

THE
SCRIBBLER,

A SERIES OF WEEKLY ESSAYS PUBLISHED IN MONTREAL, I. C.
ON LITERARY, CRITICAL, SATIRICAL, MORAL, AND
LOCAL SUBJECTS :

INTERSPERSED WITH PIECES OF POETRY.

By LEWIS LUKE MACCULLOH, Esquire.

Nos. 1 to 52,
From 23th June, 1821, to 20th June, 1822.

FORMING
VOLUME I.

*Sunt bona, sunt quædam mediocria, sunt mala, plu. a,
Quæ legis.....* MARTIAL.

Voulez vous du public meriter les amours,
Sans cesse en écrivant variez vos discours.
On lit peu ces auteurs nés pour nous ennuyer,
Quitoujours sur un ton semblent psalmodier. BOILEAU.

PRINTED BY JAMES LANE, IN MONTREAL.
Published in Montreal, and to be had of the proprietor,
SAMUEL H. WILCOCKE, at Burlington, Vermont.

.....
1822.

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Title: The Scribbler 1821-08-09 Volume 1, Issue 17

Date of first publication: 1821

Author: Samuel Hull Wilcocke (1766-1833) (Editor)

Date first posted: Feb. 1, 2019

Date last updated: Feb. 1, 2019

Faded Page eBook #20190203

This eBook was produced by: Marcia Brooks, David T. Jones, Cindy Beyer & the online Distributed Proofreaders Canada team at <https://www.pgdpCanada.net>

THE SCRIBBLER.

MONTREAL.

THURSDAY, 18th OCTOBER, 1821.

No. XVII.

—*Turba sumus.*—OVID.

We form a regiment.

*In amore hæc omnia insunt vitia; injuriæ,
Suspiciones, inimiciæ, indicia,
Bellum, pax rursum.*—TERENCE.

With doubts and fears, suspicion, and surmise,
Love plagues his votaries and deludes their eyes,
Anger and frowns, e'en enmity and pain,
First peace, then war, then peace and love again.

Readers have been divided into various classes, like Sterne's Travellers. There is

The Superficial Reader,	The Plodding Reader,
The Idle Reader,	The Commentating
The Sleepy Reader,	Reader,
The Peevish Reader,	The Interested Reader,
The Learned Reader,	The Candid Reader.

Not to mention Courteous Readers, and Gentle Readers, which are, rather terms of general courtesy addressed by authors to the purchasers of their works, than designations of actual classes.

The SUPERFICIAL Reader is one who finds neither leisure nor inclination for more literature than he can take in over a loitering breakfast, or perhaps at intervals when he is waiting till company arrives, or his horse is saddled. He contents himself with dipping into news-papers, magazines and reviews, skims over title-pages and indexes, and occasionally runs through catalogues of books, with which, and the retailed opinions of those who look deeper, he passes after dinner and at tea-tables for a well read gentleman.

The IDLE Reader, (who is so named, not from the apathy or indolence with which he reads, but from the idle quality of what he reads) is a great peruser of light literature, duodecimos are his delight, and he never goes beyond a small octavo. But he reads without method or object; amusement, not knowledge, being his pursuit. As long as there are novels, poems on several occasions, memoirs of demireps, and lives of heroes or highwaymen to be procured, he will not want entertainment.

The SLEEPY Reader is one of a dull and languid temperament, both of body and mind. He takes up a book when he can do nothing else, and pores over it till it drops from his grasp. If by good chance the same work is always at hand, he may perhaps reach the conclusion, but if he does so, he has waded through it so much between sleeping and waking, that he is often himself doubtful whether he has read it at all. Few works of genius appear on his shelves, they are of too

stimulating a nature and would defeat his object. Controversial divinity, metaphysics, moral essays, memoirs of statesmen, and soporifics under various titles, form his library. An old gentleman who died a martyr to the gout, used, as he sat in his study, to estimate his books, not from the pleasure, but from the good naps they afforded him. This, said he, to a friend who visited him, and pointing round with his crutch, this is a composer,—this is a dozer.—I believe I was nearly three months sleeping through that large quarto; and to this worthy gentleman on the middle shelf I am indebted for two nights rest in my last paroxysm.—But my most valuable friend is this set of books on my right hand. I call them my grand opiate, and you see I place my flannel night-cap upon them as a mark of distinction.

The PEEVISH Reader is made up of conceit and ill humour. He cavils with the title, the subject, the diction, the division, of every work that falls into his hands; nay, rather than not find fault, the paper, the type, the printing, or even the binding and lettering, are not to his liking. A man of this cast is an object of compassion, for in the imperfect state of human labours he must pass the time he devotes to reading very miserably. Some, however, enter this class without much natural peevishness, but only to shew off, and acquire the name of judges; so that to it belong most of the class which has sometimes been called that of the CRITICAL Reader; but there are so very few really entitled to the latter appellation, that they may be put into the next rank; namely;

The LEARNED Reader, who is a well read, and intelligent gentleman, but who, possessing too much pedantry, arising perhaps from the comparison of his own acquirements, with those of the pigmies in literature around him, is apt to look for technical precision alone, and can neither reconcile himself to flights of genius, and the excursions of fancy, nor make allowance for shade, but would have all one glare of light and science.

Next comes the PLODDING Reader. He goes through all manner of books; reads straight onward, begins at the preface, and so on through the epistle dedicatory, if there be one, the introduction, etc. He has generally a good memory, but no judgement, and his brain is a storehouse of indiscriminate and indigested materials that neither benefit himself nor his companions.

The COMMENTATING Reader, is seldom any thing more than a dipper. To this class belong likewise the CONJECTURAL Reader, and the SYSTEM MONGER. They take detached passages, and spin out reflections upon texts and paragraphs that are wholly repugnant to the context and complexion of the work. They will search through folio volumes for a confirmatory or disputable passage, and read for very little other purpose than to be stored with quotations and authorities. The cook at Dolly's chop house was one of these, who went through Shakespeare only to illustrate the dressing of a beef-steak. "If it be well done, 'twere well it were done quickly." They, however, are or should be, men of parts, for they frequently exercise their ingenuity on deceased writers by clearing up passages they suppose are left obscure, and interpreting them in their own way; discovering beauties which the author perhaps never dreamt of, and tracing out hidden meanings that he never had in view.

The INTERESTED Reader is he who peruses only those books that relate to his own particular taste, profession, or pursuit. He is often a Plodding reader, and sometimes a Superficial one; like the latter, though with different views, he is a great advocate for magazines, reviews, epitomes, and abstracts. But he is attentive, has a retentive memory and has almost all the good qualities of the candid reader in the limited sphere he allows himself. SENTIMENTAL readers are nearly related to this class, although their appetites for the pathetic, often degenerate into a hunger after the ridiculous and the simple; in consequence of which they have sometimes been considered as DEVOURERS OF NONSENSE.

But, CANDID READER, thou art the man.—In thee I contemplate the gentleman, the scholar, the true critic, slow to censure, eager to applaud; convinced by what arduous steps superior

excellence in writing is attained, and that to endeavour is the only way to deserve, thy liberal spirit cherishes every effort of genius, makes full and free allowance for such defects and weaknesses as are venial and excusable, and unwillingly condemns whenever correct judgement can not approve.

“Yes; they whom candour and true taste inspire.
Blame not with half the passion they admire;
Each little blemish with regret descry,
But mark each beauty with a raptured eye.”

Female readers belong but to few of these classes; some may be ranked with the Superficial, the Peevish, and the Sleepy; a great number are amongst the Idle, and not a few belong to the Interested and the Candid. The lady to whom the following letter is addressed, being both *interested* and *interesting*, will, it is to be hoped, also be finally *candid*.

To the Widow whom it may concern.

DEAR MADAM,

You must allow me as a well-wisher to your sex, and particularly to those who, like yourself, unite beauty of person to vivacity of disposition, to probe a little into the motives, and display some of consequences that may arise from the apparent mutability of inclination you have shewn. A little amiable coquetry, a few trials of the strength of your lover's affections, are not only allowable, but renders a successful courtship more delightful, and tend to rivet the chains of affection; but not at so late a period as after the fixing of a nuptial day, not when the man who fancies he has won your heart, is revelling in the anticipated delights of an union with the woman his soul prefers, not then to dash the cup from his lips,—be it even in playful wantonness, or with serious inconstancy,—can be reconcileable either to decorum or to feeling. You have already experienced the joys and pains of matrimony, perhaps to you the state has not now that glowing attraction which it has to him; but remember the time when you first yielded to become the wedded love of man; had then a rival stepped in to despoil you of your softest hopes; had then waywardness of humour or inconstancy of heart snatched from you your bridegroom, consider what your feelings then would have been. In like manner an ardent youth, encouraged by your fascinating manners, your condescension, your smiles and graces, put on to captivate (let it not be said to deceive) at length wins from you a promise to bless his vows, a day is even appointed for your becoming a second time a wife, whilst absorbed in the feelings of love returned, your lover becomes neglectful of all other pursuits, careless of the *Art* by which he gains a respectable livelihood, and soulless to all but you and his coming bliss. This tide of expected felicity, you suddenly dam up, freeze him by what, I would fain hope, is an affected coldness, and lacerate his bosom by coquetting with others; forgetful not only of the promises your glances have bestowed, but also of the vows your lips have made to become his. I repeat that I would fain hope, both for your and his sake, for from your mutual dispositions I can augur nothing but happiness in your union, that all this is but the effect of womanish wiles; a playful trial; but if so, let it not be carried too far. The youth wants not friends to remonstrate with him; and his already altered conduct, may tend to shew you that your fetters are not utterly unbreakable. Consider, before it is too late, and in the end you will thank

A FRIEND TO THE PARTIES.

I have felt flattered by the intention of the correspondent who sent me the substance of the above, requesting its insertion in the Scribbler, to make me the medium of the reconciliation of lovers. From the tenor of what has been communicated the lady appears to have been to blame; yet I will not deny that, even at so late a period, causes may exist for retraction. A Widow,

however, ought to have had sufficient experience to have foreseen or anticipated objections. If the lady can allege aught in extenuation or vindication of herself, I shall be ready to give her a favourable hearing; and I appoint this day fortnight for deciding the case, if before that time the pleadings are regularly laid before me. I will admit after the lady's replication, a second argument by the plaintiff, and the widow shall be allowed, as the privilege of her sex, a final rejoinder.

LEWIS LUKE MACCULLOH.

MR. SCRIBBLER

As I observe you are something of a knight-errant in the cause of man's other self, I take the liberty of inclosing a few lines which Mr. Erius wrote under kindred impressions with those of L. L. M. You may, if you please, throw them in the face of Mr. Critic, with his she-devils.

WOMAN.

O lovely woman, fairest flower that springs,
In sweetness robed, from the Creator's hand;
Bestow'd on man to be his constant friend;
His joys, his pains, his pleasures, to command.

Who hath not sought the sunshine of thy smiles?
Who hath not own'd the empire of thy charms?
Or striven to win thee by a thousand wiles,
And clash his conqueror in his eager arms.

Man is oppress'd; solicitude and care
Weigh down his soul; but when he flies to thee,
Thy soothing words beguile his anxious heart,
And from their burthen set his spirits free.

He mixes in the busy calls of life,
Till wearied nature asks the balm of rest;
He quits the noisy, bustling, scenes of strife,
And flies for respite to thy faithful breast.

He feels the rack of pain and sore disease,
Thy helping hand supports his weary frame;
Thy constant kindness gives the sufferer ease,
And mitigates e'en raging fever's flame.

By thee his name descends to future times;
He sees himself, though bowed by length of years,
Live in his children, through life's morn again,
And in their praises, his own praise he hears.

And yet we see thee mark'd by treacherous man
Fit game for lawless passion. Innocence
Protects thee not against thy wily foe.—
The weak find in it but a poor defence.

And if to shame and ruin left a prey,
See how the taunting finger points with scorn!
Compassion hardly finds a tear for thee,
Nor pity turns to soothe the wretch forlorn.

While he, *the spoiler*, is allow'd to pass,
Unmark'd by censure, and secure from shame,
In the broad world to seek and sacrifice
Some other victim to his guilty flame.

O injured woman! I will love thee still.
For where a friend so faithful can I find?
Woman supports us through life's every ill,
A WOMAN bore the SAVIOR of mankind.^[A]

ERIEUS.

Port Talbot, U. C.

^[A] Is not this rather misplaced, and making too free with the mysteries of our religion? It is, however, an observation of an eminent writer on polemic divinity. "*Non dedignatur Christus ex meretricibus et gentilibus nasci quia venit ut ulrasque salvaret.*" POLI SYNOPSIS. "For Christ himself did not disdain to be descended from harlots and from sinners, for it was unto them that he brought salvation."

L. L. M.

ERIEUS JUNIOR should not think of publishing his verses till a few years hence, after he has left school.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

[The end of *The Scribbler 1821-08-09 Volume 1, Issue 17* edited by Samuel Hull Wilcocke]