagdon alone. Although presented in the impersonal editorial 'we' voice that characterised early nineteenth century reviewing practice in general, the commentaries do represent the opinions of an individual reader. A headnote in the 1806 volume asserted that 'No books are inserted in this list but such have been perused by the editor, for the purpose of making extracts and comments. The criticisms are, therefore, the result of his own impartial opinion' (*Flowers of Literature* for 1806, p. 494). That Blagdon himself can personally claim to have examined all the works under scrutiny in each volume acts as a guarantee for his readers, constituting a special pact between reader and reviewer/editor in an otherwise increasingly impersonal literary marketplace.

This personalised relationship extends to the underlying design of the periodical as a whole, in that *Flowers* seems to have been conceived to help guide readers through the growing numbers of publications vying for their attention, especially at a time when the British reading public may have been preoccupied with other extra-literary subjects:

That the convulsions of nations, the threatening aspect of the times, and our warlike preparations have, in some degree, interrupted peaceful pursuits, we are willing to admit; but we cannot believe that, amid the din of arms, literature is absolutely at a stand; that books find neither readers nor purchasers, as is daily declared by those whom Johnson has called the only Maecenas of the modern world, and who thus wish to discourage the hopes of an author, or to depreciate his labours. Do not those, who are prompted by taste to peruse the new publications, still find that time is too short to inspect them all? Do not reviewers, as well as ourselves, still find it difficult to keep pace with the works that daily issue from the press? (*Flowers of Literature for 1803*, p. xliii).

Thus, *Flowers* was designed to help readers keep abreast of current literature, although the yearly format somewhat mitigated the timeliness of the information. In providing extracts and short, easily digestible commentaries on these works, *Flowers* presented itself as an indispensable resource for those who wished to appear educated and well read, but who might not have had the leisure (or, indeed, the inclination) to read and form an opinion on the thirty or so titles covered in each volume of the periodical. Blagdon himself makes no secret of the design of *Flowers*: the extracts and notices

1. Blagdon (1778–1819) was a fairly well known figure in early nineteenth century literary and political circles. He began his career by publishing mostly translated and edited works, such as *Mooriana, or Selections from the Works of Dr John Moore* in 1803 (with Prevost). He eventually came to write for the *Morning Post*, and, according to the DNB, helped to edit the newspaper for a time. His Tory views led him into a dispute with William Cobbett, and in response to Cobbett's *Political Register* (1802–35), Blagdon planned to publish 'Blagdon's Weekly Political Register'. While the prospectus for this appeared in October 1809, the work itself never materialised.

are presented to 'the *gens du monde*, who are desirous to become, without serious application, conversant with modern literary taste' ('Preface', *Flowers of Literature for 1801–02*, unnumbered).

The practice of including the 'Alphabetical List' of notices ended in 1807. Ever sensitive to the demands of his readers, Blagdon noted the change in a preface dated 15 September 1808: 'The only difference between the present and our former volumes, consists in an improvement which has been pointed out to us by several subscribers. They have recommended us to give a *general list* of the books which have been published during the year [...] but the brief criticisms which we were accustomed to insert under the titles, being deemed *repetitions* of the opinions expressed in our introductory remarks, (and which in fact they unavoidably were), we have consented to discontinue them' (*Flowers of Literature for 1807*, p. iii).

Coverage of novels the *Flowers of Literature* was fairly substantial—there were, for example, notices of 28 novels contained in the volume for 1806—despite the fact that Blagdon's introductory remarks often echo familiar critical discourse on the dubious moral and literary value of the genre. Although the notices were often short to the point of being telegraphic, the space and attention devoted to novels differed little from that given to other genres. Well known authors and novels, such as Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* and Opie's *Adeline Mowbray*, received significant attention, as did popular works such as Surr's *Winter in London* (which was given two notices in the volume for 1806). Even after the practice of including short notices ceased, the introductory material continued to comprise a number of pages of commentary on recent novels.

The Flowers of Literature was published by the London firm of Benjamin Crosby and Co., which operated between 1794 and 1814, from Stationer's Hall Court on Ludgate Hill and 'near Paternoster Row'—establishing it firmly in the topographical centre of the London booktrade. The concern dealt mainly in musical pieces and songs, supported by the publication of religious discourses and sermons, as well as numerous children's works, amongst them the usual gamut of conduct-books and educational textbooks. Of literary works, Crosby published a substantial amount of drama, poetry, and fiction, with numerous reprints of earlier titles. In addition to reprints of poetry such as Alexander Pope's *Iliad* (1808) and James Thomson's *The Seasons* (1802), Crosby also part-published Byron's *Hours of Idleness* (1807).

In terms of fiction output, the firm was very much a significant source, being the fourth most prolific primary publisher of novels throughout the 1800s. Crosby had auspiciously begun his publication of fiction with Godwin's *Things as They Are* (1794), and throughout its twenty years, Crosby and Co. displayed a consistent commitment to fiction, and a total of sixty-eight titles appeared between 1794 and 1814 with Crosby's name first on the title-page imprint. Many of its novels were run-of-the-mill fictions, with output of new titles consisting typically of sentimental romances and Gothic tales that were especially concentrated in the 1790s and late 1800s. The Gothic titles themselves matched the respective periods of favour of first the Radcliffian derivatives and then the more scurrilous, post-*Monk* horrors. Paradigmatic Gothic fictions included John Palmer's *The Haunted Cavern* (1796), Theodore Melville's *The White Knight* (1802), Mary Julia Young's *Moss Cliff Abbey* (1803), David Carey's *Secrets of the Castle* (1806), and Francis Lathom's *The Fatal Vow* (1807). Most of its fiction can best be described as domestic melodramas within a broadly sentimental framework. The combination of fashionable or upper-class locales with dramatic incident and manoeuvring Machiavels is a popular formula for Crosby novels. Typical examples include *The History of Netterville, a Chance Pedestrian* (1802) and Anne Ker's Gothic-sounding *Mysterious Count; or, Montville Castle* (1803). In addition to its Gothic romances and sentimental melodramas, Crosby published a number of stories with a modern setting, either comic or domestic: these include Horatio Smith's *A Family Story* (1800), Elizabeth Gunning's *The Farmer's Boy* (1802), and Sophia Woodfall's anti-fashionable *Frederick Montravers; or, the Adopted Son* (1803).

Around the time of Crosby and Co.'s publication of the first number of *The Flowers of Literature*, the firm was enjoying a marked rise in its production of fiction, precisely when the output of the Minerva Press was noticeably in decline. Although Crosby never approached Minerva in terms of magnitude as a novel producer, there was a time, however brief, when it seemed that the older

concern had outlived its success and that newer and aggressive firms might take up the mantle. It was during this period that Crosby was setting himself up as a bulk publisher of eye-catching, even flash, fictions. After the dissolution of the partnership Crosby and Letterman in 1802–03, Crosby embarked upon a brief but remarkable association with James Fletcher Hughes, who would later become notorious for his shady dealings, practice of puffing, and scandalous fictions. Ultimately, the associates would split abruptly and apparently acrimoniously, but in the short term, the arrangement marked a significant rise in production of Crosby's novels from 4 titles with 1802 imprints to 10 in 1803, most of which recorded both associates' names on imprints. One result of Crosby's association with Hughes was his adoption of certain modes of self-puffery, in an attempt to pass himself off as one of the foremost publishers of fiction by listing large numbers of novels as 'just published by B. Crosby'—when in most cases, such works were either reprints or remaindered copies of other publishers' works.

Nevertheless, the proportion of Crosby's fictions reviewed in *The Flowers of Literature* remains relatively small. Of 43 works published by Crosby (and in 1803, with Hughes) between 1801 and 1809, only 20 were actually mentioned in the *Flowers*. In the *Flowers* for 1801–02 and 1804, none were given notices, while for the figures for the remaining years up to 1806 are as follows: 1803, 4 of 22 notices; 1805, 5 of 17; and 1806, 4 of 29. When the *Flowers* stopped including notices and moved instead to prefatory 'Introductions', Crosby was publisher of only 5 of the 11 works of fiction mentioned in the 1807 *Flowers* and 3 of the 13 mentioned in the 1808–09 issue. Although most of the reviews were positive, this was not always the case. For instance, the reviewer described Elisabeth Guénard's *Three Monks!!!* (1803), as 'containing a few good passages, but of the most detestable principles—consequently the less which is said or known of it the better' (*Flowers for 1803*, p. 456). Similarly, Mrs Norris's *Edward and Anna* (1806) 'contains a few good passages, amongst a farrago of the vilest nonsense that was ever put together, and which could never have happened to the author or any other person in this world' (*Flowers for 1806*, p. 501).

If the firm of Crosby and Co. is remembered by Romantic-period scholars nowadays it is for its dealings with Jane Austen over the manuscript of what would eventually be published by John Murray as *Northanger Abbey* (1818). In the spring 1803, Austen had sold the manuscript of the novel, then titled *Susan*, to Crosby for £10. It appears that Crosby had intended to publish it, since a work entitled 'Susan; a Novel, in 2 vols.' was advertised as 'In the Press' in *The Flowers of Literature for 1801 and 1802* itself (reproduced here). For a number of (mainly financial) reasons, Crosby did not publish *Susan*, and this led to a bitter exchange between Austen and the firm, with each party challenging the other over the ownership of the work. Following this unsatisfactory correspondence, Austen's dealings with Crosby ceased until 1816, when her brother Henry bought back the manuscript, following the publication of *Emma*. According to the James Edward Austen-Leigh's *Memoir of Austen* (1870–71), Henry 'found the purchaser very willing to receive back his money, and to resign all claim to the copyright'; once the exchange had been made, Henry 'had the satisfaction of informing him that the work which had been so lightly esteemed was by the author of *Pride and Prejudice*.'

New Publications, by Crosby and Co.

5. ELEMENTS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE, intended to lead Youth into an early Acquaintance with the Nature of Man, by an Anatomical Display of the Human Frame; a concise View of the Mental Faculties, and an Enquiry into the Genuine Nature of the Passions; particularly AMBITION, ANGER, FEAR, HOPE, JOY, LOVE, SHAME, SORROW, SYMPATHY, WONDER, &c. By R. C. Dallas, Esq. with Copper-plates, 8vo, boards, Price 9s.
 6. HISTORY OF QUADRUPEDS, adapted to the Capacities of Youth. By Mrs. Trimmer. Embellished with 29 Wood Cuts, after Bewick. Price 3s. in boards, or, on small Paper, 2s.
 7. A TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF NORTH AMERICA; containing a succinct Account of its Soil, Climate, Natural History, Population, Agriculture, Manners, and Customs; with a Description of the Divisions. By Gilbert Imlay. In one large vol. 8vo, with Maps. Price 9s. boards.
 8. THE DETECTOR OF QUACKERY; or, Analysis of Medical, Philosophical, Political, Dramatic, and Literary, Imposture. By John Corry. One vol. 12mo. Price 2s. 6d. sewed.
 9. EVERY MAN HIS OWN GARDENER, or, POCKET JOURNAL; being a Daily Assistant in the Modern Practice of ENGLISH GARDENING, in a concise Monthly Display of all the practical Works of general Gardening throughout the Year. By John Abercrombie. Seventh Edition, corrected and greatly improved. Price 1s. 6d. sewed, or neatly bound 2s.
 10. FREDERICK MONTRAVERS, or THE NATURAL SON, 2 vols. By Sophia Woodfall. Price 7s.
 11. THREE MONKS, 2 vols, 7s.
 12. LINDORF AND CAROLINE, 3 vols.
 13. DEPRAVED HUSBAND AND PHILOSOPHIC WIFE, 2 vols, 6s.
 14. STROLLING PLAYER, 3 vols. By Mr. LUCAS, 10s. 6d.
- In the Press.*
15. SUSAN; a Novel, in 2 vols.
 16. DICTIONARY OF CELEBRATED WOMEN. By Miss Beetham, in one volume.

BRITISH FICTION, 1800–29: THE FLOWERS OF LITERATURE, 1801–09

[Note: All spelling and formatting of the original text as transcribed has been retained. The original headings in the 'Alphabetical Lists' have also been retained. The only exception to this is the omission of footnotes in the 'Introductions'; these footnotes usually act only to refer the reader to the notices at the end of the volume. Where the note contains more substantive information, it has been retained and is given, with the appropriate page reference, at the end of the 'Introduction'. For further bibliographical details of the novels discussed in *Flowers of Literature for 1801–09*, please see the index of novel titles at the end of this document. This index provides the corresponding references to Peter Garside, James Raven, and Rainer Schöwerling (eds.), *The English Novel 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, 2 vols. (Oxford: OUP, 2000), vol. 2.]

FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1801 AND 1802

From 'Introduction': Novels, pages unnumbered.

With respect to the NOVELS of our day, those imported from abroad, and chiefly those translated from the German, have lately presented nothing but an incongruous and cumbrous mass of fair captives, enchanted castles, or dreadful and mysterious apparitions, fit only to captivate or alarm weak imaginations. French novels, too, although a more faithful picture of modern manners, have been found to contain licentious and seductive descriptions of unbridled passions and abandoned profligacy. Among these novelists, however, we may find some, but very few, more moral and less dangerous; such as PIGAULT LE BRUN, who by the delicate true wit, humour, keen satire, and purer morality of his novel, has acquired deserved celebrity all over Europe; or such as Mr. MARMORIERE, who, in // an interesting story or fable, (which he has represented as a one of Chaldean origin, in order to give a venerable air to its characters or incidents,) has delivered a system of moral or philosophical lessons, exemplified in the life of an interesting personage. He is traced through all his adventures, and a series of actions and sufferings ascribed to him, which induce a train of reflections, and give rise to a considerable degree both of interest and instruction. The sentiments of this writer are always in favour of morality, religion, and social order.

Our domestic Novelists, absurdly imitating the German literati, have long dealt in the marvellous; and, though they seem for the present to have abandoned the idle and frightful dreams of a distorted imagination, they are nevertheless to be deprecated for teaching youth to mistake loose sentiments for liberal opinions, heedless profligacy for benevolent disposition, and impiety for strength of mind. Happy would it be, for the welfare of the present generation, if those ridiculous fabrications, of weak minds and often depraved hearts, which constitute the enchantment of circulating libraries, could be entirely annihilated! Our readers cannot expect that we should give them a catalogue of those pernicious publications, which increase the laxity of manners and debility of character, already so prevalent in all degrees of society: we will, on the contrary, content ourselves with specifying a few novelists, in whose works, instead of poisonous, they will find a grateful and nutritive combination. The justly-celebrated author of an *Essay on Education*, Mrs. [*sic*] EDGEWORTH, has very successfully displayed her powers, in a general representation of life and modern manners†. Mrs. WELLS'S novels are re-//commendable for the purity and soundness of principles, for the piety and Christian humility which they inculcate*; and Mr. DALLAS, in a masterly romance, has lately presented us with a beautiful picture of virtue in its most engaging form, which ought to be studied by all those who are desirous of conciliating the esteem of their fellow creatures, of securing the satisfaction of their own conscience, and deserving the approbation of their God. The great object of this interesting novelist, is to rescue moral sentiment from the degradation into which it has fallen; to fortify the minds of the fair sex, to expose the wiles of seduction, to give an exalted idea of marriage, to justify our social regulations, to paint a highly-coloured view of human nature, and thus, according to the title of his novel, to vindicate it from the attacks of her detractors, from the dark colouring of misanthropy, by proving that whatever is vicious or bad is *not* nature, but a deviation from it; that depravity, vice, and irreligion, so widely diffused through human nature, are not essential to it; but that, on the contrary sentiment, virtue

and piety constitute its essence. In warmly recommending, therefore, this romance to the perusal of youth, and even of parents and guardians, we do not think we are recommending *novel reading*, but the perusal of a system of morals congenial to the dignity of human nature, and calculated to promote rational happiness. As the numerous host of our common novel writers, instead of defending virtuous truths, and exposing vicious folly, too often represent the precipitate choice of evil as a mark of a generous spirit, disobedience to parental authority, as a proof of a heroic mind; and love and philanthropy as the only rulers of our actions; we will, before we conclude this article, and our rapid view of the state of domestic and foreign literature, earnestly entreat our young and fair readers, who are seeking for materials to amuse their imagination and gratify their curiosity, to turn from the perusal of those idle, dangerous, and unfaithful pictures of human life, (the trash of Circulating Libraries,) to those faithful descriptions contained in authentic travels, which display the wonders of nature in remote regions, trace the intellectual characters of men, savage or civilized, and mark, with the pencil of truth, the variations of customs, and the shades of national manners. By such a change in their taste, we will venture to assert, that, however great may be their eagerness after rational entertainment, they will never want the means to satisfy their inclination for reading. For, we may sincerely, and with justice, congratulate our countrymen, on the immense store of knowledge, and means of improvement, which the numberless and successful exertions of our judicious writers have laid open to our view. We may presume to congratulate them on the eminent and unquestionable superiority, for sound sense, nice judgment, and general information, which the literature of England has attained over that of the neighbouring countries; a pre-eminence which, among many others, we are ready to ascribe to the same cause, that has given to England a superiority in the arts; namely, to the benign influence of a virtuous and enlightened Sovereign, who is the patron of science, the defender of virtue, of its safeguard, religion; and the father of his people.

† *Belinda*.

* Chiefly *the West Indian*.

Alphabetical List

Belinda. By Maria Edgeworth, 3vols. 8vo. 1l. 1s.

This novel, though deficient perhaps in the contrivance, with respect to plot, and in the ingenuity with respect to catastrophe, is remarkable for its faithful delineation of living manners. (p. 448)

Elnathan; ou les Ages de l'Homme, traduit du Chaldéen.

"Elnathan; or the Ages of Man, translated from the Chaldean." Par A. B. Marmorieres, &c. 3 tomes, 8vo. Paris. 1802.

The author of this publication has adopted the plan of delivering a system of moral instruction, by means of an interesting story, in which he has given us his opinions respecting the various periods of the existence of men. The book does not want merit; but it is too florid and pompous. It may be read, however, with pleasure and profit. (p. 450)

Father and the Daughter. By Mrs. Opie.

This is a short, pathetic tale, related in a plain, but very impressive manner. (p. 451)

Isabel; or the Orphan of Valdarno. By a Student of Trinity College. Lane.

This romance is founded upon historical facts: the writer has delineated the character and the crimes of the Duke of Borgia, (nephew to the profligate Pope Alexander the Sixth) in the same colours as history has pourtrayed them to us. (p. 452)

Letters of a Solitary Wanderer, containing narratives of various descriptions. By Charlotte Smith, 3 Vols. Low.

These volumes have not the originality which Mrs. Smith's former novels exhibited. We cannot wonder at it, the author has nearly accomplished forty volumes in labours of this description. It may be expected, that she has exhausted her imagination. (p. 452)

Man of Fortitude. By — Frere, Esq.

The author of this well-written and truly moral novel, (the events of which, however, are rather improbable), seems to be deeply read in the works of J. J. Rousseau, and his enthusiastic admirers. (p. 453)

Old Nick, a Satyrical Story. In 3 volumes. By the writer of a Piece of Family Biography. [454/455]

This work is written in obvious imitation of FIELDING and STERNE: it does not fall much below the knowledge of mankind and genuine humour of the former, and has something of the SHANDYAN irregularity and spirit. It is an amusing story. (pp. 454–55)

Percival, or Nature Vindicated, a Novel. By R. C. Dallas, Esq. 4 vol. 12mo. 18s. boards. Longman and Rees.

The appellation of *novel* has, in this work, been restored to a considerable share of that dignity which the compositions of a Richardson first attached to it. From the perusal of it, the purest heart and most enlightened head may receive delight and instruction. (p. 455)

School for Fashion. By Mrs. Thicknesse.

The best trait in this work is its moral tendency, and the admirable instruction it contains, to correct the education of female youth. (p. 457)

Uncle Thomas, a romance, from the French of Pigault Le Brun, 4 vols. Lane. 1801.

This novel has been highly celebrated, on the continent, for its wit, its humour, and its satire; to all of which it lays unquestionable claim. (p. 461)

FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1803

From 'Introduction: Novelists', pp. xliv–xlix.

“Half pleas'd, contented will I be,
Contented half to please.”

Such seems to be their motto, and that of their readers, for novels are certainly the lowest class of literary productions: (*lowest* we say, though we rank a good novel very high amongst the works of genius;) and the mania of NOVEL WRITING seems to pervade all orders of writers, as that of NOVEL-READING does all classes of readers.

“Novels maintain their hold with such unfailing sway,
We love them e'en in age, and at our latest day*.”

Were the NOVELISTS of the present time always careful to hold up virtue to esteem, and vice to abhorrence; were they to present only fine models of heroic virtue, invincible chastity, and noble disinterestedness, we should think their works interesting, as they offer the very form and pressure of the times, and display scenes which come home to every breast, and which touch the springs of the passions of the heart.—We should think them useful as, conveying to humble and illiterate readers, an antidote to the poison which the enemies of religion and the state continue to pour forth in various popular productions; but far, very far, from affording a salutary food for the mind, most of our modern novels are, themselves, the infected vehicles of false moral and religious principles. The shelves of the circulating li- [xliv/xlv] braries, which supply a very large proportion of the younger part, at least, of the population of the country with maxims, ideas, and topics of conversation, are loaded with pernicious romances, which poison while they amuse the mind, and pervert while they profess to inform the understanding. Such is the common trash of novels, periodically manufactured for the summer or winter markets; and such are chiefly those which are imported from the continent into our happy island. We do, then, earnestly entreat the affectionate parent to prevent such works from falling into the hands of their children; and we will point out to his vigilance, principally, that profligate production*, the too celebrated *Delphine*. If, in this tale, Mad. DE STAEL captivates by the most lively descriptions, attaches by the most refined sentiments, and melts the heart by passages of the deepest sensibility; she is, nevertheless, dangerous by the immorality of most of her pictures; while the catastrophe of her tale is highly improbable. A reader whose character is already formed, and garrisoned by good sense and sound principles, may peruse it without danger and with interest, and find in it a too true picture of the profligacy of the present Parisian society; but, like the *Heloïse* of the immortal Rousseau, *Delphine* would too much exalt and disorder the imagination, as well as too powerfully excite the passions of youth.

Mrs. C**** is a more moral, and, consequently, a less dangerous novelist than Mad. DE STAEL; she has endeavoured to show, and we think successfully, by captivating pictures, which leave a more lasting impression than the wisest advice, into what an abyss of misery even the most innocent love may plunge its deluded votaries; and how far the ridiculous and insulting pride of birth may harden the heart, and mislead [xlv/xlvi] the judgment; but, far above all the foreign novelists, Mad. DE GENLIS seems to excel in this species of composition. She softens and refines the heart without seducing the imagination; and she has, happily, in her last production, ridiculed a false taste for the horrific; charmingly described the pastoral pursuits of that life which the golden age portrays; wisely contrasted the intrigues of an adventurer with the virtuous principles of a good heart and sound integrity; satirised the living opinions of republican inconsistency; and delineated the political causes and effects of revolutionary principles. These true observations she has verified by the result of personal knowledge and experienced judgment.

England can also boast of FEMALE NOVELISTS of the most sterling merit. She has produced many ladies distinguished for their exquisite beauty, rare virtue, and excellent good sense; but, until the reign of Elizabeth, few were noted either for their learning or their genius. Whatever may be said of modern manners, it must be at least acknowledged, that modern education has been

peculiarly favourable to the disclosure of female talents; and that, in point of mental accomplishments, the fair of the present day far excel those of any former epocha.

Among our present female writers Mrs. WEST holds a most distinguished place. Vigilant in observation and active in exertion, she openly and manfully braves the enemies of religious and social order, throws the gauntlet to the philosophical sages, the *Paines*, the *Woolstoncrafts* [*sic*], the *Godwins*, the *Williamses* of the age; hurls defiance in the face of fashionable vice, and holds up her unblushing votaries to obloquy and shame. She has, successfully, exposed to ridicule, the middle classes of society, who ape the follies, the extravagances, and the vices of their superiors, in her last novel, whose story is well managed, and neither deficient in ingenuity nor interest, while its incidents are natural, and its characters well preserved. She may be exceeded in [xlvi/xlvii] liveliness of imagination and sharpness of wit; but she yields to none in good sense, judicious observation, and sound principles.

Mrs. WEST has many competitors to the same literary fame, but few successful rivals: among them we will notice Mrs. PARSONS, who strongly captivates the interest, and is always in favour of virtue; and the unknown author of *Home*, who, pure in her sentiments and elegant in her language, has unhappily too much protracted her tale, and thus rendered it tedious. Equally unexceptionable in her morals, Mrs. HUNTER, of *Norwich*, perplexes her story by a continual introduction of new personages: she leads her readers through fields which would be pleasant, if they were not impeded by clods in the path, gaps to pass through, or stiles to climb over. How much, however, are the productions of our English female novelists superior to the licentious trumpery, or the extravagant fooleries, of the French and German presses! Estimable is the novel published by Miss GUNNING, who will, we hope, feel realised, for her felicity, those pictures of domestic happiness she has so agreeably traced in her production; as well as that of Miss PORTER, who will, we doubt not, by the deserved applause she has met with, be encouraged to farther exertions in this kind of writing, in which she has so eminently succeeded. Miss SOPHIA WOODFALL, daughter of the late celebrated short-hand writer, is entitled to equal commendation, for her interesting and unexceptionable work, called *Frederick Montravers*.

Among the novel writers of the male sex, the unknown authors of *Monkton* and of *Le Forester* stand eminently conspicuous. The first has delineated, with sterling humour, the most prominent features of that scriptural cant and fanatical spirit, which prevailed among our countrymen towards the middle of the seventeenth century; of that spirit which is not extinct [xlvii/xlviii] in our days, and which justly deserves the lash of ridicule. The second, who, every where in his work, betrays a gloomy cast of mind, though much genius and mental vigour, has, in a story well told, whose incidents are improbable, but whose characters are well drawn, inveighed bitterly against those *new men*, who, without birth or personal pre-eminence, hold every rank and fill every department; and who are, of course, insolent and tyrannical in their prosperity: he has, in short, scattered a variety of remarks, both moral and political, highly creditable to his principles, talents, and judgment.

The author of the *Strolling Player*, we understand Mr. LUCAS, a young writer of good talents and virtuous intentions, has painted human nature, in most instances, admirably correct; but sometimes injudiciously, in those situations and scenes in which she ought to be screened from the public eye. From such a writer, however, we have, in his future productions, every thing to expect; and we consider the above-mentioned novel as the first emanation of extraordinary talents.

The last NOVEL-WRITER we shall notice is Mr. LATHOM: our readers must know that, in novels as in many other articles of literature, or of household furniture, there is a kind of fashion; at one time all ghosts, castles, corridors [*sic*], or monsters; at another, some likeness of human life. Mr. LATHOM has tried both the marvellous and the natural romance. In his marvellous romance, whose essence is *much ado about nothing*, he has adopted that kind of work which the German school first suggested, and the genius of Mrs. RADCLIFFE rendered popular. His novel resembles hers only in scenery, which lies in France and Italy, in woods and monasteries; but he is a very distant follower of her exquisite productions. In Mrs. RADCLIFFE's mysteries we find motives for most of the contrivances; but, in Mr. LATHOM's productions, there is mystery without any other motive

than the love of [xlviii/xlix] mystery. The *Romance of the Forest*, a creation of genius, enchants and transports the fancy; while *Astonishment* excites only wonder, and merely attracts the curiosity. Mr. LATHOM, in his natural novel, has, without exhibiting much force of character, produced many laughable incidents, broad farce, and a great variety of practical jokes: this industrious author has, however, shown himself with more advantage in his dramatic production, which is greatly superior to his other literary works. His *Wife of a Million*, although extravagant, is still an amusing woman, of uncommon spirit and ingenuity. It has been performed, with success, at three different theatres: its plot is well contrived, and its incidents truly dramatic. Hence, though not very eminent as a novel writer, Mr. LATHOM may be deservedly ranked amongst the modern dramatists, to whom we shall draw the attention of our readers.

[p. xlv:] * Earl Camden is said to have learned Spanish, very late in life, in order to read the romances in that language, having exhausted those written in English, French, and Italian. Every scholar knows that Cato learned Greek, at sixty years of age, to read the romances in that tongue; and that the late Dr. Blair was delighted with the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, *Don Quixote*, and the works of Mrs. Radcliffe.

[p. xlv:] * We ought also to notice a production of this class far more vicious and contemptible; but the curiosity which our remarks might occasion, alone prevents us from naming it.

Alphabetical List

Algerine Captive. 2 vols. Robinson. 1802.

This is more a memoir than a novel; it is founded in fact, and does not give a flattering picture either of Algiers or of the American colonies. It, however, contains many amusing and interesting anecdotes. (p. 440)

Astonishment!!! 2 vols. By Francis Lathom. Longman and Rees.

Astonishment is not a misnomer, for there is much mystery and intricacy in the tale. We would wish to see banished from our literature those hobgoblins, which the German school first suggested, and which Mrs. Radcliffe [*sic*], by her superior talents, rendered popular. The author, though not destitute of merit, is certainly very far from enchanting the fancy, like the *Romance of the Forest*. (p. 442)

Author (The) and the Two Comedians; or, the Adopted Child. 228pp. Allen.

This novel, the profits of which will be appropriated to benevolent purposes, though hasty, possesses good talents, and some knowledge of the world. (pp. 442–43)

Castle of the Thuilleries [*sic*]; or, a narrative of all the events which have taken place in the interior of that palace, from the time of its construction to the eighteenth brumaire of the year VIII. Translated from the French, By Francis Lathom. 2 vols. London. Longman. 1803.

This is a hasty, defective, and inanimate translation of an uncommonly curious and interesting publication, which has but lately been printed in France, and which contains many singular revolutionary anecdotes. The circumstance which much weakens the interest of the book, is, that fact is manifestly blended with fiction, and truth with falsehood; yet, a work which possesses so many probably and curious relations, cannot fail to be generally sought after. (p. 443)

Delphine. By Madame de Stael Holstein. 6 vols. 8vo. 1l. 1s. Mawman. 1803.

This is a translation full of inaccuracies, and bearing evident marks of ignorance and haste, of a French novel, which has excited a considerable degree of curiosity. (p. 446)

The History of the Grubthorpe Family; or, the Old bachelor and his Sister Penelope. By Mrs. Hunter, of Norwich, author of *Letitia*. 3 vols. Longman and Rees.

This novel contains many family anecdotes, interesting and amusing, as well as precepts and examples of the purest morals. (p. 451)

Home, a Novel; in five volumes. Mawman. London. 1803.

“Expect not a story deck’d in the garb of Fancy,—but look at home.”

The sentiments of this novel are good, the moral excellent, and the language correct, rather than elegant. (p. 452)

Infidel Father (The). By the Author of “A Tale of the Times,” “A Gossip’s Story,” &c. In 3 vols. 12mo. 15s. Longman and Rees.

This novel points out the dangerous effects of infidel morality, as taught by system; and it does it with spirit and propriety. The picture it exhibits is strong, and yet probable and just. It is a work of much interest and utility. (p. 452)

Julietta; or, the disadvantages of deformity. 3s. 6d. Johnson. 1803.

This is a sort of novel replete with abstract and metaphysical reasoning. It likewise contains many false principles, of a moral, religious, and political nature: there are in it, however, many fine passages and sentiments. (p. 454)

[Note: The title given in the *Flowers of Literature* differs from that given in EN2, where it is ‘Julietta, or the triumph of mental acquirements over personal defects’, published by Johnson at the same price given in the periodical, but with publishing date as 1802.]

Le Forester, A Novel; by the author of Arthur Fitz-Albini. 3 vols. 12mo. 10s. 6d. White.

These volumes, which exhibit proofs of genius and mental vigour, are the productions of a mind soured by disappointment. The story is well told, the characters are ably drawn, and the sentiments pertinent and appropriate. (p. 454)

Mansfield (Amelia). Translated from the French of Mad. C***, author of *Malvina* and *Claire d’Albe*. 3 vols. London. Gameau and Co. 1803.

A dull, inanimate, and wretched translation of an interesting and uncommonly well-written French novel, whose morals are more pure than those usually conveyed in the productions of the French press. (p. 455)

Monks (The Three); translated by J. Sarrett.

A novel, containing a few good passages, but of most detestable principles—consequently, the less which is said or known of it the better. (p. 456)

Monckton; or, the Fate of Eleanor. A Novel, in three volumes; with a general Defence of Modern Novels. By the Author of Count di Novini. Robinson. 1802.

This novel is principally directed against the hypocrisy of affected puritanism. Its satire is humorous and keen. (p. 457)

Mysterious Visit! (The), a Novel, founded on facts; in four volumes. By Mrs. Parsons. Hurst. 1803.

A publication very interesting by the easy and natural display of its characters, and the concern it inspires for the heroine. Its moral is perfectly pure. (p. 457)

Reprobate; a Novel, in two volumes. Translated by the author of "The Wife and the Mistress, &c." Lane.

A bad translation, under another title, (why, we cannot conceive) of a charming novel, much after the manner of Sterne, written by Augustus La Fontaine, intitled [*sic*], Tableaux de Famille. (p. 459)

Strolling Player; or, life and adventures of William Templeton. 3 vols. 12mo. 850pp. Crosby.

The adventures of this novel are highly interesting and amusing. Some of the incidents are rather improbable, but, to a modern novel, this circumstance is no drawback. (p. 461)

Thaddeus of Warsaw; in four vols. by Miss Porter.—Longman and Rees.

A very interesting historical novel, which relates the wandering and unhappy fate of one of those Polish noblemen, banished from their native land on account of its dismemberment—"a dismemberment which," as Dr. Ralph expresses himself, "has proved the greatest scourge which the modern world has known. It has proved, that men, in whose estimation force is every thing, and justice nothing, may with impunity play with the property of sovereigns, the oath of subjects, and the faith of tre[ati]es. it has, perhaps, prepared that dreadful French revolution, of which so many thousands and ten thousands have been the victims!" (p. 461)

Very Strange, but Very True! or, the History of an Old Man's Young Wife. By Francis Lathom. 4 vols. Longman and Rees. 1803.

Though this romance is deficient in plot and force of character, there are many amusing and laughable incidents, and a great variety of practical jokes. (p. 464)

Voyagers, en Suisse, &c. i.e. "The Travellers in Switzerland; by E. F. Lantier, author of *the Travels of Antenor*. 3 vols. 8vo. Paris. 1803.

The adventures of a couple, whom love and virtue have united, constitute a part of these volumes, in which are also woven other topics, such as descriptions of Switzerland, accounts of its inhabitants, their modes of life, their habits and manners, &c.—the whole forming an olio which will be very agreeable to the reader. (p. 465)

War-Office (The); a Novel. By Miss Gunning, author of "The Packet, Farmer's Boy, &c. &c." In 3 vols. Jones. 1803.

The fair author of this publication is already advantageously known by her literary productions. This is very easy and natural—it captivates curiosity, and interests the feelings. (p. 465)

** The following works were not transmitted to us in time to obtain a place amongst the preceding Alphabetical Notices.—We must again remark, that volumes, to which a due degree of attention is expected to be paid, should be sent without delay, as we have already begun to collect materials for our next publication.

Depraved Husband; (The) a Novel. By Madame de Genlis. 2 vols. 6s.

This is a very excellent moral production; the avowed object of which is to expose the sophistry and false principles of Delphine. It has effectually attained its object. (p. 466)

Montravers, Frederick; or, the Adopted Son. By Sophia Woodfall. 2 vols. 7s. Crosby.

A very entertaining novel, in a series of letters. They are, we believe, the first production of an accomplished young lady, the daughter of a celebrated literary character, lately deceased. (p. 466)

FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1804

From 'Introduction: Novelists', pp. xliv–xlix.

In order to preserve the uniformity which we have already adopted, it will be proper to intimate, that a number of interesting fragments in the present volume have been culled from the productions of

NOVELISTS;

for the mania amongst this class of writers seems by no means to be on the wane; and it is with much pleasure we observe, that, considering them en masse, their writings are by no means of that baleful class which, a few years ago, so materially tended to contaminate the virtuous minds of youth, by the introduction of immoral and irreligious principles. When we consider the influence of works of fancy, so widely circulated, and so extensively perused, this appears to be a subject of no small gratification; for, while we observe that certain [xliv/xlv] writers of celebrity who, in late revolutionary times, excited the contempt and pity of moralists, on account of their new-fangled sophistry, have seen their error, and atoned for it by the production of works which do credit to their genius, and will prove of service to mankind; we also perceive that even the minor novelists, whose volumes fill the shelves of the circulating libraries, have, in their late productions (speaking generally) abandoned that affected cant and sentimentality which once formed so extensive a portion of their component parts.

This change, which we hope will become still more extensive, is an event of no trivial importance, because modern novels have hitherto been found to contain mostly extravagant representations, though offered to the world as a picture of real life; the result of which is, that when foreigners form their opinion of our national character from such works, they have good grounds for their satire; while such a caricature, as is thus afforded, may some time excite the astonishment of posterity at the absurdities of the eighteenth century.

Another class of novel-writers, who sought for materials in the fabulous events of early ages, have also in a great degree disappeared; and we are no longer inundated with terrific tales of castles, ghosts, and caverns; these flights of the imagination have given place to the more rational subjects of love and courtship, ending like all modern comedies, in the holy state of matrimony: so that the great majority of our lately-published novels may be said to have for their motto the following old couplet:

“There once did live a lady fair,
And she was in love with a gentleman.”

But descending from general opinions to particular elucidations, we shall, by passing over such as are harmless in their nature and ordinary in their execution, leave ourselves room to specify a few which deserve to hold a distinguished rank in the repositories of fiction.

The active pen of MADAME DE GENLIS, whose successful efforts to ridicule that propensity for the hor- [xlv/xlvi] rific, we noticed in our last introduction, (p. xlvi.) has, in her novel called *The Depraved Husband*, given, we hope, the death-blow to these disorganising principles of the French philosophers, which threatened to break asunder the bonds of morality and piety, throughout the civilised world. In the present instance, her object has been to expose the depravity and licentiousness of such writers, by the introduction, with the happiest effect, of many of their most obnoxious passages, which their authors evidently intended to apply to real life. In short, we have met with no production of this kind more capable of rendering service to the world, by the exposure of false principles, if we except MISS HAMILTON'S “*Modern Philosophers*.”

We are sorry, however, that we cannot bestow equal praise upon a subsequent work of MADAME DE GENLIS, “*The Duchess of La Valliere*;” which, though it exhibits the sufferings arising to such votaries of vice as have not become callous to virtue, yet it may have a bad effect in its ultimate operation, by inculcating the idea that the crime of adultery is diminished, the greater

the rank of the parties who commit it. The intention of the indefatigable author was, however, indisputably good, and hence censure would be unjustifiable.

Amongst the fair novelists of our own country, MRS. LE NOIR holds a very distinguished rank. Her novel, entitled, "Village Anecdotes," is a very interesting production, wherein every incident has the strongest claim to probability; and, notwithstanding an apology for numerous errata, he must be indeed fastidious, who could peruse it without uncommon satisfaction: her translations of French poetry in this novel, also afford an additional proof of her refined taste and ability.

MRS. HUNTER, in a novel, entitled "Letters from Mrs. Palmerston to her Daughter," has displayed a habit of observation on men and manners, which confers upon her no small credit; while the virtuous tendency of this work cannot fail to afford many useful lessons to the [xlvi/xlvii] juvenile reader. The tale of the mother-in-law is particularly praise-worthy.

The unknown author of "St. Clair; or, the Heiress of Desmond," whom we take to be a female, is likewise a writer of no common stamp: her work is replete with passages of the purest taste and most refined sensibility; and, though the rigid moralists might consider its plot to be of a dangerous tendency, yet it too plainly exposes the consequence of allowing sentiment to gain the ascendancy [*sic*] over reason, even in vulgar or untutored minds.

MRS. THOMPSON, who is well known to novel-readers, and whose writings are distinguished by just and probable characters, has added to her reputation by her late novel of "The Pride of Ancestry;" the style and incidents of which are easy and natural, while its object is the amusement of fancy and the improvement of life.

Reverting to the principal novel-writers of the other sex, we have no hesitation of classing in the foremost rank, MR. DALLAS, whose novel of "Percival" we criticised in our first volume, p. 455. This gentleman has since published another, under the title of "Aubrey," which, though we have not yet been able to do justice to it, in the way of extracts, we have no hesitation in saying is far, very far superior to most of such productions; as it not only has an unequivocal moral tendency, but abounds in the most interesting situations and adventures.

A new candidate for literary fame, as a novel writer, has started in the person of MR. H. SIDDONS, the object of whose production is to inculcate a strict regard for virtuous conduct, in the various relations of life; as a first attempt, it is entitled to considerable praise, though the author is not very happy in his imitation of the manner of Fielding.

The anonymous author of "The Swiss Emigrants," advantageously exhibits the happiness derivable from [xlvii/xlviii] beneficence, even in obscure stations, and gives such a picture of the miseries of continental war as must make us truly envious of our insulated situation.

We must here remark that, except those already mentioned, a great portion of the novels which have been published since our last volume made its appearance, are foreign sprigs, transplanted and naturalised in our own soil. We have always been adverse to exuberances of the imagination, of exotic growth; but either the French or German literati have become more partial to morality, or our own doers into English have been more choice in their selection. We have seen a work of the jacobin and athiest [*sic*], BARON GOETHE, author of "The Sorrows of Werter," entitled, "Heliodora;" which, to our surprise, we found free from the gross immorality and scepticism that disgraced his former productions, the present tale being, with very few exceptions, interesting and harmless.

LAFONTAINE, another German writer of celebrity, and of less equivocal principles than his countryman the Baron, has also contributed abundantly to the stock of our libraries. His "Henrietta Bellman" is a very interesting publication, calculated to please every taste, and of a good moral tendency; while his "Lobenstein Village," also translated within the last year, abounds in strong and just satire, combined with such attractive incidents, and happy moral reflections, as must place it very high in the class to which it belongs.

But as perfection cannot be either attained or expected, we find a few passages in this work which contain principles only calculated for the meridian of Paris; a circumstance the more to be regretted, as the continuance of such productions as the one before us would soon recover this class of literature from the disrepute into which it has fallen; and thus leave but little room for the censure of the moralist against novels in general.

Another German, of considerable talent, M. KARAMSIN, has, in his tales, betrayed evident marks of genius, and shown much feeling and humanity in his [xlviiii/xlix] "Russian Tales." If they exhibit a true picture of human nature in Russia, it is evident that the hardy Russian breast contains a very warm and susceptible heart. He has recorded in them the benevolent virtue of a Russian peasant, which deserves to live in history.

We shall conclude this article with lamenting the wretched state in which foreign novels appear, when clothed in an English dress; from the ignorance of most of the translators, and the rapidity with which they are obliged to perform their task. We do not mean to make any particular allusion to the translators of the works above-mentioned, who are, on the whole, rather an exception to the stigma; but we must reprobate the practice of translating from a translation; most of the works which we have from the German being translated from French editions; the latter of which are, at best, but miserable and mutilated performances.

From 'Biographical Sketch of R. C. Dallas', pp. 27–34.

[Note: The discussion of Dallas's novels is limited to one paragraph on p. 34.]

Mr. Dallas's sentiments and character appear throughout his writings. In his dedication of Percival alone, short as it is, we see the affectionate husband, the tender father, and the friend of order and society. The description of the death of Cowper's daughter, in the third volume of *Aubrey*, is said to be the exact narrative of his own loss: a narrative, not to be read without a tear [...]

Alphabetical List

Augustus and Mary; or, The Maid of Buttermere. A Tale. By W. Mudford. 1 vol. pp. 188. Jones. 1804.

A true and interesting story is here ridiculously mutilated, for the purpose of swelling the volume, by the introduction of fictitious and irrelevant trash; and poor dame virtue, whose advocate the author professes to be, certainly never had a more miserable defender. Some attacks are made, in this wretched publication, upon several literary characters of prominence, which must, of course, give the reader a very high opinion of the author's judgement. (p. 449)

Heliodora; or, the Grecian Minstrel. From the German of Goëthe. 3 vols. 12mo. Dutton. 1804.

An interesting and moral tale, from the pen of a writer formerly celebrated for the immorality and impiety of his productions. (p. 454)

The History Of A Dog. Written By Himself, And Published By A Gentleman Of His Acquaintance. Translated from the French of Pigault Le Brun. Minerva press. 1804.

This is a novel which rivals 'Pompey the Little;' the translator deserves much praise, for having given such an animated copy of its entertaining original. (p. 455)

La Valliere (Duchess of). A Historical Romance. By Mad. De Genlis. 2 vols. 12mo. Pp. 480. Murray. 1804.

A work of much ability, but not very recommendable, considering that it is the history of a prostitute. Such a romance cannot be advantageous to most readers. (p. 456)

Night (The First) of My Wedding. Translated from the French of Pigault Le Brun. 2 vols. 12mo. 7s. Lane.

A humorous and very amusing novel of a writer already celebrated; translated with a spirited correctness very uncommon in our days. (p. 459)

Popular Tales. By Maria Edgeworth. 3 vols. 12mo. 15s. Johnson.

This lady, already well known by her moral publications, will acquire additional fame by her present production, which is more accessible to the middling class of readers. (p. 461)

Pride of Ancestry; or, Who is She? A Novel. In 4 vols. By Mrs. Thompson. 1804. Parsons.

A very entertaining work, which cannot fail to increase the reputation which the fair author has already acquired. (p. 461)

St. Clair; or, the Heiress of Desmond. By S. O. 12mo. Pp. 248. 4s. 1803. Highley.

This is a very attractive little volume, full of the finest sentiments of friendship and sensibility, though liable to the charge of inconsistency. (p. 463)

Tales (Russian). By Nicolai Karamsin. 8vo. Pp. 274. 10s. 6d. Printed by G. Sidney. No Bookseller's Name.

These are, for the most, love tales, which have much merit, though often alloyed by the tinsel of sentimentality, and the dross of declamation. (p. 463)

Unexpected Legacy; a Novel. By Mrs. Hunter, of Norwich. 2 vols. 12mo. 9s. Longman and Co.

The characters of this novel are such as occur in ordinary life; and they are so well delineated, that the work rises far above the majority of similar productions. (p. 466)

Village Anecdotes; or, the Journal of a Year, from Sophia to Edward. With Original Poems. By Mrs. Le Noir. 3 vols. Vernor and Hood. [466/467]

We wish that the pleasure derived by the reader of this volume may equal what we have ourselves received; it will then not be inconsiderable. (pp. 466–67)

Virtuous Poverty; a novel. In 4 vols. By Henry Siddons, Esq. Phillips. 1804.

This novel seems to be a tribute of filial affection to an excellent parent. The language is chaste and elegant, and the incidents numerous and rational. (p. 467)

FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1805

From 'Introduction: Novelists', pp. lvi–lxii.

With respect to works of fancy, they have been far less numerous during the period above mentioned, than for many preceding years; and, with great pleasure we add, that in proportion as their number has decreased, their claims to public notice have become greater. In short, we may class amongst the most pleasing and *well-written* productions of 1805 those of

NOVELISTS;

and not one work of that description has fallen under our own observation, which is likely, in any way, to contaminate the morals of the juvenile reader.

This is a consideration of no small importance, when we reflect on a truth that must be generally acknowledged, namely, that “in all stages of human society, from the time, at least, of its emerging from absolute barbarism, no disposition has been more general, than the delight which is taken in works of fiction.”

Thus, by the rational change in the sentiments of writers of eminence, by the decrease of those who had no pretensions to literary merit, and by the introduction to the paths of the *belles lettres* of gentlemen, who, though they make literature chiefly an amusement, do not hesitate to devote their attention to the writing of novels, the objections of persons of character and understanding to this kind of composition will soon be abolished, and novels, which till lately were considered as the most injurious publications that could be put into the hands of young persons, will be rescued from the odium and contempt which they had acquired, through the efforts of ignorance and licentiousness. [lvi/lvii]

The volumes which have, within these few years, contributed more than others to re-establish fictitious narratives upon the bases of morality and reason, are unquestionably those of Mr. DALLAS: they communicate a knowledge of human life and manners, that produces a better effect than hundreds of works which are the emanations of a depraved taste and a distempered fancy. We are happy in being enabled to add, that the opinion which we gave in our first volume (p. 455) of, we believe, the *first* novel written by this gentleman, is not only strengthened, but still farther increased by a perusal of his *Aubrey*. In this work, which is highly interesting on the score of its probability, the characters and manners are preserved throughout; and the author, by making his hero a clergyman, who, from great expectations, had neglected his profession in the early part of his life, and is, in consequence, reduced to a degree of distress bordering upon misery, inculcates a strict attention to the divine objects of it, and exposes the wickedness of taking orders merely with the view of preferment†.

Mr. GODWIN, whose *former* principles we viewed with detestation, and whose return to those of reason and sensibility we greeted with unqualified pleasure, has lately appeared again as a novel writer; and, in his *Fleetwood*, shows, in odious colours, the consequences of the passion of jealousy; but, by making the hero of his piece commit the most improbable and ridiculous outrages, he not only excites the disgust of the readers, who can scarcely find patience to follow [lvii/lviii] the character to the end of his career; but causes them to lay down the book with the conviction, that no such a being ever existed in the world. Indeed, some parts of the narrative are so extravagant, that we not only must enter our caveat against the assertion of the author, who says, that the story consists of such adventures as, for the most part, have occurred to at least one half of the Englishmen now existing, of the same rank of life as his hero; but we will assert, that such adventures never occurred to any human being; and thus the work, instead of teaching the recluse to form an idea of the world, will tend only to mislead him. In thus freely expressing our opinion, we are far from wishing to intimate, that 'Fleetwood' is not a work of merit. Any thing from the pen of Mr. Godwin must be interesting; but we must decidedly declare, that though this work contain many splendid passages, which bespeak the hand of a master, yet it will bear no comparison with 'Caleb Williams;' for, notwithstanding the tendency of that publication was mischievous in the

extreme, it nevertheless displayed sterling abilities. The character of 'Fleetwood,' on the contrary, though divested of political prejudice, is throughout absurd, and contradictory to common sense.

One of the principal novels which appeared soon after the conclusion of our last volume, and which we have examined in the present, is *Modern Literature*, from the pen of Dr. BISSET, who is now no more. It cannot be asserted, that novel-writing was the *forte* of this well-known character, who was eminent both as a biographer and a historian; but it must be admitted, that in the present work he has been more successful than in his other attempts at fictitious narrative. The subject affords a capacious field for observation, animadversion, and comment; and the doctor has, in each, displayed his talents for satire and his knowledge of human nature. His hero is a young man of respectable family, but small fortune, who, being destined to rise to eminence by the labours of his pen, [lviii/lix] has an opportunity of being introduced to literary characters and their employers, by which many interesting anecdotes are developed. The characters appear to be chiefly copied from nature; and the interest of the story is skilfully preserved by probable incidents.

Mr. T. HARRAL, a gentleman with whose name, as a writer, the public are not much acquainted, has thought proper to throw aside the anonymous mask, and avow himself the author of a very interesting novel, entitled *Scenes of Life*. The object of this work is, the laudable one of bringing into contempt the ridiculous and disgusting tenets of modern philosophers, as they prevailed a few years ago, when their progress bid fair to overthrow, with the altar and the throne, the moral system of all civilized nations. The author states, in an elaborate preface, that "coldness of constitution and imbecility of intellect are the only apologies which can be alleged, in the present day, for neutrality of principle, either civil or religious;" and the rational, though spirited, manner in which he has treated his subject, proves that *he* possesses neither one nor the other. This novel contains some judicious criticisms on the detestable principles of the German drama; and the work affords sufficient evidence, not only that the author possesses a correct taste, but that he is no tyro in the walks of literature.

Amongst the novels of the last or present year, a mark of the most favourable distinction must be placed upon a *Winter in London*, which is replete with excellent morality, wholesome satire, sometimes poignant, sometimes playful; and the appropriate situations which augment the interest from the first to the last page of the volumes. The characters are powerfully exhibited; and though many of them reflect the images, or rather the shadows, of the times, immediately before us; the moral they convey is of substantial moment. We have to regret, that our confined limits will not allow us to particularize the varieties of good sentiment and good sense, impressive description, [lix/lx] and touching incidents with which this work abounds. It is written by Mr. T. S. SURR, author of 'George Barnwell,' 'Splendid Misery,' &c.; and is no ways inferior to either of those well-received productions.

We shall conclude our sketch of the *masculine* attempts at the composition of fictitious narrative, by mentioning an uncommonly interesting and well-written novel of the *historical class*.

History, when it paints the errors and vices that, in all ages, have disgraced mankind, always fills the mind with melancholy. A man of feeling is naturally disposed to espouse the cause of the unfortunate, and is always much interested for the vanquished, the captive, and oppressed, even when suffering their deserts. Is it then wonderful or inexcusable, that such a man of feeling should have recourse, for relief, to the fairy pencil of imagination, which, at least, renders the prospect agreeable? If a melancholy incident, or a depraved character, in a romance, affect the heart, or shock the judgment, one has the consolation of reflecting that *it is not true*.

Such a consolation will be peculiarly necessary after perusing the attractive and well-concerted incidents of *Gondez the Monk*, the production of Mr. W. H. IRELAND, already well known to the public. Historical facts are, in this novel, so intimately blended with fiction, that the anxiety they excite is so great, as to leave an impression upon the mind that the whole is reality; such an impression is, indeed, little inferior to that produced by the celebrated novel called 'The Recess,' in which history has been so far perverted as to gain over the opinions of some of our most celebrated

writers, who have attempted to prove that the anecdotes were literally true. Mr. Ireland has dressed up his narrative quite in the *Shaksperian* [*sic*] style; and though many of his images and metaphors are *inflated*, and savour a little of the bombastic, yet no small number of others exhibit such brilliancy of imagination as we have seldom seen equalled. It is impossible, in our limits, to give even a brief idea of [lx/lxi] a story unusually complex, but the interest of which is kept up even to the last chapter.

The fertile pen of Mrs. PARSONS has, within the last year, produced no less than six volumes. Her novel, entitled *Murray House*, is formed upon very probable incidents, of which, we fear, too many examples are to be found in fashionable life, though perhaps they are not carried to the extremes which a writer is justified in describing. Indeed, from what *we know* of the temper and disposition of modern ladies of the *haut ton*, there is probably not one of them who would tacitly suffer herself to be conveyed from the very centre of fashion, to be hidden from the world in an untenable castle in the Highlands of Scotland. The novel however conveys an excellent moral, by exhibiting the severest punishment for guilt, and the most gratifying reward for virtue. The other three volumes are translations by Mrs. P. of six very pleasing and instructive tales from LAFONTAINE, which she has rendered into correct and elegant English.

Mrs. OPIE, whose beautiful poems have excited general admiration, has gained additional credit by her novel called *Adeline Mowbray; or, the Mother and Daughter*. It inculcates principles which cannot fail to make the most striking impression on an inexperienced mind, and prevent those errors of the affections into which youth is ever liable to fall.

Mrs. SERRES, a lady who also possesses considerable talent for versification, has produced a pleasant volume, entitled *St. Julian*, the plot of which is a clandestine correspondence between two lovers, in which the author seems to have made Rousseau her model. It is evident, that the fair writer does not estimate her prose so highly as she does her poetry; but it will well bear the test of examination.

We shall terminate this article, by recommending to the notice of our readers three other novels by our fair countrywomen, viz. *Can we doubt it? or, the His- [lxi/lxii] tory of Two Families of Norwich*, by Mrs. GOOCH; *Second Love*, by Mrs. NORRIS; and *Crimes and Characters*, by Mrs. PILKINGTON. Amongst the new novels which were sent to us at the close of the year, and which we recommend as being extremely interesting and unexceptionable, having perused them most attentively, are, *The Eventful Marriage*, in four volumes; *Ferdinand and Amelia*, in three volumes; and *Eversfield Abbey*, three volumes; all of which are modestly published without the names of the authors. They are probably of the opinion, that

“Fame, the great ill, from small beginnings grows
Swift from the first, and every moment brings
New vigour to her flights, new pinions to her wings.”

DRYDEN.

† Since the close of our extracted portion, Mr. Dallas has produced a work, under the title of ‘*The Morlands: Tales illustrative of the Simple and Surprising*,’ which is now under our consideration. The title is attractive, and the work more than gratifies expectation. It consists of two tales, both of them surprising, and yet, the author having “kept *possibility* in view,” both of them simple. We cannot but think, that there is a strong resemblance between the first ‘Morland’ and Mr. Pratt’s ‘Benignus,’ in ‘Liberal Opinions.’ Both young, interesting, ardent, and equally the victims of their own benevolence and simplicity.

Alphabetical List

Adeline Mowbray; or, the Mother and Daughter. A Novel. In three Volumes. By Mrs. Opie. Second Edition. 12s. Longman & Co. 1805.

This is the most interesting of any of the productions of the beautiful and accomplished author; it inculcates the most important moral truths, and excites admiration by the elegance and simplicity of its style. (p. 416)

Aubrey: a Novel. By R. C. Dallas, Esq. 4 vols. 12mo. 18s. Longman and Co. 1804.

Mr. Dallas is, perhaps, the most chaste and elegant novel writer of the present period. All his works have in view some grand moral object; and Aubrey, in particular, excites throughout the most lively interest. (p. 417)

Can we Doubt it? or, the genuine History of two Families of Norwich, By Charlotte B. Malarme, Member of the Academy of Arcades of Rome. Translated from the French, by Mrs. Villa-Real-Gooch. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 527. 10s. 6d. Crosby & Co. 1805.

Although there is much in these volumes with which the general reader will be pleased, yet we could point out many parts which are objectionable on the score of probability, and many more which would demand the censure of the impartial critic; it is, however, far from deserving the title of a bad production. (p. 418)

Crimes and Characters; or, the New Foundling. A Novel. By Mrs. Pilkington, Author of 'Parental Education,' &c. &c. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 750. 12s. Earle and Hucklebridge. 1805.

This novel is replete with affecting incidents; but their improbability diminishes the interest they would otherwise excite. (p. 419)

Duellists (The); or, Men of Honour. A Story to show the Folly and Sin of Duelling. By W. Lucas. 12mo. pp. 182. 3s. 6d. Suttaby. 1805.

An excellent moral tale, which breathes throughout a pure spirit of religion. (p. 420)

Eve (The) of San Piedro. A Novel. In 3 vols. 10s. 6d. Cadell and Davies. 1804.

Italian castles, villainous monks, and all the addenda of the works of Mrs. Radcliffe are here introduced, though with inferior effect. The story contains too much of the marvellous; but the author possesses talents of no ordinary kind. (p. 420)

Eventful Marriage (The), a Tale. By the Author of Count di Novini, and Monckton. 4 vols. 12mo. pp. 1300. 16s. Crosby. 1806. [420/421]

The author has already gained much credit by his works of fancy; but the present novel is rendered doubly interesting, by the combination of historical facts. The language is chaste and elegant. (pp. 420–21)

Ferdinand and Amelia. A Novel. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 678. 10s. 6d. Crosby & Co. 1805.

The author, who has concealed his name, makes many pretensions to probability; and, on the whole, his tale justifies the idea which he holds out.—There is nothing absurdly improbable in the volumes, but much that is extremely interesting; and the whole is well written. (p. 422)

Fleetwood; or, the New Man of Feeling. A Novel. By W. Godwin. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 937. Phillips. 1805.

We have only to hope that Providence will preserve us, and all our readers, from such sentiments and brutality of disposition as are displayed by the *feeling* hero of this novel. As a literary work, it makes no addition to Mr. Godwin's acknowledged fame. (p. 422)

Gondez, the Monk. A Romance of the thirteenth Century. By W. H. Ireland, Author of the 'Abbess,' &c. &c. 4 vols. 12mo. pp. 920. 16s. Earle and Huckbridge. 1805.

We do not hesitate to pronounce this to be one of the most interesting, and most elegantly written, novels which have fallen under our inspection during the present year. Many of the passages would not disgrace Shakspeare [*sic*]; but the anxiety which the author still possesses to imitate the immortal bard, leads him into absurdities, which deteriorate the real merit of the work; these are the frequent introduction of *witches*, *demons*, and *ghosts*, which have so little relation to the chief incidents of the story, that we hope to see their officious interference dispensed with in a future edition, which we doubt not will be demanded. (p. 423)

Love and Gratitude; or, Traits of the Human Heart. Translated from Augustus La Fontaine, by Mrs. Parsons. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 742. 12s. Norbury, Brentford. 1805.

These are six very interesting tales, all of which have a moral tendency. They are far superior to the common-place novels of the day, and derive no small advantage from being translated into excellent English. (p. 426)

Modern Literature. A Novel. By R. Bisset, LL.D. 3 vols. 12mo. 15s. Longman and Co. 1804.

Dr. Bisset, who not long since paid the debt of nature, was one of the most industrious literati of the present day; but his *forte* was by no means novel-writing. 'Modern Literature,' however, is amongst the best of his productions of that class: most of the characters are taken from life. (p. 429)

Morlands (The); or Tales, illustrative of the simple and surprising. By R. C. Dallas, Esq. 4 vols. 12mo. pp. 1356. 1l. 1s. Longman & Co. 1806.

These tales are stated in the preface to contain a display of common, or probable facts, natural sentiments, and characters so composed, as to engage the attention and interest the mind. That they will do so, we cannot entertain a doubt, after the different specimens we have perused of this author's abilities. The tales are said to be founded on a series of facts: so surprising, as to seem improbable, till accounted for in the winding up of the story. (p. 429)

Murray House. A plain unvarnished Tale. By Mrs. Parsons. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 895. 12s. Norbury, Brentford. 1805.

The respectable author of this novel is well known to our readers. She has gained additional credit by its production; and, we fear, it is a portrait which must come home to the feelings of many persons in the fashionable world, who bear a heavy heart under a profusion of riches and honours. It is extremely well written. (p. 429)

Scenes of Life. A Novel. By T. Harral, Esq. 3 vols. pp. 680. Crosby and Co. 1805.

This work is written with a view to expose folly and castigate vice; and the folly and viciousness which are at- [432/433] tacked are those of jacobinism, infidelity, and immorality. The subject is treated in a masterly manner, and the work contains many curious anecdotes, which we think are taken from real life. (pp. 432-43)

Second Love; or, the Way to be Happy. A Novel. By Mrs. Norris. 2 vols. 12mo. pp. 562. 7s. 2d. Crosby. 1806.

We shall merely announce this volume, as one of which we entertain considerable expectations; but to which, as yet, we have not been able to pay proper attention. (p. 433)

St. Julian. In a Series of Letters. By Mrs. J. T. Serres. 8vo. pp. 167. Ridgway. 1805.

The heroine of this tale being compelled by her family to marry an aged nobleman, corresponds with St. Julian, her youthful lover, in the style of Eloisa; at length the [433/434] husband very conveniently dying, she is united to the object of her choice. The letters are interesting and well written. (pp. 433–34)

FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1806

From 'Introduction: Novelists', pp. lxxiv–lxxxii.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that the most *obscene* dramatist, whose writings ever polluted the English stage, was a *woman*; and it is a circumstance as remarkable, and as such to be regretted, that, with the exception of a certain *monkish* author, the most *indecent* playwright [*sic*], and the *grossest* and *most immoral* novelists of the present day, are *women!* [lxxiv/lxxv]

The *fair* author of *Zofloya* had before *distinguished* herself, in the annals of literary libertinism; and she has now *treated* HER admirers with the development of such scenes, as, we had hoped, no female hand could be found to trace.

But, as we wish not to initiate our readers in the mysteries of brothels, or in the more secret vices of the cloister, we dismiss the ungrateful subject.

Fashion, that universal arbitress, though frequently erroneous in her decisions, has, for once, by sanctioning Mr. Surr's *Winter in London*, which has now passed through eight editions, proved that she is sometimes deserving of attention. This truly excellent novel abounds with satire on the fashionable world. The author's shafts are admirably levelled; they never fall short of their aim; his *hits* are numerous and *palpable*. Mr. Surr very broadly exposes the absurdities of certain fashionable newspapers, and their patrons; and the infamous artifices of malignant reviewers. He has displayed great taste in the grouping of his masquerade scene; the character of the duchess of Belgrave is portrayed by the hand of a master; the letters of that lady are written in the most fascinating style of characteristic elegance; and, upon the whole, the *Winter in London*, must rank with the very best of novels.

Leonora, by Miss Edgeworth, contains some excellent writing, and is extremely well adapted to expose the absurdity, and pernicious tendency, of modern philosophy.

We were much surprised to find, that the puerile and inconsistent novel of *Adelaide* was written by the same author. Abounding with caverns, groans, shrieks, murders, hobgoblins, and all the wretched mummery of the Radcliffean school, it is, in every respect, far below the former works of Miss Edgeworth.

Mr. Siddons, the son of our venerable actress, whose *Virtuous Poverty* we noticed with approbation [lxxv/lxxvi] in our third volume, encouraged by the success which that work experienced, has produced another novel, under the title of *Maid, Wife, and Widow*, which, we think, in every respect, surpasses the former.

We are sorry that Mr. Holcroft, who has, at times, been favoured with no slight portion of public applause, should make himself appear, so repeatedly, in so short a space of time, so extremely ridiculous and contemptible. His *Hugh Trevor*, and *Anna St. Ives*, notwithstanding their ponderosity, and the infamous tendency of their principles, were not wholly without attraction; but his *Bryan Perdue*, with which he has recently *favoured* the world, is, in truth, one of the most wretched of wretched novels. It seems to be quite time for this gentleman to leave off writing.

Mackenzie's elegantly written *morceau*, the *Man of Feeling*, must be fresh in the recollection of every reader of taste; and every reader of taste will be gratified, on finding an agreeable companion to that work, in the *Stranger, or New Man of Feeling*. The typographic neatness of this volume is an additional recommendation.

The *romance* of *Castle Nuovier* is somewhat too *romantic*; but the story is ingeniously told.

In our preceding volume, we announced the appearance of Mr. Dallas's *Morlands*. Since that period, we have again read the work with renewed and increased pleasure. The diction of the first tale is at once classical and elegant; the moralist [*sic*] truly unexceptionable; and the plot, though not intricate, excites great interest. As a sport of fancy, the second tale is highly and irresistibly amusing.

Mr. Lewis's *Feudal Tyrants*, though abounding in the marvellous, possesses more originality and probability than his celebrated *Monk*; or indeed than most of his other productions; yet, it is, at

first, somewhat intricate; and, perhaps to his fair readers, may prove, as a novel, less amusing. This deficiency, however, is amply atoned for by the very high interest excited by the adventures of the virtuous Urania, by Venosta's Memoirs; and also by those of the heroic, but unfortunate Adelaide, lady of the Beacon Tower.

Miss Owenson's *Novice of St. Dominick*, and *Wild Irish Girl*, possess an extraordinary portion of attraction. The language of these novels is elegant, brilliant, and animated; and the plot and incidents are fraught with interest of no common stamp. Added to the requisite merits of a novel, the *Wild Irish Girl* contains much pleasing and useful information on the manners and customs of the Irish.—The first-mentioned novel deserves, indeed, more praise than we have room to bestow on it. The combination of historical facts with fictitious narrative is continued through the work in a striking manner; and we must declare, that with respect to originality of thought, and beauty of language, we do not recollect any modern work of fancy, which is superior, if equal to it. In this point of view, her *Wild Irish Girl* is greatly inferior.

Mrs. Temple, the fair author of some excellent poems, of which we took ample notice in our preceding volume, has produced a ponderous novel, in five volumes, entitled *Ferdinand Fitzormond*. It contains several interesting situations, and a number of beautiful pieces of poetry; but some of the characters are unnatural, and the interest is diminished by the extent to which the subject is carried.

Donald, though a novel, exhibits nothing of novelty. Poetical justice is, however, strictly observed.

Epicharis; or, the Secret History of the Conspiracy of Piso against Nero; and *Madame de Maintenon*; both of them translations from the French, are historical romances; which, as confounding truth with fiction, are highly objectionable. The translation of the latter work (Madame de Genlis's) is miserably executed.

Mr. Lathom, who is so well known, and has been recently so much admired, in the novel-reading [lxxvii/lxxviii] world, has presented us with *Human Beings*, which are not to be classed amongst those "faultless monsters which the world ne'er saw." Taking truth and nature for his model, he has produced a striking and an interesting picture. The parentage and loves of the drummer-boy and orphan-girl, and the persevering benevolence of the worthy Lewitzer, ought not to be "damned by faint praise."

Mr. Curtis's *Monk of Udolpho* [sic] is deserving of association with most of that gentleman's other performances. The interesting Hersilla exhibits one of the finest patterns of filial piety we have ever seen portrayed in a novel: neither is the character of the Monk himself over-drawn, as is, in general, the case in productions of this kind. The hero of the piece claims our particular attention, as possessing much merit. Lorenzo is a most virtuous character, worthy of imitation: and we will hope, notwithstanding the cry against the times, that there are, in real life, many such to be met with.

The *Baron de Falkenheim*, is an unaffected, well-told tale, but exhibits no very striking feature.

Madame de Genlis's *Alphonsine, or Maternal Affection*, may class with the finest productions of that lady's pen. Much novelty of idea is displayed, and the character of the heroine is admirably drawn.

Kotzebue, the universally attractive Kotzebue, has produced four volumes of *Novellettes*; the translation of which has been perused with uncommon avidity. The original work is excellent; but we could have wished the translation to be both more correct, and more elegant.

The success of Mr. Surr's *Winter in London*, has, as is usually the case under such circumstances, called forth a herd of imitators. Amongst these, *A Winter in Bath* claims the first notice. Without the aid, however, of an imitative title, its intrinsic merit would have insured and commanded a gratifying reception from the public. The story is well written, the incidents are good, and the characters are excellently portrayed. [lxxviii/lxxix]

About the same time that *A Winter in Bath* made its appearance, a Mrs. Bayfield had a novel ready for publication, under the title of *Love as it may be, and Friendship as it ought to be*. Her bookseller,

however, imitating Mr. Surr's title, and perhaps conceiving that he might safely practise an imposition on the public, gave Mrs. Bayfield's novel the title of *A Winter AT [sic] Bath*. This circumstance excited much contention between the booksellers; and we are not certain whether some legal proceedings were not commenced upon the subject. Mrs. Bayfield very candidly declared, not only that the fraud was carried on without her approbation, but without her knowledge.

The Invisible Enemy, the Bravo of Bohemia, Dellenborough Castle, Castle of Berry, Pomeroy [sic], and the Benevolent Monk, are so many modern romances, possessing the usual beauties and defects of such performances.

Mrs. Opie's *Simple Tales* have a far higher claim to notice. This work, consisting of eighteen or twenty tales, pleasingly and interestingly related, possesses the general characteristics of her style and manner of thinking. It may not be amiss to observe, that her style is that of a well-educated and accomplished woman; her manner of thinking, that which does her the highest honour! These tales are truly *simple* and unaffected, evincing much genuine pathos in the bosom of their fair author;—that bosom which has been destined recently to mourn the loss of its departed lord*. In her own beautiful lines, she may now feelingly exclaim:

“Ee'n reason says I justly weep,
And, ah! She says I weep in vain;
My midnight couch with tears I steep,
Then rise at morn—to weep again!”

The meritorious glances of *Constantia de Courcy*, [lxxix/lxxx] we should hope, will not succeed in seducing any of our readers. Her blandishments are the blandishments of a courtesan, who allures but to destroy.

Fire-side Stories are very harmless; but they are not sufficiently animated to *warm* us.

Mrs. Parsons, another of our old favourites, has introduced to our acquaintance, *The Convict, or Navy Lieutenant*. This novel not only possesses originality, but, we think, must excite in every feeling heart, the warmest interest for its unhappy heroine, and her ill-fated offspring. Mrs. Parsons is well versed in the art of pleasing, at the same time that she unites instruction with amusement. The characters are all well delineated, and not over-drawn: and the moral, such as we could wish implanted in every human breast.

Mr. Armstrong's *Anglo-Saxons, or the Court of Ethelwulph*, as a strong and pleasing picture of ancient manners, ranks far above the general run of modern romances.

So also does *The Spaniard*, a tale which very forcibly reminded us of the strong vein of satire in *Gil Blas*. Its comic situations, rich irony, and humorous descriptions, irresistibly impelled the exercise of our risible muscles.

The Children of Error, Tynemouth Castle, Wilhelmina, and Drelincourt and Rodalvi, may be considered as very harmless food for the circulating library.

We seldom meet with a novel which contains so much that is good, and so little that is exceptionable, as Mr. Semple's *Charles Ellis*. The author is a man of no common information, of no common powers of writing; and the execution of his work is, in all respects, creditable to his talents and feelings.

Should the fair author of *Santo Sebastiano*, continue to make such rapid progress in this walk of literature, we shall soon learn to forget the loss of the amiable and unfortunate Charlotte Smith.

The Monk of Dissentis is little better than im- [lxxx/lxxx] sition on the public. It is a translation from the vapid and uninteresting German romance of *Rudolph of Werdenberg*, which had already appeared in English, under its proper title.

The *Mask of Fashion* is a story very feelingly written, interwoven with a description of some of the public amusements and promenades at Paris. It contains, however, much frivolity, and some of its love-scenes are what we could not exactly wish them to be.

We could easily swell this catalogue of romances and novels to a far greater extent; but, as we have already noticed every thing of this nature, that is really deserving of attention, we shall proceed to offer a few brief remarks upon such works as fall under the comprehensive denomination of MISCELLANIES.

* Mr. Opie died on the 9th of April, in the present year, in the 46th year of his age.

Alphabetical List

Adventures (The) of Victor Allan. By Mrs. Fortnum, Author of Waldorf, &c. 2 vols. 12mo. p. 348. 7s. Hodgson, 1806.

Mrs. F. has made herself known to the public by six or seven different novels; and we have nothing to which we wish to object in the one before us. We do not think that its plot or stile will add to that portion of credit which the author has acquired by her previous labours. (p. 495)

Alphonisine; or, Maternal Affection. A Novel. By Madame Genlis. 4 vols. 11.2s. 1806.

Of all the works which Madame de Genlis has favoured the public, none is more calculated to gratify the friends of literature than this interesting effusion of her genius. The education of Alphonsine in a cave, the solitary partner of her mother's woe, unknown to any other being than her parent, ignorant of the nature of light, and fancying that her habitation is a whole world, presents a fruitful harvest of new ideas, and Madame de Genlis has proved a careful reaper. The translation is well performed. (p. 495)

Anglo-Saxons (The); or, The Court of Elthelwulph. A Romance. By L. Armstrong, Esq. 4vols. 12mo. 18s. 1806.

This is an historical novel, a kind more interesting and edifying than any other. The author is an elegant writer, and by this work of fancy has shewn himself capable of greater performances. Romance writing is certainly below his talents. (p. 495)

Adelaide; or, The Chateau de St. Pierre. A Tale of the Sixteenth Century. By Mrs. Edgeworth. 4 vols. 12mo. p. 920. 18s. Hughes. 1806.

Novels of this kind, like Adelaide, have always been successful amongst our fair countrywomen, who prefer an *ancient* story, as more consistent with their ideas of romance. Adelaide contains many touching incidents, and the style is correct throughout, and often elegant. (p. 497)

A Winter in London; or, Sketches of Fashion. A Novel. By T. Surr, Esq. 3 vols. 12mo. p.1012. 13s. 6d. Phillips. 1806.

The very extraordinary success of this novel is a sufficient criterion of its merits. When our last volume was published, it had just made its appearance, and we mentioned it with strong commendatory terms, in our introduction. It has since gone through *eight editions*. We consider it to be the severest satyre [*sic*] that has ever appeared on the detested manners of the fashionable world. (p. 497)

[Note: There are two different entries for *Winter in London* in this volume of *Flowers*. For second notice, see below.]

Bravo (The) of Venice. A Romance. Translated from the German. By M. G. Lewis, Esq. 5th edition, p. 299. 6s. Hughes. 1807.

This is a romance which Mr. Lewis states to have been translated by him from the German. It is quite in Mr. L.'s style, has been dramatised under the title of Rugantino, and the edition before us is the fifth; so that anything we could say about it would be superfluous, neither be supposed to enhance or depreciate it in the public opinion. (p. 498)

Cottager's (The) Daughter, A Tale of the Nineteenth Century. 2 vols. 12mo. p. 254. 6s. Scholey. 1805.

The principal plot of this novel is the seduction of a young female of respectable parents by a fashionable miscreant. Its tendency is very far from being of a moral kind, and we therefore cannot accord it any praise whatever. (p. 498)

Charles Ellis; or, The Friends. A Novel. Comprising the Incidents and Observations occurring on a Voyage to the Brazils and West Indies, actually performed by the Writer, Robert Semple, Author of "Walks and Sketches at the cape of Good Hope." 2 vols. 12mo. p. 506. 9s. Baldwins. 1806.

Mr. Semple states himself to be a young merchant, as an apology for attempting to write a novel: but the way in which he has executed his task, proves that he was much better employed in writing than he would have been while passing his evenings like Young Wilding, in the Citizen. His book contains much that is good, and little that is exceptionable. (p. 499)

Convict (The); or, Navy Lieutenant. A Novel. By Mrs. Parsons, Author of "The Miser and his Family," &c. 4 vols. 12mo. 18s. p. 1145. Norbury. 1807.

Mrs. Parsons has, as usual, been very fortunate in her choice of a subject that must excite sympathy in every feeling breast. The interest is kept up throughout; and the style is so simple, pleasant, and correct, that we consider this to be the best among the very great number which this amiable author has produced. (p. 500)

Edward and Anna; or, A Picture of Human Life. A Novel. By John Bristed, of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, Author of "The System of the Quakers examined." 2 vols. 12mo. p. 443. 7s. Crosby and Co. 1806.

This member of an *honourable* society informs us, as an excuse for his writing a novel, that he *was mad* at the time.—We wish many other writers would profess the same candour, as their reviewers would then have sufficient reason to shew them lenity! It appears that Mr. B. afterwards *came to his senses*, and was so delighted with what he had penned, while "a fever's fire ran along *all* his veins," that he determined on *giving* it to the public (i.e. for seven shillings a copy). It contains a few good passages, amongst a farrago of the vilest nonsense that was ever put together, and which could never have happened to the author or any other person in this world. (p. 501)

Feudal Tenants; or, The Counts of Carlschiem [*sic*] and Sorgans. A Romance, taken from the German. By M. G. Lewis, Esq. 4 vols. p. 1416. 18s. Second Edition. Hughes. 1807.

The story of this novel is founded on the time of William Tell, and, by a judicious combination of history with fiction, [501/502] much interest is excited. We have some doubts whether this romance be an alteration from the German; on the contrary, it contains so much of Mr. Lewis's peculiar manner, that we suppose it to be an original composition. At all events, he has considerably increased his reputation by producing it, notwithstanding the fame he has already acquired. (pp. 501–02)

Ferdinand Fitzormond; or, The Fool of Nature. By Mrs. Temple. 5 vols. 12mo. p.1657. 1l. 1s. Phillips. 1806.

Mrs. Temple deservedly acquired considerable fame by her poems, of which we took ample notice in our last volume; but we cannot say that she has been equally successful in her novel. The plot has little to boast of, and the division of the work into letters makes it even more insipid than it otherwise would be. Perhaps, however, we are under some mistake with regard to the fair author. Her preface is here signed F. Temple: the *poems* appeared under the name of Laura Sophia Temple. At all events, the poetry in this novel may be considered as the best parts of it, for the language of the prose is redundant [*sic*], extravagant, and unnatural. (p. 502)

Forest (The) of St. Bernardo. A Novel. By Miss Hamilton. 4 vols. 16s. p. 864. Hughes. 1806.

An interesting and well written tale, the story of which keeps the feelings alive throughout, while the language gives the fair author a claim to no ordinary rank in the paths of the *belles lettres*. (p. 502)

Film-Flams! or, The Life and Errors of my Uncle and his Friends, with Illustrations and Obscurities. By Messieurs Tage [*sic*], Rag and Bobtail. 3 vols. 12mo. p. 784. 18s. Murray.

This new edition of one of the most amusing and singular satyres of the present age, contains many Improvements upon that which appeared a short time before. The spirit of ridicule with which the author exposes the strange fantasies of modern philosophers, is in many parts equal to that of Juvenal; and it is impossible to peruse any of the chapters of this curious and eccentric work without deriving an unusual degree of pleasure and entertainment. (p. 502)

Human Beings. A Novel. By Francis Lathom, Author of "Men and Manners," &c. 3 vols. 12mo. p. 903. 12s. Crosby and Co. 1807.

Mr Lathom, who has given the world many interesting literary productions, has here proved that neither his invention nor his genius is exhausted. The characters are all natural, the story is affecting, and the stile simple and easy. (p. 503)

Mask (The) of Fashion. A plain Tale; with Anecdotes foreign and domestic. 2 vols. p. 482. Hughes. 1807.

This novel, which is dedicated to the Duchess of St. Alban's, is the effort of a very superior writer to those who fill the shelves of circulating libraries; but indeed we may say almost as much of all those novel writers we have introduced in the present volume. We should have been better pleased with the Mask of Fashion had the language been less inflated than it is in many parts; for, to quote a few words from the author's preface, "the outline is admirable, but the colouring too high." Some very affecting incidents are introduced in this novel, particularly the story which begins at p. 110; and we hope such a one as that which begins at p. 171 is merely a picture of the imagination. (p. 505)

Maid (The), Wife and Widow. A Tale. By H. Siddons, Esq. Author of "Virtuous Poverty." 3 vols. 12mo. p. 796. Phillips. 1806.

Mr. Siddons urges, as a plea for writing another novel, the success of his last, called "Virtuous Poverty." We, however, prefer the one before us, which has many pretensions of a superior nature. It seems a tale founded on facts which have occurred under the author's observation; but, at any rate, it is an interesting and well-told story, in which we think we can discover many allusions to *family* incidents! (p. 506)

Monk (The) of Udolpho. A Romance. By T. J. H. Curties, Esq. Author of the Sable Mask, &c. 4 vols. 12mo. p. 973. Hughes. 1807.

This romance is well calculated to please those who delight in horrors. The Monk as usual is a most diabolical character, and meets with his deserts. The terrors of banditti and the inquisition are each of them introduced, and will not fail to harrow up the feelings of susceptible females. (p. 507)

Mysterious (The) Sisters. A Spanish Romance, 2 vols. 12mo. p. 441. Hughes. 1806.

The Spaniards, though their literature has been so long on the decline, still excel in the invention of plot, and its elucidation. The author of the Mysterious Sisters, it appears, is Don Francisco Sancho Assensio, his romance is well written, contains many pleasing situations, and has been very respectably translated. (p. 507)

Novice (The) of Saint Dominick. By Miss Owenson, Author of St. Clair, 4 vols. 12mo. p. 1465. Phillips. 1806.

This is a romance of a very superior description. The story is uncommonly interesting and well kept up, the language is nervous, elegant, and in many parts beautiful; in short, it is a work which no person of taste can peruse without high gratification. (p. 508)

Olivia and Marcella; or, The Strangers. A Novel. 2d edition. By Mrs. Norris. 3 vols. p. 1046. 10s. 6d. Crosby and Co. 1807.

There is a considerable degree of interest kept up throughout these volumes; and the author writes in so correct and pleasant a style, that she is entitled to no ordinary rank amongst female novellists. (p. 509)

Secrets of the Castle; or, The Adventures of Charles D. Almaine. By D. Carey, Author of the Pleasures of Nature, &c. 2 vols. 12mo. p. 227. 7s. Crosby & Co. 1806.

Mr. Carey, although he does not make so distinguished a figure in his novel, as he has done in his poems, has nevertheless proved himself capable of writing a very interesting romance, of unexceptionable moral tendency; yet bordering upon the extravagant! but this is perhaps in consequence of his wish to please the still prevalent taste for horrors, and supernatural agency. (p. 512)

Sophia St. Clare. A Novel, 2 vols. 12mo. p. 404. 9s. Johnson. 1806.

This novel is represented as "the production of a young lady, a novice in Literature," but we have no doubt she will soon rank in the line to which she aspires. Sophia contains much interesting matter, blended with many attempts at the Radcliffian imagery, and a few grammatical errors, which future practice will abolish. (p. 513)

St. Botolph's Priory; or the Sable Mask, an historic Romance. By T. J. H. Curties, Esq. Author of Ethelivena, &c. 5 vols. P. 1582. Hughes. 1l. 4s. 1806.

Mr. Curteis [*sic*] having gained much celebrity by his former romances, has now become one of the most indefatigable of our literati in that department of writing. He deserves no small [513/514] credit from his ability to keep up an extraordinary degree of interest throughout five ponderous volumes, and at the same time to preserve a sufficient degree of consistency in his plot. These objects he has attained in the novel before us. (pp. 513–14)

Vensenshon; or Lover's Mazes. A Novel. By Mrs. H. Butler, 3 vols. 12mo. p. 704. Printed for the Author.

A very interesting novel, written in uncommonly good language, though sometimes a little inflated. (p. 516)

Village (The) of Friedewalde; or, The Enthusiast. A Novel, translated from the German of Lafontaine [*sic*]. By J. Powell. 3 vols. 12mo. p. 593. 9s. Hughes. 1806.

Lafontaine's style of novel writing is well known to the English reader; and the Village of Friedewalde, by its simplicity and moral tendency will not deteriorate the fame its author has already acquired. There is much factitious anecdote in these volumes, which gives a good view of human nature. The intent of the novel is to check the imbibition of early enthusiasm. (p. 517)

Winter (A) in London; or, Sketches of Fashion. A Novel. By T. S. Surr, Esq. 12mo. p. 812. Phillips. 1806.

This is one of the best satirical novels which have appeared in the present century. Many well-known characters are introduced with a degree of spirit and humour, which can scarcely be excelled. We wish we could add that the contents of this novel were founded on fiction. (p. 518)

[Note: There are two different entries for *Winter in London* in this volume of *Flowers*. For other notice, see above.]

Wolf; (The) or, The Tribunal of Blood. A Romance, from the German of Weber, Author of the Sorcerer, &c. By J. Powell, Esq. Translator of the Village of Friedewaide, &c. 2 vol. p. 366. Hughes. 1806.

We cannot perceive what this novel possesses to recommend [*sic*] it. It is a miserable German catchpenny, most wretchedly translated, and many of the *pages* contain the enormous number of *thirty words* each, as at page 13, Vol. I. (p. 518)

Wild (The) Irish Girl. A National Tale. By Miss Owenson, Author of St. Clair, &c. 3 vol. 12mo. p. 190. Phillips. 1806.

The Wild Irish Girl is in many respects inferior to the "Novice of St. Dominick," by the same fair author; but it contains many just and striking traits of the Irish character, conveyed under an interesting tale of former times. The Sketch we fear will give no credit to the author for her remarks concerning Ossian! (p. 518)

FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1807

From 'Introduction: Novellists', pp. lii–lvii.

In this department of literature we have had, as usual, a most abundant harvest, and we may justly say, that the crop is altogether more favourable than that of many a preceding season. We have [lii/liii] always been of opinion, that none but an author of *talents* can write a good novel; and however affected cynics, of the modern stamp, may pretend to *despise* such productions, we will contend, as we always have contended, that well-written novels and romances, do more to improve the taste, and correct the aberrations of heart, than all the other species of writings in congregation! If such impassioned females as *Rosa Matilda*, and such immoral and *delicately-obscene* scribblers as Messrs *Monk-Lewis* and *Anacreon-Moore*, have disgraced the English press by their *prosaic* and *poetical* masses of corruption, issued as they are year after year, shall it be said that they have affixed a stigma to all *works of fancy*? The genius of elegant literature forbids the prevalence [*sic*] of such an opinion; and while our country can produce such novels as Lathom's *Fatal Vow*, no reader, whether male or female, need be ashamed to place it in their library. Those novels in which *history* is judiciously blended with *fiction*, are of all others best calculated to please the mind of sensibility; and if in the one just mentioned, we have any thing to object to, it is, that the quantity of historical matter is too great, and also too highly coloured to accord with facts. Nothing, however, can be more interesting than many of the scenes in this work, though it only consists of two volumes. The manner in which Christabel discovers her mother, is a masterpiece of delineation, and when we consider the great versatility of this author's genius, we shall readily look over such anachronisms as the production of *pistols*, before the period at which they were invented!

Madame de Stael, a veteran in this kind of literature, has produced another novel, called *Corinna*. She fixes the scene in Italy; and her principal aim seems to be to describe the remains of art in Rome, by the introduction of fictitious characters as visitors. The most prominent of these characters, are a Scotch nobleman and an Italian heroine; but as the story is evidently subordinate to the object of describing the antiquities, it is needless to expatiate upon it. We need merely say, that this novel displays a correct knowledge of human nature, and that it is not so exceptionable on the score of morality, as the former productions of the same author.

The most *voluminous* novel of the last year, and by no means the least interesting, is *The Soldier's Family*, by an anonymous author, but who we can venture to assert, is a female. The scenes which fill its four closely-printed volumes, are chiefly of a low domestic nature, and are described with much affecting simplicity.

That *favourite* writer (with those who do not *reflect*), Kotzebue has produced another two works, one entitled *Novellettes*, and the other *Anecdotes*. A third translation has also appeared, entitled his *Romances*; but the fact is, that the *Novellettes* and the *Romances* are merely two different translations of the same original, and as some preference must be given, the *translation* of the *Novellettes* is by far the best. The *Anecdotes* are evidently *compiled*, by this most ingenious writer; but they are interspersed with such striking observations of his own, that they altogether have the appearance of originality.—Although, however, we are not ashamed to confess that *we* are admirers of that sweet-soothing *sensibility* so prevalent in the writings of Kotzebue, we shall never be found to palliate his insidious immorality, which is but too frequently evident. To deny that this author is a man of genius—that he touches the passions with a masterly hand—that he is a deep reader of the heart, would be a folly and a want of candour. But, that the story of the Pastor's Daughter, exhibits so foul a picture of depravity and lust, as none but a most corrupt imagination could work upon, and afterwards publish to the world, is an *equal* truth. It reminds one of [liv/lv] those beings whom we sometimes see on the public roads; who, in order to excite attention, expose their putrid sores and horrid deformities to the revolting sight of the passengers.

The author plainly manifests his hatred of religion, and, consequently, of God, (for there is no difference,) but, let it be observed, that a heart influenced by religion, could never have been acted upon as Charlotte's was.

He has drawn her in her first career, as a highly finished *moralist*; and *morality*, he seems to think a most stable foundation for temporal and eternal happiness; yet, *vanity*, the pigmy vice *vanity*, has overthrown his beautiful superstructure, and laid it in *ruins*. *Morality*, then he must confess, is an unstable foundation.

The first grand effect of religion, is to humble the creature in the sight of the CREATOR:—it holds up the glory of God, and the glittering pride of man fades before it, as the taper is extinguished by the sun. *Vanity*, therefore, is destroyed, and *Morality* on its firmest basis, stands secure from its most insidious and fatal enemy.

All the misery of Charlotte and Fernaw, and of all such as may resemble them, arises from their ignorance of the glory of God, which leads them to seek a glory in men, whereby they become unstable—contemptible—ignominious—they have no *God* but the *world*, and when that deceives them—when they find their prospects vanished and their pleasures blasted, they remain a prey to despair, or take refuge in suicide.—Ye lovers of Kotzebue, this is *truth*—if you deny it, you are as ignorant of God, and as corrupt in heart as he is.

Christina, or *Memoirs of a German Princess*, is an extremely interesting work. Its incidents are few, but well conceived and finished.

The gradual developement [*sic*] of the heroine's love, is managed with peculiar delicacy. It, however, greatly partakes of that general fault of novels, an [*lv/lvi*] idolizing and sentimental language, towards the female, which so intoxicates and corrupts the minds of the sex.—The heroine also sending her history, (which is a most important secret to her,) by *letters* to her friend, renders the story highly improbable:—with a *thinking* reader it quite destroys the effect.

Tales of Former Times, by A. St. John, are properly romantic, and with scarcely one exception, are truly interesting.—In a moral view we see nothing exceptionable in them, from beginning to end.

Mr. Melville's *Benevolent Monk*, is a novel of considerable merit. It is very interesting, and the plot ingeniously managed. Some of the incidents, however, are extremely improbable and extravagant, nor does the author seem, at all, to understand what dramatists call *character*, as he makes the same person, at one time, speak in a low and vulgar dialect, and, at another, with refinement and eloquence. The language is in general smooth and easy, but too redundant, and frequently ungrammatical [*sic*]: the author not seeming to understand the different tenses of the verbs.

The *Sorrows of Gustavus* is a work containing much beauty of language and richness of thought, but very uninteresting in its plan, and imperfect in its moral, if indeed, it possess any. Its barrenness of incident, and sameness of sentiment, also, render it very uninteresting; as far, however, as language, and the *generality* of its sentiment goes, this novel is superior to most of its contemporaries. The character, however, of its hero, is by no means entitled to that sympathy which the author doubtless hopes to excite for him in the breast of the reader. He falls in love with the wife of his guardian—a man of a noble and generous nature—instead of taking the most effective method of checking his criminal and ungrateful passion, by flying from the presence of its object, he still lives under the same roof with her, and nurses it till, like a love-forsaken *girl*—he sickens from its [*lvi/lvii*] influence—sickens—and dies!—His conduct certainly must excite a far different sentiment in a generous and manly breast, than that of *pity*.

Mrs. Pilkington's *Ellen Heiress of the Castle* is of a cast with her other attempts at novel writing.—There is much pleasing matter, blended with many improbable situations and events drawn in without necessity or connexion. A smooth and *conversation-like* language pervades all Mrs. P's works, but we cannot pass over without expressing our strong disapprobation of it, a sort of *semi-blasphemy*, or the introduction of *profane oaths*, as at p. 192, of volume I.

Madame de Genlis's indefatigable pen has produced *another* historical romance, entitled *The Duke of Lauzun*. It is a very ably-drawn picture of the profligacy of the French court, and is superabundant in incidents of French intrigue. The author has certainly mistaken the character of a *great man*; for the Duke of Lauzun has nothing great about him. As to the work, considered altogether, we can scarcely persuade ourselves that it ever came from the pen of so accomplished and *moral* an author as Genlis. It is the most indecent mass of profligacy and corruption which the year has given rise to, and although there are a few good reflections interspersed amongst the depravity, they are not worth the seeking for. The translation of this wretched novel is, however, executed in a very masterly manner.

The Infidel Mother, Julian, or my Father's House, and The Fatal Revenge, by D. J. Murphy, all display considerable talent. The one last mentioned, in particular, is of all others which the year has furnished, most replete with incidents of a *horrific* and *mysterious* nature, introduced in a grand and poetical, though frequently pompous mode of expression—the usual attempt of a vivid fancy—and (as Mr. M. describes himself) a very young man.

From an article on 'Mrs. Opie', pp. 11–13.

We do not remember that any of her productions were published in the name of Alderson. In the year 1801, she gave to the world *The Father and Daughter*, consisting of a [11/12] single volume. This first production possesses considerable interest, and is justly admired for the artless simplicity of its language [...]

Encouraged by the reception of her former effusions, Mrs. Opie, in the early part of the year 1805, produced a tale in three volumes, entitled *Adeline Mowbray; or the Mother and Daughter*.

The laudable object of this work was to check the progress of the *New Philosophy* which pervaded the world, and to shake the virtue of many individuals. The heroine of the piece is nurtured in the baneful system, and by reducing the vain theories to practice, proves at once, their evil and their fallacy. She falls a sacrifice to her delusive principles, and expiates, by a repentant death, a life of error.

In this admirable work, Mrs. Opie has evinced powers worthy of the sentiments which excited and adorned her labour. It is worthy the perusal of every class of a civilized nation, and is an excellent present for a parent to his child. The work was well receive, and soon passed through its first [e]dition. [...]

THE FLOWERS OF LITERATURE FOR 1808 AND 1809

From 'Introduction: Novellists', pp. lxvi–lxxiii.

The catalogue of Novels and Romances which has come under our inspection, is equally as extensive as it has been at any former period of our labours, and contains an equal variety of books of the three denominations, *good*, *bad*, and *indifferent*. In fact, the term "Novel" has of late years become so prostituted to the uses of the Circulating Libraries, that it is not easy to take up a series of volumes of the kind in question, without a strong degree of prejudice. Confining ourselves, however, chiefly to such as we may denominate the *good* portion, we have much pleasure in recommending to our readers Mr. Cumberland's novel, under the title of *John De Lancaster*. When such a name as that of Cumberland is attached to a work, the mind anticipates no common feast: we, therefore, prepared for a banquet, and found, that the veteran had not forgotten the skill to gratify the mental taste, and yet we did not rise with that satisfaction which we expected. *John De Lancaster* is a work that amply declares the touches of a master, and will be found to afford interest and gratification both to those who read for mere amusement, and those who seek to exercise their judgment. We humbly think, however, that the character of Robert De Lancaster (evidently the favourite of the author), is not a consistent one.—He is at one time represented as a man of deep erudition, of a comprehensive mind and of clear intellectual faculties; at another, as the mere creature of credulity, one who implicitly believes in all the legends of the obscurest history, and the most ex- [lxvi/lxvii] travagant and ridiculous stories upon record; for instance, that of the Lady who was punished by having three hundred and sixty-five children at a birth; such extremes as these we apprehend cannot meet in the same individual. The incidents are few, and though not particularly striking, are managed with the happiest skill; in short we presume, that no one will judge the performance to be unworthy the pen of its author.

As a Novellist, Miss Owenson holds the same rank as does Miss Temple amongst the poets. We have done ample justice to her romance of the Novice of St. Dominic; and certainly none of the numerous readers of novels, of whatever age or sex, will take up a work bearing the name of *Owenson* with apathy or indifference; neither will they, if to be *amused* be their sole object, be disappointed [*sic*] in the present work; it will prove to them a rich repast, but we fear, they will retire from it with minds surcharged with food more palatable than nutritious; such as will rather generate fevers than [*sic*] promote health. Much beauty of expression and strength of colouring is displayed in "Ida of Athens;" it may perhaps refine the taste, but it will neither tend to render youth amiable or age respectable. "Ida of Athens can never be your wife! exclaims the heroine. Oh! from souls like her's [*sic*], for ever distant be that cold and languid tie; that tie which nature never imposed; which cold erroneous feeling invented, which interest or ambition may adopt for narrow, selfish views, but to which the nature Ida worships, the love she breathes, and feels, can never submit." We had hoped that such sentiments as the above were buried in eternal night, and that they would no more have been obtruded on revolting sense; but Miss Owenson awakens them from their dark abodes, and again ushers them into the presence of day—Are they her *own* sentiments? If so, alas! she had better *read* than *write*; she will nevertheless, find *many partizans*, *many admirers*; the votaries of *morbid sentiment*, will [lxvii/lxviii] revive at her voice, and hail her as their tutelary saint. After such sentiments as the above, every lesser defect is forgotten; we shall, therefore, pass over Miss Owenson's *improvement* of the English language, and her *extension* of its vocabulary; for we would rather have our youth speak incorrectly and affectedly, than think erroneously and act viciously.

A Novel called *Ned Bentley*, from the pen of Mr. Amphlet, is exceeded in interest by none of a similar nature, and in its general merit, in our opinion, ranks among the first of modern novels. It lays an irresistible hold of the affections, nor does the mind revolt at their captivity; many of the incidents are wrought with the greatest ingenuity and dramatic skill, while the sentiments and reflections with which it abounds, do equal credit to the head and to the heart. It indeed proclaims throughout, the touches of a master of no common skill, and evinces a mind fraught with matured thinking: it has, however, its faults; at times we trace a pedantic vein which we could wish corrected,

and an insignificance of quotation unworthy of genius.—There is too a great improbability in the naval adventure of the hero; the crew of a man of war would never have made a *passenger* their commanding officer, while the boatswain, gunner, or carpenter were living—The absence of the father too, who left his dead wife and two infant children for three days, is not properly accounted for; we were also disappointed in the author's falling into that common plot, namely, of making his hero, who is introduced as a *beggar boy*, the son of a *gentleman*; as if virtue were limited to *birth*.

An historical novel entitled "*The Husband and the Lover*," is altogether an interesting production. The author appears to be one of the *sentimentalists*, abounding with sighs and notes of admiration, where, when the heroine weeps, we are poetically told, that "the *tear of pity crystallizes her soft eye!*" and "the [lxviii/lxix] *dew drops of sensibility gems her glowing cheek;*" with many other "soul subduing strains." There is, however, evinced a considerable portion of taste, accompanied by no mean talent of description, but these merits are eclipsed by too elaborate a colouring. The account of the tournament, &c. at the court of Louis XIV. is ingeniously managed, but it is calculated to infuse into the mind of the youthful reader a love of pleasure, to which the author's *morality*, we fear, will prove but a powerless antidote.

The novel entitled "*Corinna of England*," by a Lady, is a most ingenious and successful satire against the votaries of what is *erroneously* called *sentiment*, and of the new school of philosophy. *Corinna* is a strong caricature, but is sketched with a masterly hand, and her eccentricities will excite alternate laughter and surprise. The visit to the horse barracks, the *equivoque* between the heroine and Walwyn, and the embarrassing scene before the Montgomery family are excellently managed; and while the author so strikingly evinces her power of ridicule, she no less proves her skill in striking the chord of sympathy; the characters of Mary Cuthbert and of Montgomery, being delineated with the greatest delicacy, Good sense and ability pervade throughout.

"*Tales of the Manor*," is a novel which contains many beauties, and not a few *errors of judgment*.—To those who do not regard what is *probable*, but who will suffer any tale of woe, however extravagant, to captivate their feelings, this work will doubtless afford amusement. The characters are extremely distorted and unnatural, particularly those of the mule driver, Eloisa Penruddock, and Miss Fortescue; neither do we consider many of the incidents to be within the limits of probability. Moreover, the sentiments of the author are, in our opinion, very offensive and injurious: of this, the reader shall judge from the following samples. "His mind's (lxix/lxx) eye saw not in perspective, the *rapacious* tradesman and the *low born* mechanic, who bestow credit and civility for a *time* only to transfix the dart of *insolence* and *mistrust* the deeper." This is spoken of persons held up as examples of *liberality*, and of whom it is afterwards said, "it really had not struck the thoughts of either, that accumulated debts far beyond their power to pay, had caused the tongues of the tradesmen to speak in *plain terms*." Again of the same *amiable* persons it is, in another place said, "they laughed at Eloisa's sallies; but they regarded her with *partiality*, and often *owned against their better judgment*, that she was *in the right*." The author is not aware, perhaps, that while she thus speaks, she exhibits to the reader a volume more than she intended, namely, her own *heart*, which we recommend to a sound *revisal*.

The Private History of the Court of England, is an ingenious satire, which, while it professes to give the private history of the court of Edward IV. in reality presents us with that of the present. It may be called a *mathematical* book; for it treats wholly of *parallels*. There is considerable ingenuity displayed, but unless the reader is intimately acquainted with the memoirs of the great world, he will frequently stumble in his judgment and err in his applications; the real events of both ages being so mingled. We confess, that our ignorance of many events of several preceding years, disqualifies us from forming a competent opinion of the work, as its merit must rest chiefly upon the *truth* of the various incidents and comparisons.

The "*Adventures of Ralph Reybridge*," we find is the first literary effort of Mr. Linley, a specimen which fully justifies our expectations of his future performances. In the plan he seems to have had Fielding and Smollet continually in his mind, and his imitations of those celebrated authors are far from mean. He well knows how to interest the feel- [lxx/lxxi] ings and to excite the risible powers, many of his incidents being well conceived and ably managed, and there is also running through the

piece a vein of genuine humour, the effects of which are irresistible. There is, however, a great want of care manifested, many of the observations being trite and tedious, and the language in several places, incorrect and slovenly. The speech of Baron Leybrook is an instance of the former, of the latter are the following: “*Sifting* to the bottom of her heart” “*Halting*” of a stage coach; “*brushing by*” of an East Indiaman; “*Comrades*” of Joe, who were sailors. The author also frequently forgets himself, as an instance of which he calls Joe Grapling “old Joe,” whereas he cannot be supposed to exceed the age of forty, he having saved the life of Ralph when he was an *infant*, when he (Grapling) was quite a youth, running from his parents to go to sea, and Ralph being but eighteen years old when Grapling is introduced as quite an *old* sailor. Mr. Reybridge’s concealment of the secret respecting Ralph is highly improbable, because, unnecessary, and the development of the villainy of Valpine becomes exceedingly tedious: in short the work would have been considerably improved by the contentment of *one* volume.

The Governor of Belleville, a tale by Jane Harvey, merits some consideration. To begin with this work, we must say that there are two volumes too much of it; for all the incidents might very well have been related in half the number of pages. There is some ingenuity in the design, but it is sadly wrought up, the author being lamentably deficient in the knowledge of character. The Count St. Afrique, for instance, who is announced as a very accomplished Nobleman, in his manners, more resembles a French cook than a French Count; those, however, of the two sisters are prettily conceived, very well contrasted, [lxxi/lxxii] and, particularly through the first volume, well supported. The author has a strange method of using the preposition *to*. Thus she says, “if fate permit me *to again*, &c.—he promised *to afterwards* intercede, &c.—would not prevent him *to openly* solicit, &c.” She also uses the word *abstracted* so frequently, that it seems as if she had just learned the word, which thus dwells upon her mind like a new tune. We shall conclude with the following sample of the *sublime and beautiful*, humbly advising the author, however, before she again ventures to *soar*, to get a lesson on geography. “The *high arched concave* of the *horizon*, clear, refined, and *exalted*, disclosed the broad disk of the full-orbed moon, which shed a *boundless immensity* of radiance over the now still objects of creation.”

Miss Edgeworth’s [*sic*] *Tales of Fashionable Life* is a work of uncommon merit. To those who can be pleased with sterling sense, unaided by the glare of romantic bombast, the productions of this lady will never cease to charm. Excellent woman! in whom is united the accomplishment of an instructress with the tenderness of a matron! whose greatest object seems to be the improvment [*sic*] of her readers, and the happiness of society.

The present work is worthy of her name, and we express ourselves particularly gratified by her delightful little tale of Madame de Fleury, every sentence of which evinces a mind enlightened by wisdom, and a heart in love with goodness. Her little school is a little heaven, whose deity is *Innocence*. All its parts are within the limits of probability; and while they are irresistibly in eresting [*sic*], they branch from each other in an order the most natural. We could wish it were read by every parent, and by every one who has the superintendence of children: they would find it a beautiful system of practical education, and be led to consider the importance of early impressions. [lxxii/lxxiii]

Mr. George Brewer, author of a highly interesting volume, called *Hours of Leisure*, to which we have some time since paid a just tribute of applause, has published a novel called *The Hag!* It is peculiarly adapted for the amusement of those readers who are fond of *extravagancies*; and though it is beneath the talents of such a writer as Mr. Brewer, yet it will hold a respectable rank amongst works of fancy.

Mr. Dallas’s *Knights, or Tales illustrative of the Marvellous*, seems to have been written at a time when the author was inclined to shew the eccentricity of his mind, and the versatility of his talents. Spectres, ghosts, goblins, witches, devils and dragons, are here brought forward in regular masquerade, to confound the judgment and bewilder the senses. Nevertheless, individual scenes are often well managed; but the succession of wild objects is so rapid, that the imagination becomes

bewildered. There is much talent displayed in the connection of the incidents contained in these tales.

Mr. M. G. Lewis, of *Monk* celebrity, has published four volumes of *Romantic Tales*, which, while they contain a variety of scenes worked up with striking effect, are free from that licentiousness which characterized the more recent works of this eccentric author.

These are the *principal* works of the romantic kind which we have to enumerate. To specify the almost innumerable catalogue which the last eighteen months have given birth to, would be an endless task; we shall therefore conclude our present long-protracted labours by noticing two or three of the most prominent publications which come under the head of

“MISCELLANIES.”

INDEX OF NOVELS DISCUSSED IN 'FLOWERS OF LITERATURE', 1801–09

For full bibliographic details for the novels, see *The English Novel*, vol. 2. Each novel listed below is given with its corresponding entry number in *The English Novel*.

1. *Adelaide; or, the Chateau de St. Pierre. A Tale of the Sixteenth Century.* 1806:28
2. *Adeline Mowbray; or the Mother and Daughter.* 1805:57
3. *Adolphe and Blanche; or, Travellers in Switzerland.* 1803:42
4. *The Adventures of Ralph Reybridge.* 1809: 43
5. *The Adventures of Victor Allan.* 1805:30
6. *Algerine Captive.* 1802:59
7. *Alphonisine; or, Maternal Affection.* 1806:31
8. *Amelia Mansfield.* 1803:23
9. *The Anglo-Saxons; or, the Court of Elthelwulph.* 1806:17
10. *Astonishment!!!* 1802:36
11. *Aubrey: a Novel.* 1804:16
12. *Augustus and Mary; or, the Maid of Buttermere.* 1803:51
13. *The Author and the Two Comedians; or, the Adopted Child.* 1802:1
14. *Baron De Falkenheim.* 1807: 25
15. *Belinda.* 1801:24
16. *The Benevolent Monk; or, the Castle of Olalla.* 1807: 43
17. *The Bravo of Bohemia; or, the Black Forest.* 1806: 1
18. *The Bravo of Venice. A Romance.* 1805:75
19. *Can We Doubt it? or, the Genuine History of Two Families of Norwich.* 1804:44
20. *Castle Nuovier; or, Henrii and Adelina.* 1806: 45
21. *The Castle of Berry Pomeroy.* 1806: 48
22. *Castle of the Tuileries.* 1803:62
23. *The Castle of Tynemouth.* 1806: 35 [as 'Tynemouth Castle']
24. *Charles Ellis; or, the Friends.* 1806:60
25. *The Children of Error.* 1806: 2
26. *Christina; or, Memoirs of a German Princess.* 1808: 79
27. *Constantia De Courcy.* 1806: 3
28. *Constantia Neville; or, the West Indian.* 1800: 77 [Given in *Flowers* as 'the West Indian']
29. *The Convict; or, Navy Lieutenant.* 1807: 50
30. *The Corinna of England.* 1809: 4
31. *Corinna, or Italy.* 1807: 63
32. *The Cottager's Daughter, A Tale of the Nineteenth Century.* 1806:4
33. *Crimes and Characters; or, the New Foundling.* 1805:60
34. *Dellingborough Castle; or, the Mysterious Recluse.* 1806: 5
35. *Delphine.* 1803:67
36. *The Depraved Husband.* 1803:31
37. *Donald. A Novel.* 1806: 6
38. *Drelincourt and Rodalvi; or, Memoirs of Two Noble Families.* 1807: 12

39. *Duchess of La Valliere. A Historical Romance.* 1804:18
40. *The Duellists; or, Men of Honour.* 1805:51
41. *The Duke of Lauzun; an Historical Romance.* 1808: 45
42. *Edward and Anna; or, a Picture of Human Life.* 1806:19
43. *Ellen; Heiress of the Castle.* 1807: 51
44. *Elnathan; or the Ages of Man.* 1811:17
45. *The Eve of San Pedro.* 1804:53
46. *The Eventful Marriage.* 1806:59
47. *Eversfield Abbey.* 1806: 7
48. *Fatal Revenge; or, the Family of Montorio.* 1807: 42
49. *The Fatal Vow; or, St. Michael's Monastery.* 1807: 35
50. *The Father and Daughter.* 1801: 54
51. *Ferdinand and Amelia.* 1806:8
52. *Ferdinand Fitzzormond; or, the Fool of Nature.* 1805:68
53. *Feudal Tyrants; or, the Counts of Carlsheim and Sargans.* 1806: 50 [given in one instance as ' *Feudal Tenants; or, the Counts of Carlsheim [sic] and Sargans.*']
54. *Film-Flams! Or, the Life and Errors of my Uncle and his Friends, with Illustrations and Obscurities.* 1805:28
55. *Fireside Stories; or, the Plain Tales of Aunt Deborah and her Friends.* 1806: 44
56. *The First Night of My Wedding.* 1804:61
57. *Fleetwood; or, the New Man of Feeling.* 1805:33
58. *The Forest of St. Bernardo.* 1806:34
59. *Frederick Montravers; or, the Adopted Son.* 1803:77
60. *Gondez, the Monk. A Romance of the Thirteenth Century.* 1805:38
61. *The Governor of Belleville.* 1808: 53
62. *Heliodora; or, the Grecian Minstrel.* [This title is not listed in the *English Novel*. For further bibliographical details, see ' "The English Novel, 1800–1829: Update 1' [CEIR Project Report 6 <<http://www.cf.ac.uk/encap/corvey/articles/database/update1.html>>]
63. *Henrietta Bellmann: or, the New Family Picture.* 1804: 33
64. *The History of a Dog. Written by Himself, and Published by a Gentleman of his Acquaintance.* 1804:62
65. *The History of the Grubthorpe Family; or, the Old Bachelor and his Sister Penelope.* 1802:32
66. *Home, a Novel.* 1802:21
67. *Human Beings. A Novel.* 1807:36
68. *The Husband and the Lover.* 1809: 56
69. *The Infidel Father.* 1802:60
70. *The Infidel Mother: Or, Three Winters in London.* 1807: 58
71. *The Invisible Enemy; or, the Mines of Wielitska.* 1806: 43
72. *Isabel; or the Orphan of Valdarno.* 1802:37
73. *John De Lancaster.* 1809: 20
74. *Julien; Or, my Father's House.* 1807: 22
75. *Julietta, or the Triumph of Mental Acquirements over Personal Defects.* 1802:52
76. *The Knights: Tales Illustrative of the Marvellous.* 1808: 40
77. *Le Forester.* 1802:16

78. *Leonora*. 1806: 29
79. *Letters of a Solitary Wanderer*. 1800:69
80. *Lobenstein Village*. 1804: 34
81. *Love and Gratitude; or, Traits of the Human Heart*. 1804:35
82. *The Maid, Wife and Widow. A Tale*. 1806:62
83. *Man of Fortitude*. 1801:28
84. *The Mask of Fashion*. 1807:59
85. *Memoirs of Bryan Perdue*. 1805: 37
86. *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers*. 1800: 39
87. *Modern Literature*. 1804:13
88. *Monckton; or, the Fate of Eleanor*. 1802:56
89. *The Monk of Dissentis*. 1807: 34
90. *The Monk of Udolpho*. 1807:16
91. *The Morlands; or Tales, Illustrative of the Simple and Surprising*. 1805:25
92. *Murray House. A Plain Unvarnished Tale*. 1804:54
93. *The Mysterious Sisters. A Spanish Romance*. 1806:13
94. *The Mysterious Visit!* 1802:53
95. *My Uncle Thomas*. 1801:56
96. *Ned Bentley*. 1808: 21
97. *The Novice of Saint Dominick*. 1806:53
98. *Old Nick, a Satyrical Story*. 1801:22
99. *Olivia and Marcella; or, the Strangers*. 1806:51
100. *The Pastor's Daughter, with Other Romances*. 1807: 32
101. *Percival, or Nature Vindicated, a Novel*. 1801:20
102. *Popular Tales*. 1804:17
103. *Pride of Ancestry; or, Who Is She?* 1804:67
104. *The Private History of the Court of England*. 1808: 49
105. *Reprobate; a Novel*. 1802:35
106. *Romantic Tales*. 1808: 72
107. *Russian Tales*. 1803:38
108. *Santo Sebastiano: Or, the Young Protector*. 1806: 24
109. *Scenes of Life. A Novel*. 1805:34
110. *School for Fashion*. 1800:74
111. *Second Love; or, the Way to Be Happy*. 1805:56
112. *Secrets of the Castle; or, the Adventures of Charles D. Almaine*. 1806:2
113. *Simple Tales*. 1806: 52
114. *The Soldier's Family; or, Guardian Genii*. 1807: 49
115. *Sophia St. Clare. A Novel*. 1806:27
116. *The Sorrows of Gustavus, or the History of a Young Swede*. 1808: 66
117. *The Spaniard; or, the Pride of Birth*. 1806: 58
118. *St. Botolph's Priory; or the Sable Mask, an Historic Romance*. 1806:23
119. *St. Clair; or, the Heiress of Desmond*. 1803:55
120. *St. Julian. In a Series of Letters*. 1805:64

121. *The Stranger; or, the New Man of Feeling.* 1806: 15
122. *Strolling Player; or, Life and Adventures of William Templeton.* 1802:13
123. *The Swiss Emigrants: A Tale.* 1804: 52
124. *Tales of Fashionable Life.* 1809: 22
125. *Tales of Former Times.* 1808: 94
126. *Tales of the Manor.* 1809: 28
127. *Thaddeus of Warsaw.* 1803:59
128. *The Three Monks.* 1803:32
129. *Unexpected Legacy; a Novel.* 1804:26
130. *Vensenshon; or Lover's Mazes.* 1806:20
131. *Very Strange, but Very True! or, the History of an Old Man's Young Wife.* 1803:43
132. *Village Anecdotes; or, the Journal of a Year, from Sophia to Edward.* 1804:40
133. *The Village of Fridewalde; or, the Enthusiast.* 1806:40
134. *Virtuous Poverty; a Novel.* 1804:64
135. *The War-Office.* 1803:33
136. *The Wild Irish Girl. A National Tale.* 1806:54
137. *A Winter in Bath.* 1807: 7
138. *A Winter at Bath; or, Love as It May Be, and Friendship as It Ought to Be.* 1807: 9
139. *A Winter in London; or, Sketches of Fashion.* 1806:64
140. *The Witch of Ravensworth.* 1808: 29 [title given as 'The Hag!']
141. *The Wolf; or, the Tribunal of Blood.* 1806:67
142. *Woman: Or, Ida of Athens.* 1809: 55 [as 'Ida of Athens']
143. *Zofloya; or, the Moor.* 1806: 25

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

This article is copyright © 2001 Centre for Editorial and Intertextual Research, and is the result of the independent labour of the scholar or scholars credited with authorship. The material contained in this document may be freely distributed, as long as the origin of information used has been properly credited in the appropriate manner (e.g. through bibliographic citation, etc.).

REFERRING TO THIS ARTICLE

CEIR PROJECT REPORT 7. 'British Fiction, 1800–1829: A Database of Production and Reception, Phase II: *The Flowers of Literature*', *Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text* 7 (Dec 2001). Online: Internet (date accessed): <<http://www.cf.ac.uk/encap/corvey/articles/database/flowers.html>>.