

the Restoration, we find that this evil had become worse. The writings of Congreve or Wycherley, although they were men of master minds, are too low to be admitted to the family circle, or even the stage, at the present time; yet when written they enjoyed the greatest popularity. Thus the fact, that writers of this class once enjoyed the highest reputation, but now are almost unknown and unread, except by the student of English literature, proves, I think, a higher standard of morals and refinement. But it may be urged that the literature of the present is as bad as that I have alluded to. While I am forced to admit that there is much in it that is bad and debasing, I think this low style is confined to second or third class writers, and is not found among our best authors as it was in former ages.

George Eliott's, Thackeray's or Charles Dickens' works are not filled with the coarseness or half-hidden allusions that

disgrace the pages of the great writers of two centuries ago. This elevation in our great writers can, I think, be accounted for only by allowing that the popular taste has been elevated. Neither do we have to go to the field of literature to find proofs that the world, on the whole, instead of retrograding, is gradually advancing.

Now, instead of settling every little offence by the sword, arbitration is often resorted to. War is beginning to be looked down upon; rather than being held up as the place where honor and renown may be gained, or where men may do their noblest deeds. Neither is a strictly temperance man any longer a curiosity; nay, he even stands forth among the most honored. So I think, that while there is much left that is bad in every department of life, there is much cause for rejoicing over the advancement that has been made.

WALT.

