

after the publication of Defoe's great work, there appeared an English novel of a more extraordinary form, and of higher literary pretensions, in the "Travels of Gulliver;" and it too at once attained to a popularity which has never since flagged or diminished. Thirteen years more elapsed, and Richardson had produced his "Pamela," and, shortly after, Fielding his "Joseph Andrews." Smollett came upon the scene with his "Roderick Random" in eight years more. There followed in succession, after the lapse of about ten other years, the "Rasselas" of Johnson and the "Candide" of Voltaire,—both works which spread over the world; and in yet seven other years, Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield" appeared, and attained to even a more extensive popularity than either. And yet still, after the teaching of nearly half a century,—nay, after nearly two centuries had elapsed since a novel was recognised as the most popular and influential of all the works ever produced by Spain,—grave and serious people continued to speak of novels as mere frivolities, that were to be in every case eschewed by the young, but were scarce of importance enough to be heeded by the old at all. Nor even yet,—after the novels of Scott have, if we may so express ourselves, taken possession of the world,—after the most potent work of Germany, the "Wilhelm Meister" of Goethe, has appeared, like that of Spain, in the form of a novel,—after the modern novels of France have been measuring lances with even its priesthood, and approving themselves, in at least the larger towns, the mightier power of the two,—and after, in our own country, it has been accepted altogether as a marvel that history, in the case of Macaulay's, should have its thirty thousand subscribers, but as quite an expected and ordinary thing that fiction, in Dickens's current work, should have at least an equal number,—the old estimate in the minds of many has been suffered to remain uncorrected, and the novel is thought of rather as a light though not al-