

It is the same in literature as in life. Wherever one goes one immediately comes upon the incorrigible mob of humanity. It exists everywhere in legions; crowding, soiling everything, like flies in summer. Hence the numberless bad books, those rank weeds of literature which extract nourishment from the corn and choke it.

They monopolise the time, money, and attention which really belong to good books and their noble aims; they are written merely with a view to making money or procuring places. They are not only useless, but they do positive harm. Nine-tenths of the whole of our present literature aims solely at taking a few shillings out of the public's pocket, and to accomplish this, author, publisher, and reviewer have joined forces.

There is a more cunning and worse trick, albeit a profitable one.

Littérateurs, hack-writers, and productive authors have succeeded, contrary to good taste and the true culture of the age, in bringing the world _elegante_ into leading-strings, so that they have been taught to read _a tempo_ and all the same thing--namely, _the newest books_ order that they may have material for conversation in their social circles.

Bad novels and similar productions from the pen of writers who were once famous, such as Spindler, Bulwer, Eugène Sue, and so on, serve this purpose. But what can be more miserable than the fate of a reading public of this kind, that feels always impelled to read the latest writings of extremely commonplace authors who write for money only, and therefore exist in numbers? And for the sake of this they merely know by name the works of the rare and superior writers, of all ages and

countries.