

ENNUI

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Ennui by Maria Edgeworth

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MARIA EDGEWORTH

ENNUI



W. Harvey

1874

The daughter, a beautiful girl, kneeling beside him, held the light for the young man, who was reading her brother's letter.

ENNUI
BY
MARIA EDGEWORTH



— I stood up, on a moment, belonging to the Gleasons family
and the moment it was observed that I wished to address the
multitude, the talking voices were stilled, and there was a dead
silence.

LONDON
J. M. DENT & CO. ALDINE HOUSE
NEW YORK: DODD MEAD & CO.
1893

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1893
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NOTE.

OF the *Tales of Fashionable Life*, of which *Ennui* is the first, only the larger ones are at present intended to be included in this edition of Maria Edgeworth's works. The various stories comprised in this series were written between the appearance of *Leonora* in 1806 and the publication of the last of the series in 1812. The whole eight stories of which this series consists were issued in six volumes, the first three in 1809, and three other volumes in 1812. The preface which her father wrote to the first portion is here reprinted, and will give all the information needed in connection with the present volume and the scope of this series of stories as a whole.

The following is a list of the principal editions of *Ennui* :—

- ENNUI, forming Vol. I. of *Tales of Fashionable Life* by Maria Edgeworth, 6 vols., London, 1809-12 (second and third editions bearing same dates).
- another edition, London, 1815.
- with *Almeria* (forming Vol. VII. of *Tales and Miscellaneous Pieces* by Maria Edgeworth, 14 vols.), London, 1825.
- with *The Dun* (forming Vol. VI. of *Novels*

and Tales of Maria Edgeworth, 18 vols.),
London, 1832-33.

Many reprints from the stereotype plates of this edition
have been issued in various forms, and with
varying arrangement of the stories.

Translated into French in 1817.

F. J. S.





ORIGINAL PREFACE
TO
TALES OF FASHIONABLE LIFE.

MY daughter asks me for a Preface to the following volumes; from a pardonable weakness she calls upon me for parental protection: but, in fact, the public judges of every work, not from the sex, but from the merit of the author.

What we feel, and see, and hear, and read, affects our conduct from the moment when we begin till the moment when we cease to think. It has therefore been my daughter's aim to promote, by all her writings, the progress of education from the cradle to the grave.

Miss Edgeworth's former works consist of tales for children—of stories for young men and women—and of tales suited to that great mass which does not move in the circles of fashion. The present volumes are intended to point out some of those errors to which the higher classes of society are disposed.

All the parts of this series of moral fictions bear upon the faults and excellencies of different ages and classes; and they have all arisen from that view of society which we have laid before the public in more didactic works on education. In the PARENT'S ASSIST-

ANT, in MORAL and in POPULAR TALES, it was my daughter's aim to exemplify the principles contained in PRACTICAL EDUCATION. In these volumes, and in others which are to follow, she endeavours to disseminate, in a familiar form, some of the ideas that are unfolded in ESSAYS ON PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION.

The first of these stories is called

ENNUI.—The causes, curses, and cure of this disease are exemplified, I hope, in such a manner, as not to make the remedy worse than the disease. Thiebauld tells us, that a prize-essay on Ennui was read to the Academy of Berlin, which put all the judges to sleep.

THE DUN—is intended as a lesson against the common folly of believing that a debtor is able by a few cant phrases to alter the nature of right and wrong. We had once thoughts of giving to these books the title of FASHIONABLE TALES: alas! the Dun could never have found favour with fashionable readers.

MANGEUVRING—is a vice to which the little great have recourse, to show their second-rate abilities. Intrigues of gallantry upon the Continent frequently lead to political intrigue: amongst us the attempts to introduce this *improvement* of our manners have not yet been successful; but there are, however, some, who, in everything they say or do, show a predilection for “left-handed wisdom.” It is hoped that the picture here represented of a *manœuvrer* has not been made alluring.

ALMERIA—gives a view of the consequences which usually follow the substitution of the gifts of fortune in the place of merit; and shows the meanness of