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BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA

By S. T. COLERIDGE

EDITED

WITH HIS AESTHETICAL ESSAYS

BY

J. SHAWCROSS

VOLUME II

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Biographical Sketches

OF

MY LITERARY LIFE

AND

OPINIONS.

By S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

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BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA

CHAPTER XIV

Occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed—Preface to the second edition—The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony—Philosophic definitions of a poem and poetry with scholia.

DURING the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moon-light or sun-set diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself (to which of us I do not recollect) that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in *this* sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such, as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the "Lyrical Ballads";

in which it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote "The Ancient Mariner," and was preparing among other poems, "The Dark Ladie," and the "Christabel," in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the "Lyrical Ballads" were published; and were presented by him, as an *experiment*, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasureable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length; in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of

this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of style that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of *real* life. From this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being; had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by meanness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found too not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by its *religious* fervor. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence, with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface, in the sense attributed to them, and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize,

I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them a erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to th author's own practice in the greater number of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection s, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice. But he has not, as far as I can discover, announced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honored more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with his opinions, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my ideas, first, of a POEM; and secondly, of POETRY itself, in *kind*, and in *essence*.

The office of philosophical *disquisition* consists in just *distinction;* while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is no division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts and this is the technical *process* of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the *result* of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a

man might attribute the name of a poem to the well-known numeration of the days in the several months;

> "Thirty days hath September,
> April, June, and November," &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this harm super-added, whatever be their contents, *may* be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial *form*. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may *result* from the *attainment* of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the *ultimate* end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the Bathyllus even of an Anacreon, or the Alexis of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, as in novels and romances. Would then the mere superaddition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle *these* to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must

be made consonant with it. They must be such, as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by [illegible] *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species (having *this* object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking, than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chooses to call every composition a poem, which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical [illegible] The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgement of all countries, in equally denying the praises of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distiches, each of which, [illegible] the whole attention of the reader to itself, disjoins it from its context, and makes it a separate whole, instead of an harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result, unattracted by the component

parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasureable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air; at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. "Præcipitandus est *liber* spiritus," says Petronius Arbiter most happily. The epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb; and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of PLATO, and Bishop TAYLOR, and the "Theoria Sacra" of BURNET, furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contra- [illegible] objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah (indeed a very large portion of the whole book) is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth, was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever *specific* import we attach to the word, poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, or ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved *in keeping* with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement, as will partake of *one*, though not a *peculiar* property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in the preceding disquisition on the fancy and imagination. What is poetry? is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

The poet, described in *ideal* perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, controul (*laxis effertur habenis*) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgement ever awake and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. | "Doubtless," as Sir John Davies observes of the soul (and his words may with slight alteration be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic IMAGINATION)

> "Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
> Bodies to spirit by sublimation strange,
> As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
> As we our food into our nature change.

From their gross matter she abstracts their forms,
And draws a kind of quintessence from things;
Which to her proper nature she transforms,
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

Thus does she, when from individual states
She doth abstract the universal kinds;
Which then re-clothed in divers names and fates
Steal access through our senses to our minds."

Finally, GOOD SENSE is the BODY of poetic genius, FANCY its DRAPERY, MOTION its LIFE, and IMAGINATION the SOUL that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

CHAPTER XV

The specific symptoms of poetic power elucidated in a critical analysis of Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, and Lucrece.

IN the application of these principles to purposes of practical criticism as employed in the appraisal of works more or less imperfect, I have endeavoured to discover what the qualities in a poem are, which may be deemed promises and specific symptoms of poetic power, as distinguished from general talent determined to poetic composition by accidental motives, by an act of the will, rather than by the inspiration of a genial and productive nature. In this investigation, I could not, I thought, do better, than keep before me the earliest work of the greatest genius, that perhaps human nature has yet produced, our *myriad-minded** Shakespeare. I mean the "Venus and Adonis," and the "Lucrece"; works which give at once strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity, of

* Ἀνὴρ μυριώνους, a phrase which I have borrowed from a Greek monk, who applies it to a Patriarch of Constantinople. I might have said, that I have *reclaimed*, rather than borrowed it: for it seems to belong to Shakespeare, "de jure singulari, et ex privilegio naturæ."

his genius. From these I abstracted the following marks, as characteristics of original poetic genius in general.

1. In the "Venus and Adonis," the first and most obvious excellence is the perfect sweetness of the versification; its adaptation to the subject; and the power displayed in varying the march of the words without passing into a loftier and more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts, or permitted by the propriety of preserving a sense of melody predominant. The delight in richness and sweetness of sound, even to a faulty excess, if it be evidently original, and not the result of an easily imitable mechanism, I regard as a highly favourable promise in the compositions of a young man. "The man that hath not music in his soul" can indeed never be a genuine poet. Imagery (even taken from nature, much more when transplanted from books, as travels, voyages, and works of natural history); affecting incidents; just thoughts; interesting personal or domestic feelings; and with these the art of their combination or intertexture in the form of a poem; may all by incessant effort be acquired as a trade, by a man of talents and much reading, who, as I once before observed, has mistaken an intense desire of poetic reputation for a natural poetic genius; the love of the arbitrary end for a possession of the peculiar means. But the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination; and this together with the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect, and modifying a series of thoughts by some one predominant thought or feeling, may be cultivated and improved, but can never be learned. It is in these that "poeta nascitur non fit."

2. A second promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself. At least I have found, that where the subject is taken immediately from the author's personal sensations and experiences, the excellence of a particular poem

is but an equivocal mark, and often a fallacious pledge, of genuine poetic power. We may perhaps remember the tale of the statuary, who had acquired considerable reputation for the legs of his goddesses, though the rest of the statue accorded but indifferently with ideal beauty; till his wife, elated by her husband's praises, modestly acknowledged that she herself had been his constant model. In the "Venus and Adonis" this proof of poetic power exists even to excess. It is throughout as if a superior spirit more intuitive, more intimately conscious, even than the characters themselves, not only of every outward look and act, but of the flux and reflux of the mind in all its subtlest thoughts and feelings, were placing the whole before our view; himself meanwhile unparticipating in the passions, and actuated only by that pleasureable excitement, which had resulted from the energetic fervor of his own spirit in so vividly exhibiting, what it had so accurately and profoundly contemplated. I think, I should have conjectured from these poems, that even then the great instinct, which impelled the poet to the drama, was secretly working in him, prompting him by a series and never broken chain of imagery, always vivid and, because unbroken, often minute; by the highest effort of the picturesque in words, of which words are capable, higher perhaps than was ever realized by any other poet, even Dante not excepted; to provide a substitute for that visual language, that constant intervention and running comment by tone, look and gesture, which in his dramatic works he was entitled to expect from the players. His "Venus and Adonis" seem at once the characters themselves, and the whole representation of those characters by the most consummate actors. You seem to be told nothing, but to see and hear everything. Hence it is, that from the perpetual activity of attention required on the part of the reader; from the rapid flow, the quick change, and the playful nature of the thoughts and images; and above all from the aliena-

tion, and, if I may hazard such an expression, the utter *aloofness* of the poet's own feelings, from those of which he is at once the painter and the analyst; that though the very subject cannot but detract from the pleasure of a delicate mind, yet never was poem less dangerous on a moral account. Instead of doing as Ariosto, and as, still more offensively, Wieland has done, instead of degrading and deforming passion into appetite, the trials of love into the struggles of concupiscence; Shakespeare has here represented the animal impulse itself, so as to preclude all sympathy with it, by dissipating the reader's notice among the thousand outward images, and now beautiful, now fanciful circumstances, which form its dresses and its scenery; or by diverting our attention from the main subject by those frequent witty or profound reflections, which the poet's ever active mind has deduced from, or connected with, the imagery and the incidents. The reader is forced into too much action to sympathize with the merely passive of our nature. As little can a mind thus roused and awakened be brooded on by mean and indistinct emotion, as the low, lazy mist can creep upon the surface of a lake, while a strong gale is driving it onward in waves and billows.

3. It has been before observed that images, however beautiful, though faithfully copied from nature, and as accurately represented in words, do not of themselves characterize the poet. They become proofs of original genius only as far as they are modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit,

"Which shoots its being through earth, sea, and air."

In the two following lines for instance, there is nothing

objectionable, nothing which would preclude them from forming, in their proper place, part of a descriptive poem :

" Behold yon row of pines, that shorn and bow'd
Bend from the sea-blast, seen at twilight eve."

But with a small alteration of rhythm, the same words would be equally in their place in a book of topography, or in a descriptive tour. The same image will rise into semblance of poetry if thus conveyed :

" Yon row of bleak and visionary pines,
By twilight glimpse discerned, mark ! how they flee
From the fierce sea-blast, all their tresses wild
Streaming before them."

I have given this as an illustration, by no means as an instance, of that particular excellence which I had in view, and in which Shakespeare even in his earliest, as in his latest, works surpasses all other poets. It is by this, that he still gives a dignity and a passion to the objects which he presents. Unaided by any previous excitement, they burst upon us at once in life and in power.

" Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain tops with sovereign eye."
Shakespeare, Sonnet 33rd.

" Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come—

* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *

The mortal moon hath her eclipse endur'd,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage ;
Incertainties now crown themselves assur'd,
And Peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My Love looks fresh, and DEATH to me subscribes !
Since spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.
And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
When tyrants' crests, and tombs of brass are spent."
Sonnet 107.

As of higher worth, so doubtless still more characteristic of poetic genius does the imagery become, when it moulds and colors itself to the circumstances, passion, or character, present and foremost in the mind. For unrivalled instances of this excellence, the reader's own memory will refer him to the LEAR, OTHELLO, in short to which not of the "*great, ever living, dead man's*" dramatic works? "Inopem me copia fecit." How true it is to nature, he has himself finely expressed in the instance of love in Sonnet 98.

"From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud pied April drest in all its trim
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them, where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were, tho' sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play!"

Scarcely le ɔ sure, or if a less valuable, not less indispensable mark

Γονίμου μὲν ποιητοῦ·
——ὅστις ῥῆμα γενναῖον λάκοι,

will the imagery supply, when, with more than the power of the painter, the poet gives us the liveliest image of succession with the feeling of simultaneousness!

"With this, he breaketh from the sweet embrace
Of those fair arms, that held him to her heart,
And homeward through the dark lawns runs apace
Look! how a bright star shooteth from the sky,
So glides he in the night from Venus' eye."

4. The last character I shall mention, which would prov[1] indeed but little, except as taken conjointly with the forme[r]

yet without which the former could scarce exist in a high degree, and (even if this were possible) would give promises only of transitory flashes and a meteoric power; is DEPTH, and ENERGY of THOUGHT. No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher. For poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language. In Shakespeare's *poems* the creative power and the intellectual energy wrestle as in a war embrace. Each in its excess of strength seems to threaten the extinction of the other. At length in the DRAMA they were reconciled, and fought each with its shield before the breast of the other. Or like two rapid streams, that, at their first meeting within narrow and rocky banks, mutually strive to repel each other and intermix reluctantly and in tumult; but soon finding a wider channel and more yielding shores blend, and dilate, and flow on in one current and with one voice. The "Venus and Adonis" did not perhaps allow the display of the deeper passions. But the story of Lucretia seems to favor and even demand their intensest workings. And yet we find in *Shakespeare's* management of the tale neither pathos, nor any other *dramatic* quality. There is the same minute and faithful imagery as in the former poem, in the same vivid colors, inspirited by the same impetuous vigor of thought, and [illegible] and contracting with the same activity of the assimilative and of the modifying faculties; and with a yet larger display, a yet wider range of knowledge and reflection; and lastly, with the same perfect dominion, often *domination*, over the whole world of language. What then shall we say? even this; that Shakespeare, no mere child of nature; no automaton of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it; first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings, and at length

gave birth to that stupendous power, by which he stands alone, with no equal or second in his own class; to that power which seated him on one of the two glory-smitten summits of the poetic mountain, with Milton as his compeer, not rival. While the former darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion, the one Proteus of the fire and the flood; the other attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own IDEAL. All things and modes of action shape themselves anew in the being of MILTON; while SHAKESPEARE becomes all things, yet for ever remaining himself. O what great men hast thou not produced, England! my country! truly indeed—

"Must *we* be free or die, who speak the tongue,
Which SHAKESPEARE spake; the faith and morals hold,
Which MILTON held. In every thing we are sprung
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold!"

WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER XVI

Striking points of difference between the Poets of the present age and those of the 15th and 16th centuries—Wish expressed for the union of the characteristic merits of both.

CHRISTENDOM, from its first settlement on feudal rights, has been so far one great body, however imperfectly organized, that a similar spirit will be found in each period to have been acting in all its members. The study of Shakespeare's *poems* (I do not include his dramatic works, eminently as they too deserve that title) led me to a more careful examination of the contemporary poets both in this and in other countries. But my attention was especially fixed on those of Italy, from the birth to the death of Shakespeare; that being the country in which the fine arts had been most sedulously, and hitherto most successfully cultivated. Abstracted from the degrees and peculiarities of individual genius, the properties common to the good writers of each

period seem to establish one striking point of difference between the poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and that of the present age. The remark may perhaps be extended to the sister art of painting. At least the latter will serve to illustrate the former. In the present age the poet (I would wish to be understood as speaking generally, and without allusion to individual names) seems to propose to himself as his main object, and as that which is the most characteristic of his art, new and striking IMAGES; with INCIDENTS that interest the affections or excite the curiosity. Both his characters and his descriptions he renders, as much as possible, specific and individual, even to a degree of portraiture. In his diction and metre, on the other hand, he is comparatively careless. The measure is either constructed on no previous system, and acknowledges no justifying principle but that of the writer's convenience; or else some mechanical movement is adopted, of which one couplet or stanza is so far an adequate specimen, as that the occasional differences appear evidently to arise from accident, or the qualities of the language itself, not from meditation and an intelligent purpose. And the language from Pope's "Translation of Homer" to Darwin's "Temple of Nature," may, notwithstanding some illustrious exceptions, be too faithfully characterized, as claiming to be poetical for no better reason, than that it would be intolerable in conversation or in prose. Though alas! even our prose writings, nay even the style of our more set discourses, strive to be in the fashion, and trick themselves out in the soiled and over-worn finery of the meretricious muse. It is true that of late a great improvement in this respect is observable in our most popular writers. But it is equally true, that this recurrence to plain sense and genuine mother English is far from being general; and that the composition of our novels, magazines, public harangues, &c., is commonly as trivial in thought, and yet enigmatic in expression, as if ECHO and SPHINX had

laid their heads together to construct it. Nay, even of those who have most rescued themselves from this contagion, I should plead inwardly guilty to the charge of duplicity or cowardice, if I withheld my conviction, that few have guarded the purity of their native tongue with that jealous care, which the sublime Dante in his tract "De la nobile volgare eloquenza" declares to be the first duty of a poet. For language is the armoury of the human mind; and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future conquests. "Animadverte, quam sit ab impropriete verborum pronum hominibus prolabi in errores circa res!" HOBBES: *Exam. et Exmend. hod. Math.*—"Sat vero, in hâc vitæ brevitate et naturæ obscuritate, rerum est, quibus cognoscendis tempus impendatur, ut confusis et multivocis sermonibus intelligendis illud consumere non opus sit. Eheu! quantas strages paravere verba nubila, quæ tot dicunt, ut nihil dicant—nubes potius, e quibus et in rebus politicis et in ecclesiâ turbines et tonitrua erumpunt! Et proinde recte dictum putamus a Platone in Gorgia: ὃς ἂν τὰ ὀνόματα εἰδῇ, εἴσεται καὶ τὰ πράγματα: et ab Epicteto, ἀρχὴ παιδεύσεως ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπίσκεψις: et prudentissime Galenus scribit, ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων χρῆσις ταραχθεῖσα καὶ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιταράττει γνῶσιν, Egregie vero J. C. Scaliger, in Lib. I. de Plantis: Est *primum*, inquit, *sapientis officium, bene sentire, ut sibi vivat: proximum, bene loqui, ut patriæ vivat.*" SENNERTUS *de Puls: Differentiâ.*

Something analogous to the materials and structure of modern poetry I seem to have noticed (but here I beg to be understood as speaking with the utmost diffidence) in our common landscape painters. Their foregrounds and intermediate distances are comparatively unattractive: while the main interest of the landscape is thrown into the background, where mountains and torrents and castles forbid the eye to proceed, and nothing tempts it to trace its way back again. But in the works of the great Italian and

Flemish masters, the front and middle objects of the landscape are the most obvious and determinate, the interest gradually dies away in the background, and the charm and peculiar worth of the picture consists, not so much in the specific objects which it conveys to the understanding in a visual language formed by the substitution of figures for words, as in the beauty and harmony of the colors, lines and expression, with which the objects are represented. Hence novelty of subject was rather avoided than sought for. Superior excellence in the manner of treating the same subjects was the trial and test of the artist's merit.

Not otherwise is it with the more polished poets of the 15th and 16th century, especially with those of Italy. The imagery is almost always general: sun, moon, flowers, breezes, murmuring streams, warbling songsters, delicious shades, lovely damsels cruel as fair, nymphs, naiads, and goddesses, are the materials which are common to all, and which each shaped and [illegible] to his judgement or fancy, little solicitous to add or to particularize. If we make an honourable exception in favour of some English poets, the thoughts too are as little novel as the images; and the fable of their narrative poems, for the most part drawn from mythology, or sources of equal notoriety, derive their chief attractions from the manner of treating them; from impassioned flow, or picturesque arrangement. In opposition to the present age, and perhaps in as faulty an extreme, they placed the essence of poetry in the *art*. The excellence, at which they aimed, consisted in the exquisite polish of the diction, combined with perfect simplicity. This, their prime object, they attained by the avoidance of every word, which a *gentleman* would *not* use in dignified conversation, and of every word and phrase, which none but a *learned* man *would* use; by the studied position of words and phrases, so that not only each part should be melodious in itself, but contribute to the harmony of the whole, each

note referring and conducing to the melody of all the foregoing and following words of the same period or stanza; and lastly with equal labor, the greater because unbetrayed, by the variation and various harmonies of their metrical movement. Their measures, however, were not indebted for their variety to the introduction of new metres, such as have been attempted of late in the "Alonzo and Imogen," and others borrowed from the German, having in their very mechanism a specific overpowering tune, to which the generous reader humours his voice and emphasis, with more indulgence to the author than attention to the meaning or quantity of the words; but which, to an ear familiar with the *numerous* sounds of the Greek and Roman poets, has an effect not unlike that of galloping over a paved road in a German stage-waggon without springs. On the contrary, our elder bards both of Italy and England produced a far greater as well as more charming variety by countless modifications and subtle balances of sound in the common metres of their country. A lasting and enviable reputation awaits that man of genius, who should attempt and realize a union; who should recall the high finish, the appropriateness, the facility, the delicate proportion, and above all, the perfusive and omnipresent grace, which have preserved, as in a shrine of precious amber, the "Sparrow" of Catullus, the "Swallow," the "Grasshopper," and all the other little loves of Anacreon: and which, with bright, though diminished glories, revisited the youth and early manhood of Christian Europe, in the vales of * Arno, and the groves of Isis and of Cam; and who with these should combine the keener interest, deeper pathos, manlier reflection, and the fresher and more various imagery, which give a value and a name that will not pass away to the poets who have done honor to our own times, and to those of our immediate predecessors.

* These thoughts were suggested to me during the perusal of the Madrigals of GIOVAMBATISTA STROZZI published in Flor-

ence (nella Stamperia del Sermartelli) 1st May 1593, by his sons Lorenzo and Filippo Strozzi, with a dedication to their deceased paternal uncle, "Signor Leone Strozzi, Generale delle battaglie di Santa Chiesa." As I do not remember to have seen either the poems or their author mentioned in any English work, or have found them in any of the common collections of Italian poetry; and as the little work is of rare occurrence; I will transcribe a few specimens. I have seldom met with compositions that possessed, to my feelings, more of that satisfying *entireness*, that complete adequateness of the manner to the matter which so charms us in Anacreon, join'd with the tenderness, and more than the *delicacy* of Catullus. Trifles as they are, they were probably elaborated with great care; yet in the perusal we refer them to a spontaneous energy rather than to voluntary effort. To a cultivated taste there is a delight in *perfection* for its own sake, independent of the material in which it is manifested, that none but a cultivated taste can understand or appreciate.

After what I have advanced, it would appear presumption to offer a translation; even if the attempt were not discouraged by the different genius of the English mind and language, which demands a denser body of thought as the condition of a high polish, than the Italian. I cannot but deem it likewise an advantage in the Italian tongue, in many other respects inferior to our own, that the language of poetry is more distinct from that of prose than with us. From the earlier appearance and established primacy of the Tuscan poets, concurring with the number of independent states, and the diversity of written dialects, the Italians have gained a poetic idiom, as the Greeks before them had obtained it from the same causes with greater and more various discriminations—ex. gr. the ionic for their heroic verses; the attic for their iambic; and the two modes of the doric, the lyric or sacerdotal, and the pastoral, the distinctions of which were doubtless more obvious to the Greeks themselves than they are to us.

I will venture to add one other observation before I proceed to the transcription. I am aware, that the sentiments which I have avowed concerning the points of difference between the poetry of the present age, and that of the period between 1500 and 1650, are the reverse of the opinion commonly entertained. I was conversing on this subject with a friend, when the servant, a worthy and sensible woman, coming in, I placed before her two engravings, the one a pinky-colored plate of the day, the other a masterly etching by Salvator Rosa from one of his own pictures. On pressing her to tell us, which she preferred, after a little blushing and flutter of feeling, she replied—"Why, that, Sir! to be sure!" (pointing to the *ware* from the Fleet-street print shops); "it's so *neat* and elegant. T'other is such a

scratchy slovenly thing." An artist, whose writings are scarcely less valuable than his works, and to whose authority more deference will be willingly paid, than I could even wish should be shown to mine, has told us, and from his own experience too, that good taste must be *acquired*, and like all other good things, is the result of thought, and the submissive study of the best models. If it be asked, "But what shall I deem such?" the answer is; *presume* those to be the best, the *reputation* of which has been matured into *fame* by the consent of ages. For wisdom always has a final majority, if not by conviction, yet by acquiescence. In addition to Sir J. Reynolds I may mention Harris of Salisbury; who in one of his philosophical disquisitions has written on the means of acquiring a just taste with the precision of Aristotle, and the elegance of Quinctilian.

"MADRIGALE.

Gelido suo ruscel chiaro, e tranquillo
M'insegnò Amor di state a mezzo'l giorno;
Ardean le selve, ardean le piagge, e i colli.
Ond 'io, ch' a più gran gielo ardo e sfavillo,
Subito corsi; ma sì puro adorno
Girsene il vidi, che turbar no'l volli:
Sol mi specchiava, e'n dolce ombrosa sponda
Mi stava intento al mormorar dell' onda.

MADRIGALE.

Aure, dell' angoscioso viver mio
Refrigerio soave,
E dolce sì, che più non mi par grave
Nè l' arder, nè l' morir, anz' il desio;
Deh voi'l ghiaccio, e le nubi, e'l tempo rio
Discacciatene omai, che l' onda chiara,
E l' ombra non men cara
A scherzare, e cantar per suoi boschetti,
E prati Festa et Allegrezza alletti.

MADRIGALE.

Pacifiche, ma spesso in amorosa
Guerra co'fiori, e l' erba
Alla stagione acerba
Verdi Insegne del giglio, e della rosa,
Movete, Aure, pian pian; che tregua ò posa,
Se non pace, io ritrove;
E so ben dove:—Oh vago, e mansueto
Sguardo, oh labbra d'ambrosia, oh rider lieto!

MADRIGALE.

Hor come un Scoglio stassi,
Hor come un Rio se'n fugge,
Ed hor crud' Orsa rugge,
Hor canta Angelo pio: ma che non fassi?
E che non fammi, O Sassi,
O Rivi, o Belue, o Dii, questa mia vaga

Non so, se Ninfa, ò Maga,
Non so, se Donna, ò Dea,
Non so, se dolce ò rea ?

MADRIGALE.

Piangendo mi baciaste,
E ridendo il negaste :
In doglia hebbivi pia,
In festa hebbivi ria :
Nacque Gioia di pianti,
Dolor di riso : O amanti
Miseri, habbiate insieme
Ognor Paura e Speme.

MADRIGALE.

Bel Fior, tu mi rimembri
La rugiadosa guancia del bel viso ;
E sì vera l'assembri,
Che'n te sovente, come in lei m'affiso :
Et hor del vago riso,
Hor del sereno sguardo
Io pur cieco risguardo. Ma qual fugge,
O Rosa, il mattin lieve ?
E chi te, come neve,
E'l mio cor teco, e la mia vita strugge ?

MADRIGALE.

Anna mia, Anna dolce, oh sempre nuovo
E più chiaro concento,
Quanta dolcezza sento
In sol Anna dicendo ? Io mi pur pruovo,
Nè quì tra noi ritruovo,
Nè tra cieli armonia,
Che del bel nome suo più dolce sia :
Altro il Cielo, altro Amore,
Altro non suona l'Ecco del mio core.

MADRIGALE.

Hor che'l prato, e la selva si scolora,
Al tuo sereno ombroso
Muovine, alto Riposo ;
Deh ch' io riposi una sol notte, un hora .
Han le fere, gli augelli, ognun talora
Ha qualche pace ; io quando,
Lasso ! non vonne errando,
E non piango, e non grido ? e qual pur forte ?
Ma poichè non sent' egli, odine Morte.

MADRIGALE.

Risi e piansi d'Amor ; nè però mai
Se non in fiamma, ò 'n onda, ò 'n vento scrissi :
Spesso mercè trovai
Crudel ; sempre in me morto, in altri vissi :
Hor da' più scuri Abissi al ciel m'alzai,
Hor ne pur caddi giuso ;
Stanco al fin qui son chiuso."

CHAPTER XVII

Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth—Rustic life (above all, low *and rustic life) especially unfavorable to the formation of a human diction—The* best *parts of language the product of philosophers, not of clowns or shepherds—Poetry essentially ideal and generic—The language of Milton as much the language of* real *life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager.*

As far then as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the *dramatic* propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he was, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasureable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of empassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the publication of this preface. I cannot likewise but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses

of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible, that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conduced not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions, which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annexments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption, that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in

any sense this rule is applicable only to *certain* classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense, as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is *practicable*, yet as a *rule* it is useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised. The poet informs his reader, that he had generally chosen *low and rustic* life; but not *as* low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superior refinement oftentimes derive from a happy *imitation* of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiors. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in *fact*, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the *representation*, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an *imitation* as distinguished from a mere *copy*. The third cause may be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained sometimes *actual* clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that *character*. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended, and are more durable;

and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."

Now it is clear to me, that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as "the Brothers," "Michael," "Ruth," "the Mad Mother," &c., the persons introduced are by no means taken *from low or rustic life* in the common acceptation of those words; and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, [illegible] and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in *every* state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal I rank that INDEPENDENCE, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, EDUCATION, which has rendered few books familiar, but the Bible, and the liturgy or hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far *accidental*, that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the show of probability, that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, (Enthusiasmus triumphatus, Sec. XXXV.), that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned; the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing *their* style."

It is, moreover, to be considered that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, *negations* involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced, that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is pre-requisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labors. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants: and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the POOR LAWS in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the *farmers* are the overseers and guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desireable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pastoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point, to which all the

lines of difference converge as to their source and centre. (I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulged in this preface.) I adopt with full faith the principle of Aristotle, that poetry as poetry is essentially* *ideal*, that it avoids and excludes all *accident*; that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be *representative* of a class; and that the *persons* of poetry must be clothed with *generic* attributes, with the *common* attributes of the class: not with such as one gifted individual might *possibly* possess, but such as

* Say not that I am recommending abstractions; for these class-characteristics which constitute the instructiveness of a character, are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shakespearean Drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of Geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence; and Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in Geometry it is the universal truth, which is uppermost in the consciousness; in poetry the individual form, in which the truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of poetry. They neither sought in comedy to make us laugh merely; much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, *slang* phrases for the day, or the clothing of common-place morals drawn from the shops or mechanic occupations of their characters. Nor did they condescend in tragedy to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them facsimiles of their own mean selves in all their existing meanness, or to work on the sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to *affect* us indeed; but yet within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to implant the germs of that greatness, during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing we are," and of the peculiar state in which each man *happens* to be, suspending our individual recollections and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

FRIEND, Pages 251, 252.

from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he *would* possess. If my premises are right and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no *poetic* medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of "THE BROTHERS," that of the shepherd of Greenhead Ghyll in the "MICHAEL," have all the verisimilitude and representative quality, that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class. Take "MICHAEL" for instance:

"An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb:
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence he had learnt the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes
When others heeded not, he heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
The winds are now devising work for me!
And truly at all times the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summon'd him
Up to the mountains. He had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him and left him on the heights.
So liv'd he, till his eightieth year was pass'd.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green vallies, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with chearful spirits he had breath'd
The common air; the hills, which he so oft
Had climb'd with vigorous steps; which had impress'd

So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had sav'd,
Had fed or shelter'd, linking to such acts,
So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honorable gain; these fields, these hills
Which were his living being, even more
Than his own blood—what could they less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasureable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself."

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched at a lower note, as the "HARRY GILL," "IDIOT BOY," the *feelings* are those of human nature in general; though the poet has judiciously laid the *scene* in the country, in order to place *himself* in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In the "Idiot Boy," indeed, the mother's character is not so much a real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgement. Hence the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless: at least, they are the only plausible objections, which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of *ordinary morbid idiocy*, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He has even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the *boy* is so evenly balanced by the folly of the *mother*, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile dotage, than

an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In the "Thorn" the poet himself acknowledges in a note the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have pourtrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man moderately imaginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings, "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men having nothing to do become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem (and the NURSE in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic *poetry*, if indeed the Nurse itself can be deemed altogether a case in point) it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser, without repeating the effects of dullness and garrulity. However this may be, I dare assert, that the parts (and these form the far larger portion of the whole) which might as well or still better have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own character, are those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza;* the seven last lines of the tenth;† and the five following

* "I've measured it from side to side;
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide."

† "Nay, rack your brain—'tis all in vain,
I'll tell you every thing I know;
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond
Which is a little step beyond,
I wish that you would go:
Perhaps when you are at the place,
You something of her tale may trace.

stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many un-

I'll give you the best help I can:
Before you up the mountain go,
Up to the dreary mountain-top,
I'll tell you all I know.
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,
Her company to Stephen Hill;
And she was blithe and gay,
And she was happy, happy still
Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fix'd the wedding-day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another maid
Had sworn another oath;
And, with this other maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went—
Poor Martha! on that woeful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,
And there was often seen.
'Tis said a child was in her womb,
As now to any eye was plain;
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often she was sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel father!

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Last Christmas when we talked of this,
Old farmer Simpson did maintain,
That in her womb the infant wrought
About its mother's heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

prejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory, by which the choice of *characters* was to be directed, not only *à priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself *need* be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither admit as particular fact, or as general rule. "The language too of these men is adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the action of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions." To this I reply; that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far reconstructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar (which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials) will not differ from the language of any other man of com-

> No more I know, I wish I did,
> And I would tell it all to you:
> For what became of this poor child
> There 's none that ever knew:
> And if a child was born or no,
> There 's no one that could ever tell;
> And if 'twas born alive or dead,
> There 's no one knows, as I have said:
> But some remember well,
> That Martha Ray about this time
> Would up the mountain often climb."

mon-sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration (equally important though less obvious) that the rustic, from the more imperfect developement of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey *insulated facts*, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those *connections* of things, or those relative *bearings* of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For *facts* are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling *law*, which is the true *being* of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on; the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things, and modes of action, requisite for his bodily conveniences, would alone be individualized; while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the *best* part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived

from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed or reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes of the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to *particularize* many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly, such a language" (meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism) "arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by poets, who think they are conferring honor upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression:" it may be answered, that the language, which he has in view, can be attributed to rustics with no greater right, than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange. Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same.

Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of *folly* and *vanity*, not for that of the *rustic*, but for that of *good sense* and *natural feeling*.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions, which I controvert, are contained in the sentences —"*a selection of the* REAL *language of men;*"—"*the language of these men*" (i.e. men in low and rustic life) "*I propose to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men.*" "*Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be any essential difference.*" It is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its *individualities*; secondly, the common properties of the *class* to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of *universal* use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superior number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that, which every well-educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train, of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one nor the other differ half so much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real" therefore, we must substitute *ordinary*, or *lingua communis*. And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low

and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each, and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be transferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty, as would be required in adapting to the same purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, or barber, happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*. Anterior to cultivation, the lingua communis of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists every where in parts, and no where as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, *in a state of excitement*. For the nature of a man's words, where he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to *create*; but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or (which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement) whatever generalizations of truth or experience, the heat of passion may produce; yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an un-

furnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIIIth. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the *apparent* tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. "*At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, there he fell down dead.*"

CHAPTER XVIII

Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose—Origin and elements of metre—Its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.

I CONCLUDE, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgement? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at

least understand; but likewise by following the *order*, in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiors in knowledge and power, by the greater *disjunction* and *separation* in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that *surview*, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza, on which I have chanced to open, in the Lyrical Ballads. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

> "In distant countries have I been,
> And yet I have not often seen
> A healthy man, a man full grown,
> Weep in the public roads alone.
> But such a one, on English ground,
> And in the broad highway, I met;
> Along the broad highway he came,
> His cheeks with tears were wet:
> Sturdy he seem'd, though he was sad;
> And in his arms a lamb he had."

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order*, in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously deceived, if the following less *compact* mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt," &c., &c. But when I turn to the following stanza in "The Thorn":

"At all times of the day and night
This wretched woman thither goes,
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows:
And there, beside the thorn, she sits,
When the blue day-light 's in the skies;
And when the whirlwind 's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still;
And to herself she cries,
Oh misery! Oh misery!
Oh woe is me! Oh misery!"

and compare this with the language of ordinary men; or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in *real* life, from *such* a narrator, as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences; I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which MILTON, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair *specimen* of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

"THE VISION AND THE FACULTY DIVINE."

One point then alone remains, but that the most important; its examination having been, indeed, my chief inducement for the preceding inquisition. "*There neither is or can be any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition.*" Such is Mr. Wordsworth's assertion. Now prose itself, at least in all argumentative and consecutive works, differs, and ought to differ, from the language of conversation; even as * reading ought to differ from talking.

* It is no less an error in teachers, than a torment to the poor children, to inforce the necessity of reading as they would talk.

Unless therefore the difference denied be that of the mere *words*, as materials common to all styles of writing, and not of the *style* itself in the universally admitted sense of the term, it might be naturally presumed that there must exist a still greater between the ordonnance of poetic composition and that of prose, than is expected to distinguish prose from ordinary conversation.

There are not, indeed, examples wanting in the history of literature, of apparent paradoxes that have summoned the public wonder as new and startling truths, but which on examination have shrunk into tame and harmless *truisms*; as the eyes of a cat, seen in the dark, have been mistaken for flames of fire. But Mr. Wordsworth is among the last men, to whom a delusion of this kind would be attributed by

In order to cure them of *singing* as it is called, that is, of too great a difference, the child is made to repeat the words with his eyes from off the book; and then, indeed, his tones resemble talking, as far as his fears, tears and trembling will permit. But as soon as his eye is again directed to the printed page, the spell begins anew; for an instinctive sense tells the child's feelings, that to utter its own momentary thoughts, and to recite the written thoughts of another, as of another, and a far wiser than himself, are two widely different things; and as the two acts are accompanied with widely different feelings, so must they justify different modes of enunciation. Joseph Lancaster, among his other sophistications of the excellent Dr. Bell's invaluable system, cures this fault of *singing*, by hanging fetters and chains on the child, to the music of which one of his schoolfellows, who walks before, dolefully chaunts out the child's last speech and confession, birth, parentage, and education. And this soul-benumbing ignominy, this unholy and heart-hardening burlesque on the last fearful infliction of outraged law, in pronouncing the sentence to which the stern and familiarized judge not seldom bursts into tears, has been extolled as a happy and ingenious method of remedying—what? and how?—why, one extreme in order to introduce another, scarce less distant from good sense, and certainly likely to have worse moral effects, by enforcing a semblance of petulant ease and self-sufficiency, in repression, and possible after-perversion of the natural feelings. I have to beg Dr. Bell's pardon for this connection of the two names, but he knows that contrast is no less powerful a cause of association than likeness.

anyone, who had enjoyed the slightest opportunity of understanding his mind and character. Where an objection has been anticipated by such an author as natural, his answer to it must needs be interpreted in some sense which either is, or has been, or is capable of being controverted. My object then must be to discover some other meaning for the term "*essential difference*" in this place, exclusive of the indistinction and community of the words themselves. For whether there ought to exist a class of words in the English, in any degree resembling the poetic dialect of the Greek and Italian, is a question of very subordinate importance. The number of such words would be small indeed, in our language; and even in the Italian and Greek, they consist not so much of different words, as of slight differences in the *forms* of declining and conjugating the same words; forms, doubtless, which having been, at some period more or less remote, the common grammatic flexions of some tribe or province, had been accidentally appropriated to poetry by the general admiration of certain master intellects, the first established lights of inspiration, to whom that dialect happened to be native.

Essence, in its primary signification, means the principle of *individuation*, the inmost principle of the possibility of any thing, as that particular thing. It is equivalent to the *idea* of a thing, when ever we use the word, idea, with philosophic precision. Existence, on the other hand, is distinguished from essence, by the superinduction of *reality*. Thus we speak of the essence, and essential properties of a circle; but we do not therefore assert, that any thing, which really exists, is mathematically circular. Thus too, without any tautology we contend for the *existence* of the Supreme Being; that is, for a reality correspondent to the idea. There is, next, a *secondary* use of the word essence, in which it signifies the point or ground of contra-distinction between two modifications of the same substance or subject. Thus

we should be allowed to say, that the style of architecture of Westminster Abbey is *essentially* different from that of St. Paul's, even though both had been built with blocks cut into the same form, and from the same quarry. Only in this latter sense of the term must it have been *denied* by Mr. Wordsworth (for in this sense alone is it *affirmed* by the general opinion) that the language of poetry (i.e. the formal construction, or architecture, of the words and phrases) is *essentially* different from that of prose. Now the burthen of the proof lies with the oppugner, not with the supporters of the common belief. Mr. Wordsworth, in consequence, assigns as the proof of his position, "that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose, when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings even of Milton himself." He then quotes Gray's sonnet—

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;
The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or chearful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
A different object do these eyes require;
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And newborn pleasure brings to happier men:
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear,
To warm their little loves the birds complain.
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more because I weep in vain,"

and adds the following remark:—"It will easily be per-

ceived, that the only part of this Sonnet, which is of any value, is the lines printed in italics. It is equally obvious, that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word 'fruitless' for 'fruitlessly,' which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose."

An idealist defending his system by the fact, that when asleep we often believe ourselves awake, was well answered by his plain neighbour, "Ah, but when awake do we ever believe ourselves asleep?"—Things identical must be convertible. The preceding passage seems to rest on a similar sophism. For the question is not, whether there may not occur in prose an order of words, which would be equally proper in a poem; nor whether there are not beautiful lines and sentences of frequent occurrence in good poems, which would be equally becoming as well as beautiful in good prose; for neither the one nor the other has ever been either denied or doubted by any one. The true question must be, whether there are not modes of expression, a *construction*, and an *order* of sentences, which are in their fit and natural place in a serious prose composition, but would be disproportionate and heterogeneous in metrical poetry; and, vice versa, whether in the language of a serious poem there may not be an arrangement both of words and sentences, and a use and selection of (what are called) *figures of speech*, both as to their kind, their frequency, and their occasions, which on a subject of equal weight would be vicious and alien in correct and manly prose. I contend that in both cases this unfitness of each for the place of the other frequently will and ought to exist.

And first from the *origin* of metre. This I would trace to the balance in the mind effected by that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion. It might be easily explained likewise in what manner this salutary [illegible] is assisted by the very state, which

it counteracts; and how this balance of antagonists became organized into *metre* (in the usual acceptation of that term) by a supervening act of the will and judgement, consciously and for the foreseen purpose of pleasure. Assuming these principles, as the data of our argument, we deduce from them two legitimate conditions, which the critic is entitled to expect in every metrical work. First, that, as the *elements* of metre owe their existence to a state of increased excitement, so the metre itself should be accompanied by the natural language of excitement. Secondly, that as these elements are formed into metre *artificially*, by a *voluntary* act, with the design and for the purpose of blending *delight* with emotion, so the traces of present *volition* should throughout the metrical language be proportionately discernible. Now these two conditions must be reconciled and co-present. (There must be not only a partnership, but a union; an interpenetration of passion and of will, of *spontaneous* impulse and of *voluntary* purpose.) Again, this union can be manifested only in a frequency of forms and figures of speech (originally the offspring of passion, but now the adopted children of power) greater than would be desired or endured, where the emotion is not voluntarily encouraged and kept up for the sake of that pleasure, which such emotion, so tempered and mastered by the will, is found capable of communicating. It not only dictates, but of itself tends to produce, a more frequent employment of picturesque and vivifying language, than would be natural in any other case, in which there did not exist, as there does in the present, a previous and well understood, though tacit, *compact* between the poet and his reader, that the latter is entitled to expect, and the former bound to supply, this species and degree of pleasureable excitement. We may in some measure apply to this union the answer of POLIXENES, in the Winter's Tale, to PERDITA'S neglect of the streaked gilly-flowers, because she had heard it said,

"There is an art which, in their piedness, shares
With great creating nature.
Pol: Say there be;
Yet nature is made better by no mean,
But nature makes that mean; so, ev'n that art,
Which, you say, adds to nature, is an art,
That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scyon to the wildest stock;
And make conceive a bark of ruder kind
By bud of nobler race. This is an art,
Which does mend nature—change it rather; but
The art itself is nature."

Secondly, I argue from the EFFECTS of metre. As far as metre acts in and for itself, it tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and of the attention. This effect it produces by the continued excitement of surprize, and by the quick reciprocations of curiosity still gratified and still re-excited, which are too slight indeed to be at any one moment objects of distinct consciousness, yet become considerable in their aggregate influence. As a medicated atmosphere, or as wine during animated conversation; they act powerfully, though themselves unnoticed. Where, therefore, correspondent food and appropriate matter are not provided for the attention and feelings thus roused, there must needs be a disappointment felt; like that of leaping in the dark from the last step of a stair-case, when we had prepared our muscles for a leap of three or four.

The discussion on the powers of metre in the preface is highly ingenious and touches at all points on truth. But I cannot find any statement of its powers considered abstractly and separately. On the contrary Mr. Wordsworth seems always to estimate metre by the powers, which it exerts during (and, as I think, in *consequence of*) its combination with other elements of poetry. Thus the previous difficulty is left unanswered, *what* the elements are, with which it must be combined in order to produce its own effects to any

pleasureable purpose. Double and tri-syllable rhymes, indeed, form a lower species of wit, and, attended to exclusively for their own sake, may become a source of momentary amusement; as in poor Smart's distich to the Welsh 'Squire who had promised him a hare:

"Tell me, thou son of great Cadwallader!
Hast sent the hare? or hast thou swallow'd her?"

But for any *poetic* purposes, metre resembles (if the aptness of the simile may excuse its meanness) yeast, worthless or disagreeable by itself, but giving vivacity and spirit to the liquor with which it is proportionally combined.

The reference to the "Children in the Wood," by no means satisfies my judgement. We all willingly throw ourselves back for awhile into the feelings of our childhood. This ballad, therefore, we read under such recollections of our own childish feelings, as would equally endear to us poems, which Mr. Wordsworth himself would regard as faulty in the opposite extreme of gaudy and technical ornament. Before the invention of printing, and in a still greater degree, before the introduction of writing, metre, especially *alliterative* metre (whether alliterative at the beginning of the words, as in "Pierce Plouman," or at the end as in rhymes) possessed an independent value as assisting the recollection, and consequently the preservation, of *any* series of truths or incidents. But I am not convinced by the collation of facts, that the "Children in the Wood" owes either its preservation, or its popularity, to its metrical form. Mr. Marshal's repository affords a number of tales in prose inferior in pathos and general merit, some of as old a date, and many as widely popular. "TOM HICKATHRIFT," "JACK THE GIANT-KILLER," "GOODY TWO-SHOES," and "LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD" are formidable rivals. And that they have continued in prose, cannot be fairly explained by the assumption, that the comparative meanness of their

thoughts and images precluded even the humblest forms of metre. The scene of GOODY TWO-SHOES in the church is perfectly susceptible of metrical narration; and, among the Θαύματα θαυμαστότατα even of the present age, I do not recollect a more astonishing image than that of the "*whole rookery, that flew out of the giant's beard,*" scared by the tremendous voice, with which this monster answered the challenge of the heroic TOM HICKATHRIFT!

If from these we turn to compositions universally, and independently of all early associations, beloved and admired; would "THE MARIA," "THE MONK," or "THE POOR MAN'S ASS" of Sterne, be read with more delight, or have a better chance of immortality, had they without any change in the diction been composed in rhyme, than in their present state? If I am not grossly mistaken, the general reply would be in the negative. Nay, I will confess, that, in Mr. Wordsworth's own volumes, the "ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS," "SIMON LEE," "ALICE FELL," "THE BEGGARS," and "THE SAILOR'S MOTHER," notwithstanding the beauties which are to be found in each of them where the poet interposes the music of his own thoughts, would have been more delightful to me in prose, told and managed, as by Mr. Wordsworth they would have been, in a moral essay, or pedestrian tour.

Metre in itself is simply a stimulant of the attention, and therefore excites the question: Why is the attention to be thus stimulated? Now the question cannot be answered by the pleasure of the metre itself: for this we have shown to be *conditional*, and dependent on the appropriateness of the thoughts and expressions, to which the metrical form is superadded. Neither can I conceive any other answer that can be rationally given, short of this: I write in metre, because I am about to use a language different from that of prose. Besides, where the language is not such, how interesting soever the reflections are, that are capable of being drawn by a philosophic mind from the thoughts or incidents

of the poem, the metre itself must often become feeble. Take the last three stanzas of "THE SAILOR'S MOTHER," for instance. If I could for a moment abstract from the effect produced on the author's feelings, as a man, by the incident at the time of its real occurrence, I would dare appeal to his own judgement, whether in the *metre* itself he found a sufficient reason for *their* being written *metrically?*

"And, thus continuing, she said,
I had a son, who many a day
Sailed on the seas; but he is dead;
In Denmark he was cast away:
And I have travelled far as Hull, to see
What clothes he might have left, or other property.

The bird and cage they both were his:
'Twas my son's bird; and neat and trim
He kept it: many voyages
This [illegible] hath gone with him;
When last he sailed he left the bird behind;
As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind.

He to a fellow-lodger's care
Had left it, to be watched and fed,
Till he came back again; and there
I found it when my son was dead;
And now, God help me for my little wit!
I trail it with me, Sir! he took so much delight in it."

If disproportioning the emphasis we read these stanzas so as to make the rhymes perceptible, even *tri-syllable* rhymes could scarcely produce an equal sense of oddity and strangeness, as we feel here in finding *rhymes at all* in sentences so exclusively colloquial. I would further ask whether, but for that visionary state, into which the figure of the woman and the susceptibility of his own genius had placed the poet's imagination, (a state, which spreads its influence and coloring over all, that co-exists with the exciting cause, and in which

"The simplest, and the most familiar things
Gain a strange power of spreading awe around * them,")

I would ask the poet whether he would not have felt an abrupt downfall in these verses from the preceding stanza ?

"The ancient spirit is not dead;
Old times, thought I, are breathing there;
Proud was I that my country bred
Such strength, a dignity so fair:
She begged an alms, like one in poor estate;
I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate."

It must not be omitted, and is besides worthy of notice, that those stanzas furnish the only fair instance that I have been able to discover in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings, of an *actual* adoption, or true imitation, of the *real* and *very* language of *low and rustic life*, freed from provincialisms.

Thirdly, I deduce the position from all the causes elsewhere assigned, which render metre the proper form of poetry, and poetry imperfect and defective without metre. Metre therefore having been connected with *poetry* most often and by a peculiar fitness, whatever else is combined with *metre* must, though it be not itself *essentially* poetic, have nevertheless some property in common with poetry, as an intermedium of affinity, a sort (if I may dare borrow a well-known phrase from technical chemistry) of *mordaunt* between it and the super-added metre. Now poetry,

* Altered from the description of Night-Mair in the "Remorse."

"Oh Heaven! 'twas frightful! Now run down and stared at
By hideous shapes that cannot be remembered;
Now seeing nothing and imagining nothing;
But only being afraid—stifled with fear!
While every goodly or familiar form
Had a strange power of spreading terror round me!"

N.B. Though Shakespeare has, for his own *all-justifying* purposes, introduced the Night-*Mare* with her own foals. vet Mair means a Sister, or perhaps a Hag.

Mr. Wordsworth truly affirms, does always imply PASSION: which word must be here understood in its general sense, as an excited state of the feelings and faculties. And as every passion has its proper pulse, so will it likewise have its characteristic modes of expression. But where there exists that degree of genius and talent which entitles a writer to aim at the honors of a poet, the very *act* of poetic composition *itself* is, and is *allowed* to imply and to produce, an unusual state of excitement, which of course justifies and demands a correspondent difference of language, as truly, though not perhaps in as marked a degree, as the excitement of love, fear, rage, or jealousy. The vividness of the descriptions or declamations in DONNE or DRYDEN is as much and as often derived from the force and fervor of the describer, as from the reflections, forms or incidents, which constitute their subject and materials. The wheels take fire from the mere rapidity of their motion. To what extent, and under what modifications, this may be admitted to act, I shall attempt to define in an after remark on Mr. Wordsworth's reply to this objection, or rather on his objection to this reply, as already anticipated in his preface.

Fourthly, and as intimately connected with this, if not the same argument in a more general form, I adduce the high spiritual instinct of the human being impelling us to seek unity by harmonious adjustment, and thus establishing the principle, that *all* the parts of an organized whole must be assimilated to the more *important* and *essential* parts. (This and the preceding arguments may be strengthened by the reflection, that the composition of a poem is among the *imitative* arts; and that imitation, as opposed to copying, consists either in the interfusion of the SAME throughout the radically DIFFERENT, or of the different throughout a base radically the same.)

Lastly, I appeal to the practice of the best poets, of all countries and in all ages, as *authorizing* the opinion (*deduced*

from all the foregoing) that in every import of the word ESSENTIAL, which would not here involve a mere truism, there may be, is, and ought to be an *essential* difference between the language of prose and of metrical composition. In Mr. Wordsworth's criticism of GRAY'S Sonnet, the readers' sympathy with his praise or blame of the different parts is taken for granted rather perhaps too easily. He has not, at least, attempted to win or compel it by argumentative analysis. In *my* conception at least, the lines rejected as of no value do, with the exception of the two first, differ as much and as little from the [illegible] of common life, as those which he has printed in italics as possessing genuine excellence. Of the five lines thus honourably distinguished, two of them differ from prose, even more widely than the lines which either precede or follow, in the *position* of the words.

> "*A different object do these eyes require;*
> My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;
> *And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.*"

But were it otherwise, what would this prove, but a truth, of which no man ever doubted? Videlicet, that there are sentences, which would be equally in their place both in verse and prose. Assuredly it does not prove the point, which alone requires proof; namely, that there are not passages, which would suit the one and not suit the other. The first line of this sonnet is distinguished from the ordinary language of men by the epithet to morning. (For we will set aside, at present, the consideration, that the particular word "*smiling*" is hackneyed and (as it involves a sort of personification) not quite congruous with the common and material attribute of *shining*.) And, doubtless, this adjunction of epithets for the purpose of additional description, where no particular attention is demanded for the quality of the thing, would be noticed as giving a poetic

cast to a man's conversation. Should the sportsman exclaim, "*Come boys! the rosy morning calls you up,*" he will be supposed to have some song in his head. But no one suspects this, when he says, "A wet morning shall not confine us to our beds." This then is either a defect in poetry, or it is not. Whoever should decide in the *affirmative*, I would request him to re-peruse any one poem of any confessedly great poet from Homer to Milton, or from Æschylus to Shakespeare; and to strike out (in thought I mean) every instance of this kind. If the number of these fancied erasures did not startle him; or if he continued to deem the work improved by their total omission; he must advance reasons of no ordinary strength and evidence, reasons grounded in the essence of human nature. Otherwise, I should not hesitate to consider him as a man not so much *proof against* all authority, as *dead to* it.

The second line,

"And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;"

has indeed almost as many faults as words. But then it is a bad line, not because the language is distinct from that of prose; but because it conveys incongruous images, because it confounds the cause and the effect, the real *thing* with the personified *representative* of the thing; in short, because it differs from the language of GOOD SENSE! That the "Phœbus" is hackneyed, and a school-boy image, is an *accidental* fault, dependent on the age in which the author wrote, and not deduced from the nature of the thing. That it is part of an exploded mythology, is an objection more deeply grounded. Yet when the torch of ancient learning was re-kindled, so cheering were its beams, that our eldest poets, cut off by Christianity from all *accredited* machinery, and deprived of all *acknowledged* guardians and symbols of the great objects of nature, were naturally induced to adopt, as a *poetic* language, those fabulous personages, those

forms of the * supernatural in nature, which had given them such dear delight in the poems of their great masters. Nay, even at this day what scholar of genial taste will not so far sympathize with them, as to read with pleasure in PETRARCH, CHAUCER, or SPENSER, what he would perhaps condemn as puerile in a modern poet ?

I remember no poet, whose writings would safelier stand the test of Mr. Wordsworth's theory, than SPENSER. Yet will Mr. Wordsworth say, that the style of the following stanza is either undistinguished from prose, and the language of ordinary life ? Or that it is vicious, and that the stanzas are *blots* in the "Faery Queen" ?

"By this the northern waggonet had set
His sevenfold teme behind the steadfast starre,
That was in ocean waves yet never wet,
But firme is fixt, and sendeth light from farre
To all that in the wild deep wandering are :
And chearful chanticleer with his note shrill
Had warned once that Phœbus' fiery carre
In haste was climbing up the easterne hill,
Full envious that night so long his roome did fill."

Book I. Can. 2. St. 2.

"At last the golden orientall gate
Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre,
And Phœbus fresh, as brydegrome to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
And hurl'd his glist'ring beams through gloomy ayre :
Which when the wakeful elfe perceived, streightway
He started up, and did him selfe prepayre
In sun-bright armes and battailous array ;
For with that pagan proud he combat will that day."

B. I. Can. 5. St. 2.

On the contrary to how many passages, both in hymn

* But still more by the mechanical system of philosophy which has needlessly infected our theological opinions, and teaching us to consider the world in its relation to God, as of a building to its mason, leaves the idea of omnipresence a mere abstract notion in the state-room of our reason.

books and in blank verse poems, could I, (were it not invidious), direct the reader's attention, the style of which is most *unpoetic, because,* and only because, it is the style of *prose*? He will not suppose me capable of having in my mind such verses, as

> "I put my hat upon my head
> And walk'd into the Strand;
> And there I met another man,
> Whose hat was in his hand."

To such specimens it would indeed be a fair and full reply, that these lines are not bad, because they are *unpoetic*; but because they are empty of all sense and feeling; and that it were an idle attempt to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is evident that he is not a man. But the sense shall be good and weighty, the language correct and dignified, the subject interesting and treated with feeling; and yet the style shall, notwithstanding all these merits, be justly blamable as *prosaic,* and solely because the words and the order of the words would find their appropriate place in prose, but are not suitable to *metrical* composition. The "Civil Wars" of Daniel is an instructive, and even interesting work; but take the following stanzas (and from the hundred instances which abound I might probably have selected others far more striking):

> "And to the end we may with better ease
> Discern the true discourse, vouchsafe to shew
> What were the times foregoing near to these,
> That these we may with better profit know.
> Tell how the world fell into this disease;
> And how so great distemperature did grow;
> So shall we see with what degrees it came;
> How things at full do soon wax out of frame."

> "Ten kings had from the Norman conqu'ror reign'd
> With intermixt and variable fate,
> When England to her greatest height attain'd
> Of power, dominion, glory, wealth, and state;

After it had with much ado sustain'd
The violence of princes, with debate
For titles and the often mutinies
Of nobles for their ancient liberties."

" For first, the Norman, conqu'ring all by might,
By might was forc'd to keep what he had got;
Mixing our customs and the form of right
With foreign constitutions he had brought;
Mast'ring the mighty, humbling the poorer wight,
By all severest means that could be wrought;
And, making the succession doubtful, rent
His new-got state, and left it turbulent."

B. I. St. VII. VIII. & IX.

Will it be contended on the one side, that these lines are mean and senseless? Or on the other, that they are not prosaic, and for *that* reason unpoetic? This poet's well-merited epithet is that of the "*well-languaged Daniel*;" but likewise, and by the consent of his contemporaries no less than of all succeeding critics, the "prosaic Daniel." Yet those, who thus designate this wise and amiable writer, from the frequent incorrespondency of his diction to his metre in the majority of his compositions, not only deem them valuable and interesting on other accounts; but willingly admit, that there are to be found throughout his poems, and especially in his *Epistles* and in his *Hymen's Triumph*, many and exquisite specimens of that style which, as the *neutral ground* of prose and verse, is common to both. A fine and almost faultless extract, eminent, as for other beauties, so for its perfection in this species of diction, may be seen in LAMB'S Dramatic Specimens, &c., a work of various interest from the nature of the selections themselves, (all from the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries), and deriving a high additional value from the notes, which are full of just and original criticism, expressed with all the freshness of originality.

Among the possible effects of practical adherence to a

theory, that aims to *identify* the style of prose and verse, (if it does not indeed claim for the latter a yet nearer resemblance to the average style of men in the vivâ voce intercourse of real life) we might anticipate the following as not the least likely to occur. It will happen, as I have indeed before observed, that the metre itself, the sole acknowledged difference, will occasionally become metre to the eye only. The existence of *prosaisms*, and that they detract from the merit of a poem, *must* at length be conceded, when a number of successive lines can be rendered, even to the most delicate ear, unrecognizable as verse, or as having even been intended for verse, by simply transcribing them as prose; when, if the poem be in blank verse, this can be effected without any alteration, or at most by merely restoring one or two words to their proper places, from which they have been * transplanted for no assignable cause or reason

* As the ingenious gentleman under the influence of the Tragic Muse contrived to dislocate, "I wish you a good morning, Sir! Thank you, Sir, and I wish you the same," into two blank-verse heroics :—

> To you a morning good, good Sir! I wish.
> You, Sir! I thank: to you the same wish I.

In those parts of Mr. Wordsworth's works which I have thoroughly studied, I find fewer instances in which this would be practicable than I have met in many poems, where an approximation of prose has been sedulously and on system guarded against. Indeed excepting the stanzas already quoted from "THE SAILOR'S MOTHER," I can recollect but one instance: viz. a short passage of four or five lines in "THE BROTHERS," that model of English pastoral, which I have never yet read with unclouded eye.—"James, pointing to its summit, over which they had all purposed to return together, informed them that he would wait for them there. They parted, and his comrades passed that way some two hours after, but they did not find him at the appointed place, *a circumstance of which they took no heed*: but one of them, going by chance into the house, which at this time was James's house, learnt *there*, that nobody had seen him all that day." The only change which has been made is in the position of the little word *there* in two instances, the position in the original being clearly such as is not adopted in ordinary conversation. The other words printed in *italics* were so marked

but that of the author's convenience; but, if it be in rhyme, by the mere exchange of the final word of each line for some other of the same meaning, equally appropriate, dignified, and euphonic.

The answer or objection in the preface to the anticipated remark "that metre paves the way to other distinctions," is contained in the following words. "The distinction of rhyme and metre is voluntary and uniform, and not, like that produced by (what is called) poetic diction, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices, upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case the reader is utterly at the mercy of the poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion." But is this a *poet*, of whom a poet is speaking? No surely! rather of a fool or madman: or at best of a vain or ignorant phantast! And might not brains so wild and so deficient make just the same havock with rhymes and metres, as they are supposed to effect with modes and figures of speech? How is the reader at the *mercy* of such men? If he continue to read their nonsense, is it not his own fault? The ultimate end of criticism is much more to establish the principles of writing, than to furnish *rules* how to pass judgement on what has been written by others; if indeed it were possible that the two could be separated. But if it be asked, by what principles the poet is to regulate his own style, if he do not adhere closely to the sort and order of words which he hears in the market, wake, high-road, or plough-field? I reply; by principles, the ignorance or neglect of which would convict

because, though good and genuine English, they are not the phraseology of common conversation either in the word put in apposition, or in the connection by the genitive pronoun. Men in general would have said, "but that was a circumstance they paid no attention to, or took no notice of," and the language is, on the theory of the preface, justified only by the narrator's being the *Vicar*. Yet if any ear *could* suspect, that these sentences were ever printed as metre, on these very words alone could the suspicion have been grounded.

him of being no *poet*, but a silly or presumptuous usurper of the name! By the principles of grammar, logic, [illegible]! In one word by such a knowledge of the facts, material and spiritual, that most appertain to his art, as, if it have been governed and applied by *good sense*, and rendered instinctive by habit, becomes the representative and reward of our past conscious reasonings, insights, and conclusions, and acquires the name of TASTE. By what *rule* that does not leave the reader at the poet's mercy, and the poet at his own, is the latter to distinguish between the language suitable to *suppressed*, and the language, which is characteristic of *indulged*, anger? Or between that of rage and that of jealousy? Is it obtained by wandering about in search of angry or jealous people in uncultivated society, in order to copy their words? Or not far rather by the power of imagination proceeding upon the *all in each* of human nature? By *meditation*, rather than by *observation*? And by the latter in consequence only of the former? As eyes, for which the former has pre-determined their field of vision, and to which, as to *its* organ, it communicates a microscopic power? There is not, I firmly believe, a man now living, who has, from his own inward experience, a clearer intuition, than Mr. Wordsworth himself, that the last mentioned are the true sources of *genial* discrimination. Through the same process and by the same creative agency will the poet distinguish the degree and kind of the excitement produced by the very act of poetic composition. As intuitively will he know, what differences of style it at once inspires and justifies; what intermixture of conscious volition is natural to that state; and in what instances such figures and colors of speech degenerate into mere creatures of an arbitrary purpose, cold technical artifices of ornament or connection. For, even as truth is its own light and evidence, discovering at once itself and falsehood, so is it the prerogative of poetic genius to distinguish by parental instinct its proper offspring from

the changelings, which the gnomes of vanity or the fairies of fashion may have laid in its cradle or called by its names. Could a rule be given from *without*, poetry would cease to be poetry, and sink into a mechanical art. It would be μόρφωσις, not ποίησις. The *rules* of the IMAGINATION are themselves the very powers of growth and production. The *words*, to which they are reducible, present only the outlines and external appearance of the fruit. A deceptive counterfeit of the superficial form and colors may be elaborated; but the marble peach feels cold and heavy, and *children* only put it to their mouths. We find no difficulty in admitting as excellent, and the legitimate language of poetic fervor self-impassioned, DONNE'S apostrophe to the Sun in the second stanza of his "Progress of the Soul:"

"Thee, eye of heaven! this great soul envies not:
By thy male force is all, we have, begot.
In the first East thou now beginn'st to shine,
Suck'st early balm and island spices there,
And wilt anon in thy loose-rein'd career
At Tagus, Po, Seine, Thames, and Danow dine,
And see at night this western world of mine:
Yet hast thou not more nations seen than she,
Who before thee one day began to be,
And, thy frail light being quench'd, shall long, long outlive thee!"

Or the next stanza but one:

"Great destiny, the commissary of God,
That hast mark'd out a path and period
For ev'ry thing! Who, where we offspring took,
Our ways and ends see'st at one instant: thou
Knot of all causes! Thou, whose changeless brow
Ne'er smiles or frowns! O! vouchsafe thou to look,
And shew my story in thy eternal book, &c."

As little difficulty do we find in excluding from the honors of unaffected warmth and elevation the madness prepense of pseudo-poesy, or the startling *hysteric* of weakness over-

exerting itself, which bursts on the unprepared reader in sundry odes and apostrophes to abstract terms. Such are the Odes to Jealousy, to Hope, to Oblivion, and the like, in Dodsley's collection and the magazines of that day, which seldom fail to remind me of an Oxford copy of verses on the two SUTTONS, commencing with

"INOCULATION, heavenly maid! descend!"

It is not to be denied that men of undoubted talents, and even poets of true, though not of first-rate, genius, have from a mistaken theory deluded both themselves and others in the opposite extreme. I once read to a company of sensible and well-educated women the introductory period of Cowley's preface to his "*Pindaric Odes, written in imitation of the style and manner of the odes of Pindar.*" "If, (says Cowley), a man should undertake to translate Pindar, word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated another; as may appear, when he, that understands not the original, reads the verbal traduction of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving." I then proceeded with his own free version of the second Olympic, composed for the charitable purpose of *rationalizing* the Theban Eagle.

"Queen of all harmonious things,
Dancing words and speaking strings,
What God, what hero, wilt thou sing?
What happy man to equal glories bring?
Begin, begin thy noble choice,
And let the hills around reflect the image of thy voice.
Pisa does to Jove belong,
Jove and Pisa claim thy song.
The fair first-fruits of war, th' Olympic games,
Alcides offer'd up to Jove;
Alcides too thy strings may move!
But, oh! what man to join with these can worthy prove?
Join Theron boldly to their sacred flames;
Theron the next honor claims;

Theron to no man gives place,
Is first in Pisa's and in Virtue's race;
Theron there, and he alone,
Ev'n his own swift forefathers has outgone."

One of the company exclaimed, with the full assent of the rest, that if the original were madder than this, it must be incurably mad. I then translated the ode from the Greek, and as nearly as possible, word for word; and the impression was, that in the general movement of the periods, in the form of the connections and transitions, and in the sober majesty of lofty sense, it appeared to them to approach more nearly, than any other poetry they had heard, to the style of our Bible in the prophetic books. The first strophe will suffice as a specimen:

"Ye harp-controuling hymns! (or) ye hymns the sovereigns of harps!
What God? what Hero?
What Man shall we celebrate?
Truly Pisa indeed is of Jove,
But the Olympiad (or the Olympic games) did Hercules establish,
The first-fruits of the spoils of war.
But Theron for the four-horsed car,
That bore victory to him,
It behoves us now to voice aloud:
The Just, the Hospitable,
The Bulwark of Agrigentum,
Of renowned fathers
The Flower, even him
Who preserves his native city erect and safe."

But are such rhetorical caprices condemnable only for their deviation from the language of real life? and are they by no other means to be precluded, but by the rejection of all distinctions between prose and verse, save that of metre? Surely good sense, and a moderate insight into the constitution of the human mind, would be amply sufficient to prove, that such language and such combinations are the native

produce neither of the fancy nor of the imagination; that their operation consists in the excitement of surprise by the juxta-position and *apparent* reconciliation of widely different or incompatible things. As when, for instance, the hills are made to reflect the image of a *voice*. Surely, no unusual taste is requisite to see clearly, that this compulsory juxta-position is not produced by the presentation of impressive or delightful forms to the inward vision, nor by any sympathy with the modifying powers with which the genius of the poet had united and inspirited all the objects of his thought; that it is therefore a species of *wit*, a pure work of the *will*, and implies a leisure and self-possession both of thought and of feeling, incompatible with the steady fervor of a mind possessed and filled with the grandeur of its subject. To sum up the whole in one sentence. When a poem, or a part of a poem, shall be adduced, which is evidently vicious in the figures and contexture of its style, yet for the condemnation of which no reason can be assigned, except that it differs from the style in which men actually converse, then, and not till then, can I hold this theory to be either plausible, or practicable, or capable of furnishing either rule, guidance, or precaution, that might not, more easily and more safely, as well as more naturally, have been deduced in the author's own mind from considerations of grammar, logic, and the truth and nature of things, confirmed by the authority of works, whose fame is not of ONE country nor of ONE age.

CHAPTER XIX

Continuation—Concerning the real object which, it is probable, Mr. Wordsworth had before him in his critical preface—Elucidation and application of this—The neutral style, or that common to Prose and Poetry, exemplified by specimens from Chaucer, Herbert, and others.

IT might appear from some passages in the former part of Mr. Wordsworth's preface, that he meant to confine his theory of style, and the necessity of a close accordance with the actual language of men, to those particular subjects from low and rustic life, which by way of experiment he had purposed to naturalize as a new species in our English poetry. But from the train of argument that follows; from the reference to Milton; and from the spirit of his critique on Gray's sonnet; those sentences appear to have been rather courtesies of modesty, than actual limitations of his system. Yet so groundless does this system appear on a close examination; and so strange and * over-whelming in its consequences, that I cannot, and I do not, believe that the poet did ever himself adopt it in the unqualified sense, in which his expressions have been understood by others, and which, indeed, according to all the common laws of interpretation they seem to bear. What then did he mean? I apprehend, that in the clear perception, not unaccompanied with disgust or contempt, of the gaudy affections of a style which passed current with too many for poetic diction, (though in truth it had as little pretensions to poetry, as to logic or

* I had in my mind the striking but untranslatable epithet, which the celebrated Mendelssohn applied to the great founder of the Critical Philosophy "*Der alleszermalmende* KANT," i. e. the all-becrushing, or rather the *all-to-nothing-crushing* KANT. In the facility and force of compound epithets, the German from the number of its cases and inflections approaches to the Greek: that language so

"Bless'd in the happy marriage of sweet words."

It is in the woeful harshness of its sounds alone that the German need shrink from the comparison.

common sense), he narrowed his view for the time; and feeling a justifiable preference for the language of nature and of good sense, even in its humblest and least ornamented forms, he suffered himself to express, in terms at once too large and too exclusive, his predilection for a style the most remote possible from the false and showy splendour which he wished to explode. It is possible, that this predilection, at first merely comparative, deviated for a time into direct partiality. But the real object which he had in view, was, I doubt not, a species of excellence which had been long before most happily characterized by the judicious and amiable GARVE, whose works are so justly beloved and esteemed by the Germans, in his remarks on GELLERT, (see Sammlung einiger Abhandlungen von Christian Garve), from which the following is literally translated. "The talent, that is required to make excellent verses, is perhaps greater than the philosopher is ready to admit, or would find it in his power to acquire: the talent to seek only the apt expression of the thought, and yet to find at the same time with it the rhyme and the metre. Gellert possessed this happy gift, if ever any one of our poets possessed it; and nothing perhaps contributed more to the great and universal impression which his fables made on their first publication, or conduces more to their continued popularity. It was a strange and curious phenomenon, and such as in Germany had been previously unheard of, to read verses in which everything was expressed just as one would wish to talk, and yet all dignified, attractive, and interesting; and all at the same time perfectly correct as to the measure of the syllables and the rhyme. It is certain, that poetry when it has attained this excellence makes a far greater impression than prose. So much so indeed, that even the gratification which the very rhymes afford, becomes then no longer a contemptible or trifling gratification."

However novel this phenomenon may have been in

Germany at the time of Gellert, it is by no means new, nor yet of recent existence in our language. Spite of the licentiousness with which Spencer occasionally compels the orthography of his words into a subservience to his rhymes, the whole "Faery Queen" is an almost continued instance of this beauty. Waller's song "Go, lovely Rose," is doubtless familiar to most of my readers; but if I had happened to have had by me the Poems of COTTON, more but far less deservedly celebrated as the author of the "Virgil travestied," I should have indulged myself, and I think have gratified many, who are not acquainted with his serious works, by selecting some admirable specimens of this style. There are not a few poems in that volume, replete with every excellence of thought, image, and passion, which we expect or desire in the poetry of the milder muse; and yet so worded, that the reader sees no one reason either in the selection or the order of the words, why he might not have said the very same in an appropriate conversation, and cannot conceive how indeed he could have expressed such thoughts otherwise, without loss or injury to his meaning.

But in truth our language is, and from the first dawn of poetry ever has been, particularly rich in compositions distinguished by this excellence. The final *e*, which is now mute, in Chaucer's age was either sounded or dropt indifferently. We ourselves still use either *beloved* or *belov'd* according as the rhyme, or measure, or the purpose of more or less solemnity may require. Let the reader then only adopt the pronunciation of the poet and of the court, at which he lived, both with respect to the final *e* and to the accentuation of the last syllable; I would then venture to ask, what even in the colloquial language of elegant and unaffected women, (who are the peculiar mistresses of "pure English and undefiled,") what could we hear more natural. or seemingly more unstudied, than the following stanzas from Chaucer's "Troilus and Creseide"?

"And after this forth to the gate he wente,
Ther as Creseide out rode a full gode paas,
And up and doun there made he many a wente,
And to himselfe ful oft he said, Alas!
Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:
As wouldè blisful God now for his joie,
I might her sene agen come in to Troie!
And to the yondir hil I gan her guide,
Alas! and there I toke of her my leve:
And yond I saw her to her fathir ride;
For sorrow of which mine hearte shall to-cleve;
And hithir home I came whan it was eve,
And here I dwel, out-cast from allè joie,
And shal, til I maie sene her efte in Troie.
"And of himselfe imaginid he ofte
To ben defaitid, pale and waxen lesse
Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe,
What may it be? who can the sothè gesse,
Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?
And al this n' as but his melancolie,
That he had of himselfe suche fantasie.
Another time imaginin he would
That every wight, that past him by the wey,
Had of him routhe, and that they saien should,
I am right sorry, Troilus wol dey!
And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde: suche life gan he to lede
As he that stode betwixin hope and drede:
For which him likid in his songis shewe
Th' encheson of his wo as he best might,
And made a songe of wordis but a fewe,
Somwhat his woful herté for to light,
And whan he was from every mannis sight,
With softé voice he of his lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye may hear:

* * * * * *

This song when he thus songin had, ful soon
He fell agen into his sighis olde:
And every night, as was his wonte to done,
He stodè the bright moonè to beholde
And all his sorrowe to the moone he tolde,

And said: I wis, whan thou art hornid newe,
I shall be glad, if al the world be trewe!"

Another exquisite master of this species of style, where the scholar and the poet supplies the material, but the perfect well-bred gentleman the expressions and the arrangement, is George Herbert. As from the nature of the subject, and the too frequent quaintness of the thoughts, his "Temple: or Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations" are comparatively but little known, I shall extract two poems. The first is a Sonnet, equally admirable for the weight, number, and expression of the thoughts, and for the simple dignity of the language. (Unless indeed a fastidious taste should object to the latter half of the sixth line.) The second is a poem of greater length, which I have chosen not only for the present purpose, but likewise as a striking example and illustration of an assertion hazarded in a former page of these sketches: namely, that the characteristic fault of our elder poets is the reverse of that, which distinguishes too many of our more recent versifiers; the one conveying the most fantastic thoughts in the most correct and natural language; the other in the most fantastic language conveying the most trivial thoughts. The latter is a riddle of words; the former an enigma of thoughts. The one reminds me of an odd passage in Drayton's IDEAS:

"SONNET IX.

As other men, so I myself do muse,
Why in this sort I wrest invention so;
And why these *giddy metaphors* I use,
Leaving the path the greater part do go!
I will resolve you: *I am lunatic!*"

The other recalls a still odder passage in the "SYNAGOGUE: *or The Shadow of the Temple,*" a connected series of poems in imitation of Herbert's "TEMPLE," and, in some editions, annexed to it.

"O how my mind
Is gravell'd!
Not a thought,
That I can find,
But's ravell'd
All to nought!
Short ends of threds,
And narrow shreds
Of lists,
Knots, snarled ruffs,
Loose broken tufts
Of twists,
Are my torn meditation's ragged clothing,
Which, wound and woven, shape a sute for nothing:
One while I think, and then I am in pain
To think how to unthink that thought again!"

Immediately after these burlesque passages I cannot proceed to the extracts promised, without changing the ludicrous tone of feeling by the interposition of the three following stanzas of Herbert's.

VIRTUE.

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must dye.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must dye.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A nest, where sweets compacted lie:
My musick shews, ye have your closes,
And all must dye."

THE BOSOM SIN:

A SONNET BY GEORGE HERBERT.

"Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round,
Parents first season us; then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,

Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,
Bibles laid open, millions of surprizes;
Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,
The sound of glory ringing in our ears:
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears!
Yet all these fences and their whole array
One cunning BOSOM-SIN blows quite away."

LOVE UNKNOWN.

"Dear friend, sit down, the tale is long and sad:
And in my faintings, I presume, your love
Will more comply than help. A Lord I had,
And have, of whom some grounds, which may improve,
I hold for two lives, and both lives in me.
To him I brought a dish of fruit one day,
And in the middle placed my HEART. But he
(I sigh to say)
Look't on a servant, who did know his eye,
Better than you knew me, or (which is one)
Than I myself. The servant instantly,
Quitting the fruit, seiz'd on my *heart* alone,
And threw it in a font, wherein did fall
A stream of blood, which issued from the side
Of a great rock: I well remember all
And have good cause: there it was dipt and dyed,
And washt, and wrung! the very wringing yet
Enforceth tears. *Your heart was foul, I fear.*
Indeed 'tis true. I did and do commit
Many a fault, more than my lease will bear;
Yet still ask'd pardon, and was not deny'd.
But you shall hear. After my heart was well,
And clean and fair, as I one eventide
(I sigh to tell)
Walk'd by myself abroad, I saw a large
And spacious furnace flaming, and thereon
A boiling caldron, round about whose verge
Was in great letters set AFFLICTION.

The greatness shew'd the owner. So I went
To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,
Thinking with that, which I did thus present,
To warm his love, which, I did fear, grew cold.
But as my heart did tender it, the man
Who was to take it from me, slipt his hand,
And threw my *heart* into the scalding pan;
My heart that brought it (do you understand?)
The *offerer's* heart. *Your heart was hard, I fear.*
Indeed 'tis true. I found a callous matter
Began to spread and to expatiate there:
But with a richer drug than scalding water
I bath'd it often, ev'n with holy blood,
Which at a board, while many drank bare wine,
A friend did steal into my cup for good,
Ev'n taken inwardly, and most divine
To supple hardnesses. But at the length
Out of the caldron getting, soon I fled
Unto my house, where to repair the strength
Which I had lost, I hasted to my bed;
But when I thought to sleep out all these faults,
(I sigh to speak)
I found that some had stuffed the bed with thoughts,
I would say *thorns*. Dear, could my heart not break,
When with my pleasures ev'n my rest was gone?
Full well I understood who had been there:
For I had given the key to none but one:
It must be he. *Your heart was dull, I fear.*
Indeed a slack and sleepy state of mind
Did oft possess me; so that when I pray'd,
Though my lips went, my heart did stay behind.
But all my scores were by another paid,
Who took my guilt upon him. *Truly, friend,*
For aught I hear, your master shews to you
More favor than you wot of. Mark the end!
The font did only what was old renew:
The caldron suppled what was grown too hard:
The thorns did quicken what was grown too dull:
All did but strive to mend what you had marr'd.
Wherefore be cheer'd, and praise him to the full
Each day, each hour, each moment of the week
Who fain would have you be new, tender, quick!"

CHAPTER XX

The former subject continued.

I HAVE no fear in declaring my conviction, that the excellence defined and exemplified in the preceding Chapter is not the characteristic excellence of Mr. Wordsworth's style; because I can add with equal sincerity, that it is precluded by higher powers. The praise of uniform adherence to [illegible] logical English is undoubtedly his; nay, laying the main emphasis on the word *uniform*, I will dare add that, of all contemporary poets, it is *his alone*. For in a less absolute sense of the word, I should certainly include MR. BOWLES, LORD BYRON, and, as to all his later writings, MR. SOUTHEY, the exceptions in their work being so few and unimportant. But of the specific excellence described in the quotation from Garve, I appear to find more, and more undoubted specimens in the works of others; for instance, among the minor poems of Mr. Thomas Moore, and of our illustrious Laureate. To me it will always remain a singular and noticeable fact; that a theory which would establish this *lingua communis*, not only as the best, but as the only commendable style, should have proceeded from a poet, whose diction, next to that of Shakespeare and Milton, appears to me of all others the most *individualized* and characteristic. And let it be remembered too, that I am now interpreting the controverted passages of Mr. W's. critical preface by the purpose and object, which he may be supposed to have intended, rather than by the sense which the words themselves must convey, if they are taken without this allowance.

A person of any taste, who had but studied three or four of Shakespeare's principal plays, would without the name

affixed scarcely fail to recognise as Shakespeare's a quotation from any other play, though but of a few lines. A similar peculiarity, though in a less degree, attends Mr. Wordsworth's style, whenever he speaks in his own person; or whenever, though under a feigned name, it is clear that he himself is still speaking, as in the different dramatis personæ of the "RECLUSE." Even in the other poems, in which he purposes to be most dramatic, there are few in which it does not occasionally burst forth. The reader might often address the poet in his own words with reference to the persons introduced:

"It seems, as I retrace the ballad line by line,
That but half of it is theirs, and the better half is thine."

Who, having been previously acquainted with any considerable portion of Mr. Wordsworth's publications, and having studied them with a full feeling of the author's genius, would not at once claim as Wordsworthian the little poem on the rainbow?

"The child is father of the man, &c."

Or in the "Lucy Gray?"

"No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor;
The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door."

Or in the "Idle Shepherd-boys"?

"Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chaunts a joyous song;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon Gill."

Need I mention the exquisite description of the Sea Loch in the "Blind Highland Boy"? Who but a poet tells a tale in such language to the little ones by the fire-side as—

"Yet had he many a restless dream
Both when he heard the eagle's scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near where their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood,
But one of mighty size, and strange,
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills,
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns on errand still the same;
This did it when the earth was new;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that sweetly ride,
Between the woods and lofty rocks;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands."

I might quote almost the whole of his "RUTH," but take the following stanzas:

"But, as you have before been told,
This stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And with his dancing crest,
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roamed about with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a youth to whom was given
So much of earth, so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound,
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seemed allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
Fair trees and lovely flowers;
The breezes their own languor lent;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those magic bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent:
For passions, linked to forms so fair
And stately, needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment."

But from Mr. Wordsworth's more elevated compositions, which already form three-fourths of his works; and will, I trust, constitute hereafter a still larger proportion;—from these, whether in rhyme or blank-verse, it would be difficult and almost superfluous to select instances of a diction peculiarly his own, of a style which cannot be imitated, without its being at once recognised as originating in Mr. Wordsworth. It would not be easy to open on any one of his loftier strains, that does not contain examples of this; and more in proportion as the lines are more excellent, and most like the author. For those, who may happen to have been less familiar with his writings, I will give three specimens

taken with little choice. The first from the lines on the "BOY OF WINANDER-MERE,"—who

"Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him. And they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
With long halloos and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild
Of mirth and jocund din. And when it chanced,
That pauses of deep silence mock'd his skill,
Then sometimes in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprize
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene *
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received
Into the bosom of the steady lake."

* Mr. Wordsworth's having judiciously adopted "*concourse wild*" in this passage for "*a wild scene*" as it stood in the former edition, encourages me to hazard a remark, which I certainly should not have made in the works of a poet less austerely accurate in the use of the words, than he is, to his own great honor. It respects the propriety of the word "*scene*," even in the sentence in which it is retained. DRYDEN, and he only in his more careless verses, was the first, as far as my researches have discovered, who for the convenience of rhyme used this word in the vague sense, which has been since too current even in our best writers, and which (unfortunately, I think) is given as its first explanation in Dr. Johnson's Dictionary, and therefore would be taken by an incautious reader as its proper sense. In Shakespeare and Milton the word is never used without some clear reference, proper or metaphorical, to the theatre. Thus Milton:

"Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan *scene*; and, as the ranks ascend,
Shade above shade, a woody *theatre*
Of stateliest view."

I object to any extension of its meaning, because the word is already more equivocal than might be wished; inasmuch as in the limited use, which I recommend, it may still signify two different things; namely, the scenery, and the characters and actions presented on the stage during the presence of particular scenes. It can therefore be preserved from *obscurity* only by keeping the original signification full in the mind. Thus Milton again:

"Prepare thou for another scene."

The second shall be that noble imitation of Drayton * (if it was not rather a coincidence) in the "JOANNA."

"When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
The rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the lady's voice, and laughed again!
That ancient woman seated on HELM-CRAG
Was ready with her cavern; HAMMAR-SCAR
And the tall steep of SILVER-HOW sent forth
A noise of laughter; southern LOUGHRIGG heard,
And FAIRFIELD answered with a mountain tone.
HELVELLYN far into the clear blue sky
Carried the lady's voice!—old SKIDDAW blew
His speaking trumpet!—back out of the clouds
From GLARAMARA southward came the voice:
And KIRKSTONE tossed it from his misty head!"

The third, which is in rhyme, I take from the "Song at the feast of Brougham Castle, upon the restoration of Lord Clifford the shepherd to the estates of his ancestors."

"Now another day is come,
Fitter hope, and nobler doom;
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book;
Armour rusting in the halls
On the blood of Clifford calls;
'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the lance!
'Bear me to the heart of France,'

*"Which COPLAND scarce had spoke, but quickly every hill,
Upon her verge that stands, the neighbouring vallies fill;
HELVILLON from his height it through the mountains threw,
From whom as soon again the sound DUNBALRASE drew,
From whose stone-trophied head it on the WENDROSS went,
Which tow'rds the sea again resounded it to DENT.
That BROADWATER, therewith within her banks astound,
In sailing to the sea, told it to EGREMOUND,
Whose buildings, walks, and streets, with echoes loud and long,
Did mightily commend old COPLAND for her song."
DRAYTON'S POLYOLBION: *Song XXX.*

Is the longing of the shield—
Tell thy name, thou trembling field!—
Field of death, where'er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory!
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored,
Like a re-appearing star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war!"

"Alas! the fervent harper did not know
That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie:
His daily teachers had been woods and rills;
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

The words themselves, in the foregoing extracts, are no doubt sufficiently common for the greater part. (But in what poem are they not so, if we except a few misadventurous attempts to translate the arts and sciences into verse?) In the "Excursion" the number of polysyllabic (or what the common people call, *dictionary*) words is more than usually great. And so must it needs be, in proportion to the number and variety of an author's conceptions, and his solicitude to express them with precision. But are those words *in those places* commonly employed in real life to express the same thought or outward thing? Are they the style used in the ordinary intercourse of spoken words? No! nor are the modes of connections; and still less the breaks and transitions. Would any but a poet—at least could any one without being conscious that he had expressed himself with noticeable vivacity—have described a bird singing loud by, "The thrush is *busy* in the wood?"—or have spoken of boys

with a string of club-moss round their rusty hats, as the boys "*with their green coronal?*"—or have translated a beautiful May-day into "*Both earth and sky keep jubilee?*" or have brought all the different marks and circumstances of a sea-loch before the mind, as the actions of a living and acting power? Or have represented the reflection of the sky in the water, as "*That uncertain heaven received into the bosom of the steady lake?*" Even the grammatical construction is not unfrequently peculiar; as "*The wind, the tempest roaring high, the tumult of a tropic sky*, might well be dangerous food *to him, a youth* to whom was given, &c." There is a peculiarity in the frequent use of the ἀσυνάρτητον (i. e. the omission of the connective particle before the last of several words, or several sentences used grammatically as single words, all being in the same case and governing or governed by the same verb) and not less in the construction of words by apposition (*to him, a youth*). In short, were there excluded from Mr. Wordsworth's poetic compositions all, that a literal adherence to the theory of his preface *would* exclude, two-thirds at least of the marked beauties of his poetry must be erased. For a far greater number of lines would be sacrificed than in any other recent poet; because the pleasure received from Wordsworth's poems being less derived either from excitement of curiosity or the rapid flow of narration, the *striking* passages form a larger proportion of their value. I do not adduce it as a fair criterion of comparative excellence, nor do I even think it such; but merely as matter of fact. I affirm, that from no contemporary writer could so many lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are found, for their own independent weight or beauty. From the sphere of my own experience I can bring to my recollection three persons of no every-day powers and acquirements, who had read the poems of others with more, and more unalloyed pleasure, and had thought more highly of their authors, as poets; who yet have con-

fessed to me, that from no modern work had so many passages started up anew in their minds at different times, and as different occasions had awakened a meditative mood.

CHAPTER XXI

Remarks on the present mode of conducting critical journals.

LONG have I wished to see a fair and philosophical inquisition into the character of Wordsworth, as a poet, on the evidence of his published works; and a positive, not a comparative, appreciation of their *characteristic* excellencies, deficiencies, and defects. I know no claim that the mere *opinion* of any individual can have to weigh down the *opinion* of the author himself; against the probability of whose parental partiality we ought to set that of his having thought longer and more deeply on the subject. But I should call that investigation fair and philosophical, in which the critic announces and endeavours to establish the principles, which he holds for the foundation of poetry in general, with the specification of these in their application to the different *classes* of poetry. Having thus prepared his canons of criticism for praise and condemnation, he would proceed to particularize the most striking passages to which he deems them applicable, faithfully noticing the frequent or infrequent recurrence of similar merits or defects, and as faithfully distinguishing what is characteristic from what is accidental, or a mere flagging of the wing. Then if his premises be rational, his deductions legitimate, and his conclusions justly applied, the reader, and possibly the poet himself, may adopt his judgement in the light of judgement and in the independence of free-agency. If he has erred, he presents his errors in a definite place and tangible form, and holds the torch and guides the way to their detection.

I most willingly admit, and estimate at a high value, the services which the EDINBURGH REVIEW, and others formed afterwards on the same plan, have rendered to society in the diffusion of knowledge. I think the commencement of the Edinburgh Review an important epoch in periodical criticism; and that it has a claim upon the gratitude of the literary republic, and indeed of the reading public at large, for having [illegible] the scheme of reviewing those books only, which are susceptible and deserving of argumentative criticism. Not less meritorious, and far more faithfully and in general far more ably executed, is their plan of supplying the vacant place of the trash or mediocrity, wisely left to sink into oblivion by its own weight, with original essays on the most interesting subjects of the time, religious, or political; in which the titles of the books or pamphlets prefixed furnish only the name and occasion of the disquisition. I do not arraign the keenness, or asperity of the damnatory style, in and for itself, as long as the author is addressed or treated as the mere impersonation of the work then under trial. I have no quarrel with them on this account, as long as no personal allusions are admitted, and no re-commitment (for new trial) of juvenile performances, that were published, perhaps forgotten, many years before the commencement of the review: since for the forcing back of such works to public notice no motives are easily assignable, but such as are furnished to the critic by his own personal malignity; or what is still worse, by a *habit* of malignity in the form of mere wantonness.

> "No private grudge they need, no personal spite:
> The *viva sectio* is its own delight!
> All enmity, all envy, they disclaim,
> Disinterested thieves of our good name:
> Cool, sober murderers of their neighbour's fame!"
> S. T. C.

Every censure, every sarcasm respecting a publication

which the critic, with the criticised work before him, can make good, is the critic's right. The writer is authorised to reply, but not to complain. Neither can anyone prescribe to the critic, how soft or how hard; how friendly, or how bitter; shall be the phrases which he is to select for the expression of such reprehension or ridicule. The critic must know, what effect it is his object to produce; and with a view to this effect must he weigh his words. But as soon as the critic betrays, that he knows more of his author, than the author's publications could have told him; as soon as from this more intimate knowledge, elsewhere obtained, he avails himself of the slightest trait *against* the author; his censure instantly becomes personal injury, his sarcasms personal insults. He ceases to be a CRITIC, and takes on him the most contemptible character to which a rational creature can be degraded, that of a gossip, backbiter, and pasquillant: but with this heavy aggravation, that he steals the unquiet, the deforming passions of the World into the Museum; into the very place which, next to the chapel and oratory, should be our sanctuary, and secure place of refuge; offers abominations on the altar of the muses; and makes its sacred paling the very circle in which he conjures up the lying and profane spirit.

This determination of unlicensed personality, and of permitted and legitimate censure (which I owe in part to the illustrious LESSING, himself a model of acute, spirited, sometimes stinging, but always argumentative and honorable, criticism) is beyond controversy the true one: and though I would not myself exercise all the rights of the latter, yet, let but the former be excluded, I submit myself to its exercise in the hands of others, without complaint and without resentment.

Let a communication be formed between any number of learned men in the various branches of science and literature; and whether the president and central committee be in

London, or Edinburgh, if only they previously lay aside their individuality, and pledge themselves inwardly, as well as ostensibly, [illegible] according to a constitution and code of laws; and if by grounding this code on the two-fold basis of universal morals and philosophic reason, independent of all foreseen application to particular works and authors, they obtain the right to speak each as the representative of their body corporate; they shall have honor and good wishes from me, and I shall accord to them their fair dignities, though self assumed, not less chearfully than if I could inquire concerning them in the heralds' office, or turn to them in the book of peerage. However loud may be the outcries for prevented or subverted reputation, however numerous and impatient the complaints of merciless severity and insupportable despotism, I shall neither feel, nor utter ought but to the defence and justification of the critical machine. Should any literary Quixote find himself provoked by its sounds and regular movements, I should admonish him with Sancho Panza, that it is no giant, but a windmill; there it stands on its own place, and its own hillock, never goes out of its way to attack anyone, and to none and from none either gives or asks assistance. When the public press has poured in any part of its produce between its mill-stones, it grinds it off, one man's sack the same as another, and with whatever wind may happen to be then blowing. All the two and thirty winds are alike its friends. Of the whole wide atmosphere it does not desire a single finger-breadth more than what is necessary for its sails to turn round in. But this space must be left free and unimpeded. Gnats, beetles, wasps, butterflies, and the whole tribe of ephemerals and insignificants, may flit in and out and between; may hum, and buzz, and jarr; may shrill their tiny pipes, and wind their puny horns, unchastised and unnoticed. But idlers and bravadoes of larger size and prouder show must beware, how they place them-

selves within its sweep. Much less may they presume to lay hands on the sails, the strength of which is neither greater nor less than as the wind is, which drives them round. Whomsoever the remorseless arm slings aloft, or whirls along with it in the air, he has himself alone to blame; though, when the same arm throws him from it, it will more often double than break the force of his fall.

Putting aside the too manifest and too frequent interference of NATIONAL, PARTY, and even PERSONAL predilection or aversion; and reserving for deeper feelings those worse and more criminal intrusions into the sacredness of private life, which not seldom merit legal rather than literary chastisement, the two principal objects and occasions which I find for blame and regret in the conduct of the review in question are: first, its unfaithfulness to its own announced and excellent plan, by subjecting to criticism works neither indecent nor immoral, yet of such trifling importance even in point of size and, according to the critic's own verdict, so devoid of all merit, as must excite in the most candid mind the suspicion, either that dislike or vindictive feelings were at work; or that there was a cold prudential predetermination to increase the sale of the Review by flattering the malignant passions of human nature. That I may not myself become subject to the charge, which I am bringing against others, by an accusation without proof, I refer to the article on Dr. Rennell's sermons in the very first number of the Edinburgh Review as an illustration of my meaning. If in looking through all the succeeding volumes the reader should find this a solitary instance, I must submit to that painful forfeiture of esteem, which awaits a groundless or exaggerated charge.

The second point of objection belongs to this review only in common with all other works of periodical criticism: at least, it applies in common to the general system of all, whatever exceptions there may be in favor of particular

articles. Or if it attaches to the Edinburgh Review, and to its only corrival (the QUARTERLY), with any peculiar force, this results from the superiority of talent, acquirement, and information which both have so undeniably displayed; and which doubtless deepens the regret, though not the blame. I am referring to the substitution of assertion for argument; to the frequency of arbitrary and sometimes petulant verdicts, not seldom unsupported even by a single quotation from the work condemned, which might at least have explained the critic's meaning, if it did not prove the justice of his sentence. Even where this is not the case, the extracts are too often made without reference to any general grounds or rules from which the faultiness or inadmissibility of the qualities attributed may be deduced; and without any attempt to show, that the qualities *are* attributable to the passage extracted. I have met with such extracts from Mr. Wordsworth's poems, annexed to such assertions, as led me to imagine, that the reviewer, having written his critique before he had read the work, had then *pricked with a pin* for passages, wherewith to illustrate the various branches of his preconceived opinions. By what principle of rational choice can we suppose a critic to have been directed (at least in a Christian country, and himself, we hope, a Christian) who gave the following lines, portraying the fervor of solitary devotion excited by the magnificent display of the Almighty's works, as a proof and example of an author's tendency to *downright ravings*, and absolute unintelligibility?

"O then what soul was his, when on the tops
Of the high mountains he beheld the sun
Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked—
Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth,
And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched,
And in their silent faces did he read
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,

Nor any *voice* of joy: his spirit drank
The spectacle! sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being; in them did he live,
And by them did he live: they were his life."
(EXCURSION.)

Can it be expected, that either the author or his admirers should be induced to pay any serious attention to decisions which prove nothing but the pitiable state of the critic's own taste and sensibility? On opening the Review they see a favorite passage, of the force and truth of which they had an intuitive certainty in their own inward experience, confirmed, if confirmation it could receive, by the sympathy of their most enlightened friends; some of whom, perhaps, even in the world's opinion, hold a higher intellectual rank than the critic himself would presume to claim. And this very passage they find selected, as the characteristic effusion of a mind *deserted by reason*; as furnishing evidence that the writer was raving, or he could not have thus strung words together without sense or purpose! No diversity of taste seems capable of explaining such a contrast in judgement.

That I had *over-rated* the merit of a passage or poem, that I had erred concerning the *degree* of its excellence, I might be easily induced to believe or apprehend. But that lines, the sense of which I had analysed and found consonant with all the best convictions of my understanding; and the imagery and diction of which had collected round these convictions my noblest as well as my most [illegible] feelings; that I should admit such lines to be mere nonsense or lunacy, is too much for the most [illegible] *arguments* to effect. But that such a revolution of taste should be brought about by a few broad assertions, seems little less than impossible. On the contrary, it would require an effort of charity not to dismiss the criticism with the aphorism of the wise man, "in animam malevolam sapientia haud intrare potest."

What then if this very critic should have cited a large number of single lines and even of large paragraphs, which he himself acknowledges to possess eminent and original beauty? What if he himself had owned, that beauties as great are scattered in abundance throughout the whole book? And yet, though under this impression, should have commenced his critique in vulgar exultation with a prophecy meant to secure its own fulfilment? With a "THIS WON'T DO!" What if after such acknowledgments extorted from his own judgement he should proceed from charge to charge of tameness and raving; flights and flatness; and at length, consigning the author to the house of incurables, should conclude with a strain of rudest contempt evidently grounded in the distempered state of his own moral associations? Suppose too all this done without a single leading principle established or even announced, and without any one attempt at argumentative deduction, though the poet had presented a more than usual opportunity for it, by having previously made public his own principles of judgement in poetry, and supported them by a connected train of reasoning!

The office and duty of the poet is to select the most dignified as well as

"The happiest, gayest attitude of things."

The reverse, for in all cases a reverse is possible, is the appropriate business of burlesque and travesty, a predominant taste for which has been always deemed a mark of a low and degraded mind. When I was at Rome, among many other visits to the tomb of Julius II. I went thither once with a Prussian artist, a man of genius and great vivacity of feeling. As we were gazing on Michael Angelo's MOSES, our conversation turned on the horns and beard of that stupendous statue; of the necessity of each to support the other; of the super-human effect of the former, and the necessity of the existence of both to give a harmony and *integrity* both to the image and the feeling excited by it. Conceive them

removed, and the statue would become *un*-natural, without being *super*-natural. We called to mind the horns of the rising sun, and I repeated the noble passage from Taylor's Holy Dying. That horns were the emblem of power and sovereignty among the Eastern nations, and are still retained as such in Abyssinia ; the Achelous of the ancient Greeks ; and the probable ideas and feelings, that originally suggested the mixture of the human and the brute form in the figure, by which they realized the idea of their mysterious Pan, as [illegible] intelligence blended with a darker power, deeper, mightier, and more universal than the conscious intellect of man ; than intelligence ;—all these thoughts and recollections passed in procession before our minds. My companion who possessed more than his share of the hatred, which his countrymen bore to the French, had just observed to me, "*A Frenchman, Sir! is the only animal in the human shape, that by no possibility can lift itself up to religion or poetry:*" when, lo! two French officers of distinction and rank entered the church! "*Mark you,*" whispered the Prussian, "*the first thing which those scoundrels will notice (for they will begin by instantly noticing the statue in parts, without one moment's pause of admiration impressed by the whole) will be the horns and the beard. And the associations, which they will immediately connect with them will be those of a* HE-GOAT *and a* CUCKOLD." Never did man guess more luckily. Had he inherited a portion of the great legislator's prophetic powers, whose statue we had been contemplating, he could scarcely have uttered words more coincident with the result : for even as he had said, so it came to pass.

In the "EXCURSION" the poet has introduced an old man, born in humble but not abject circumstances, who had enjoyed more than usual advantages of education, both from books and from the more awful discipline of nature. This person he represents, as having been driven by the restlessness of fervid feelings, and from a craving intellect, to an

itinerant life; and as having in consequence passed the larger portion of his time, from earliest manhood, in villages and hamlets from door to door,

"A vagrant merchant bent beneath his load."

Now whether this be a character appropriate to a lofty didactick poem, is perhaps questionable. It presents a fair subject for controversy; and the question is to be determined by the congruity or incongruity of such a character with what shall be proved to be the essential constituents of poetry. But surely the critic who, passing by all the opportunities which such a mode of life would present to such a man; all the advantages of the liberty of nature, of solitude, and of solitary thought; all the varieties of places and seasons, through which his track had lain, with all the varying imagery they bring with them; and lastly, all the observations of men,

"Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,
Their passions and their feelings,"

which the memory of these yearly journies must have given and recalled to such a mind—the critic, I say, who from the multitude of possible associations should pass by all these in order to fix his attention exclusively on the *pin-papers*, and *stay-tapes*, which *might* have been among the wares of his pack; this critic, in my opinion, cannot be thought to possess a much higher or much healthier state of moral feeling, than the FRENCHMEN above recorded.

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CHAPTER XXII

The characteristic defects of Wordsworth's poetry, with the principles from which the judgement, that they are defects, is deduced —Their proportion to the beauties—For the greatest part characteristic of his theory only.

IF Mr. Wordsworth have set forth principles of poetry which his arguments are insufficient to support, let him and those who have adopted his sentiments be set right by the confutation of these arguments, and by the substitution of more philosophical principles. And still let the due credit be given to the portion and importance of the truths, which are blended with his theory; truths, the too exclusive attention to which had occasioned its errors, by tempting him to carry those truths beyond their proper limits. If his mistaken theory have at all influenced his poetic compositions, let the effects be pointed out, and the instances given. But let it likewise be shown, how far the influence has acted; whether diffusively, or only by starts; whether the number and importance of the poems and passages thus infected be great or trifling compared with the sound portion; and lastly, whether they are inwoven into the texture of his works, or are loose and separable. The result of such a trial would evince beyond a doubt, what it is high time to announce decisively and aloud, that the *supposed* characteristics of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry, whether admired or reprobated; whether they are simplicity or simpleness; faithful adherence to essential nature, or wilful selections from human nature of its meanest forms and under the least attractive associations; are as little the *real* characteristics of his poetry at large, as of his genius and the constitution of his mind.

In a comparatively small number of poems he chose to

try an experiment; and this experiment we will suppose to have failed. Yet even in these poems it is impossible not to perceive that the natural *tendency* of the poet's mind is to great objects and elevated conceptions. The poem entitled "Fidelity" is for the greater part written in language, as unraised and naked as any perhaps in the two volumes. Yet take the following stanza and compare it with the preceding stanzas of the same poem.

> "There sometimes doth a leaping fish
> Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
> The crags repeat the raven's croak,
> In symphony austere;
> Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
> And mists that spread the flying shroud;
> And sun-beams; and the sounding blast,
> That if it could would hurry past;
> But that enormous barrier binds it fast."

Or compare the four last lines of the concluding stanza with the former half.

> "Yes, proof was plain that since the day
> On which the traveller thus had died,
> The dog had watched about the spot,
> Or by his master's side
> *How nourish'd there through such long time*
> *He knows, who gave that love sublime,*
> *And gave that strength of feeling, great*
> *Above all human estimate!*"

Can any candid and intelligent mind hesitate in determining, which of these best represents the tendency and native character of the poet's genius? Will he not decide that the one was written because the poet *would* so write, and the other because he could not so entirely repress the force and grandeur of his mind, but that he must in some part or other of *every* composition write otherwise? In short, that his only disease is the being out of his element; like the swan, that, having amused himself, for a while, with crushing the weeds on the river's bank, soon returns to his

own majestic movements on its reflecting and sustaining surface. Let it be observed that I am here supposing the imagined judge, to whom I appeal, to have already decided against the poet's theory, as far as it is different from the principles of the art, generally acknowledged.

I cannot here enter into a detailed examination of Mr. Wordsworth's works; but I will attempt to give the main results of my own judgement, after an acquaintance of many years, and repeated perusals. And though, to appreciate the defects of a great mind it is necessary to understand previously its characteristic excellences, yet I have already expressed myself with sufficient fulness, to preclude most of the ill effects that might arise from my pursuing a contrary arrangement. I will therefore commence with what I deem the prominent *defects* of his poems hitherto published.

The first *characteristic, though only occasional* defect, which I appear to myself to find in these poems is the INCONSTANCY of the *style*. Under this name I refer to the sudden and unprepared transitions from lines or sentences of peculiar felicity (at all events striking and original) to a style, not only unimpassioned but undistinguished. He sinks too often and too abruptly to that style, which I should place in the second division of language, dividing it into the three species; *first*, that which is peculiar to poetry; *second*, that which is only proper in prose; and *third*, the neutral or common to both. There have been works, such as Cowley's Essay on Cromwell, in which prose and verse are intermixed (not as in the Consolation of Boetius, or the Argenis of Barclay, by the insertion of poems supposed to have been spoken or composed on occasions previously related in prose, but) the poet passing from one to the other, as the nature of the thoughts or his own feelings dictated. Yet this mode of composition does not satisfy a cultivated taste. There is something unpleasant in the being thus obliged to

alternate states of feeling so dissimilar, and this too in a species of writing, the pleasure from which is in part derived from the preparation and previous expectation of the reader. A portion of that awkwardness is felt which hangs upon the introduction of songs in our modern comic operas; and to prevent which the judicious Metastasio (as to whose exquisite *taste* there can be no hesitation, whatever doubts may be entertained as to his *poetic genius*) uniformly placed the ARIA at the end of the scene, at the same time that he almost always raises and impassions the style of the recitative immediately preceding. Even in real life, the difference is great and evident between words used as the *arbitrary marks* of thought, our smooth market-coin of intercourse, with the image and superscription worn out by currency; and those which convey pictures either borrowed from *one* outward object to enliven and particularize some *other*; or used allegorically to body forth the inward state of the person speaking; or such as are at least the exponents of his peculiar turn and unusual extent of faculty. So much so indeed, that in the social circles of private life we often find a striking use of the latter put a stop to the general flow of conversation, and by the excitement arising from concentered attention produce a sort of damp and interruption for some minutes after. But in the perusal of works of literary *art*, we *prepare* ourselves for such language; and the business of the writer, like that of a painter whose subject requires unusual splendor and prominence, is so to raise the lower and neutral tints, that what in a different style would be the *commanding* colors, are here used as the means of that gentle *degradation* requisite in order to produce the effect of a *whole*. Where this is not achieved in a poem, the metre merely reminds the reader of his claims in order to disappoint them; and where this defect occurs frequently, his feelings are alternately startled by anticlimax and hyperclimax.

I refer the reader to the exquisite stanzas cited for another purpose from the blind Highland Boy; and then annex, as being in my opinion instances of this *disharmony* in style, the two following:

" And one, the rarest, was a shell,
Which he, poor child, had studied well:
The shell of a green turtle, thin
And hollow;—you might sit therein,
It was so wide, and deep."

" Our Highland Boy oft visited
The house which held this prize; and, led
By choice or chance, did thither come
One day, when no one was at home,
And found the door unbarred."

Or page 172, vol. I.

" 'Tis gone—forgotten—*let me do*
My best. There was a smile or two—
I can remember them, I see
The smiles worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby, I must lay thee down:
Thou troublest me with strange alarms;
Smiles hast thou, sweet ones of thine own;
I cannot keep thee in my arms;
For they confound me: *as it is,*
I have forgot those smiles of his!"

Or page 269, vol. I.

" Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest,
And though little troubled with sloth
Drunken lark! thou would'st be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver!
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to th'Almighty giver!
Joy and jollity be with us both!
Hearing thee or else some other,
As merry a brother
I on the earth will go plodding on
By myself chearfully till the day is done."

The incongruity, which I appear to find in this passage, is

that of the two noble lines in italics with the preceding and following. So vol. II. page 30.

"Close by a pond, upon the further side,
He stood alone; a minute's space, I guess,
I watch'd him, he continuing motionless:
To the pool's further margin then I drew,
He being all the while before me full in view."

Compare this with the repetition of the same image, in the next stanza but two.

"And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Beside the little pond or moorish flood
Motionless as a cloud the old man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds as they call,
And moveth altogether, if it move at all."

Or lastly, the second of the three following stanzas, compared both with the first and the third.

"My former thoughts returned; the fear that kills;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty poets in their misery dead.
But now, perplex'd by what the old man had said,
My question eagerly did I renew,
'How is it that you live, and what is it you do?'
He with a smile did then his words repeat;
And said, that gathering leeches far and wide
He travell'd; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the ponds where they abide.
'Once I could meet with them on every side,
'But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
'Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.'
While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old man's shape, and speech, all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently."

Indeed this fine poem is *especially* characteristic of the author. There is scarce a defect or excellence in his writings of which it would not present a specimen. But it would be unjust not to repeat that this defect is only occasional. From

a careful reperusal of the two volumes of poems, I doubt whether the objectionable passages would amount in the whole to one hundred lines; not the eighth part of the number of pages. In the "EXCURSION" the feeling of incongruity is seldom excited by the diction of any passage considered in itself, but by the sudden superiority of some other passage forming the context.

The second defect I can generalize with tolerable accuracy, if the reader will pardon an uncouth and new-coined word. There is, I should say, not seldom a *matter-of-factness* in certain poems. This may be divided into, *first*, a laborious minuteness and fidelity in the representation of objects, and their positions, as they appeared to the poet himself; *secondly*, the insertion of accidental circumstances, in order to the full explanation of his living characters, their dispositions and actions; which circumstances might be necessary to establish the probability of a statement in real life, where nothing is taken for granted by the hearer; but appear superfluous in poetry, where the reader is willing to believe for his own sake. To this *accidentality* I object, as contravening the essence of poetry, which Aristotle pronounces to be σπουδαιότατον καὶ φιλοσοφώτατον γένος, the most intense, weighty and philosophical product of human art; adding, as the *reason*, that it is the most catholic and abstract. The following passage from Davenant's prefatory letter to Hobbs well expresses this truth. "When I considered the actions which I meant to describe, (those inferring the persons), I was again persuaded rather to choose those of a former age, than the present; and in a century so far removed, as might preserve me from their improper examinations, who know not the requisites of a poem, nor how much pleasure they lose, (and even the pleasures of heroic poesy are not unprofitable), who take away the liberty of a poet, and fetter his feet in the shackles of an historian. For why should a poet doubt in story to mend the intrigues of fortune by

more delightful conveyances of probable fictions, because austere historians have entered into bond to truth? An obligation, which were in poets as foolish and unnecessary, as in the bondage of false martyrs, who lie in chains for a mistaken opinion. *But by this I would imply, that truth narrative and past is the idol of historians, (who worship a dead thing), and truth operative, and by effects continually alive, is the mistress of poets, who hath not her existence in matter, but in reason.*"

For this minute accuracy in the painting of local imagery, the lines in the EXCURSION, pp. 96, 97, and 98, may be taken, if not as a striking instance, yet as an illustration of my meaning. It must be some strong motive (as, for instance, that the description was necessary to the intelligibility of the tale) which could induce me to describe in a number of verses what a draughtsman could present to the eye with incomparably greater satisfaction by half a dozen strokes of his pencil, or the painter with as many touches of his brush. Such descriptions too often occasion in the mind of a reader, who is determined to understand his author, a feeling of labor, not very dissimilar to that, with which he would construct a diagram, line by line, for a long geometrical proposition. It seems to be like taking the pieces of a dissected map out of its box. We first look at one part, and then at another, then join and dove-tail them; and when the successive acts of attention have been completed, there is a retrogressive effort of mind to behold it as a whole. The poet should paint to the imagination, not to the fancy; and I know no happier case to exemplify the distinction between these two faculties. Master-pieces of the former mode of poetic painting abound in the writings of Milton, ex. gr.

"The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day, to Indians known,
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms

> Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
> The bended twigs take root, *and daughters grow*
> *About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade*
> *High over-arch'd, and* ECHOING WALKS BETWEEN :
> *There oft the Indian Herdsman, shunning heat,*
> *Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds*
> *At loop holes cut through thickest shade.*"
>
> MILTON *P. L.* 9. 1100.

This is *creation* rather than *painting*, or if painting, yet such, and with such co-presence of the whole picture flash'd at once upon the eye, as the sun paints in a camera obscura. But the poet must likewise understand and command what Bacon calls the *vestigia communia* of the senses, the latency of all in each, and more especially as by a magical *penna duplex*, the excitement of vision by sound and the exponents of sound. Thus "THE ECHOING WALKS BETWEEN," may be almost said to reverse the fable in tradition of the head of Memnon, in the Egyptian statue. Such may be deservedly entitled the *creative words* in the world of imagination.

The second division respects an apparent minute adherence to *matter-of-fact* in characters and incidents ; *a biographical* attention to probability, and an *anxiety* of explanation and retrospect. Under this head I shall deliver, with no feigned diffidence, the results of my best reflection on the great point of controversy between Mr. Wordsworth and his objectors ; namely, on THE CHOICE OF HIS CHARACTERS. I have already declared and, I trust, justified, my utter dissent from the mode of argument which his critics have hitherto employed. To *their* question, Why did you chuse such a character, or a character from such a rank of life ? the poet might in my opinion fairly retort : why with the conception of my character did you make wilful choice of mean or ludicrous associations not furnished by me, but supplied from your own sickly and fastidious feelings ? How was it, indeed, probable, that such arguments could have

any weight with an author, whose plan, whose guiding principle, and main object it was to attack and subdue that state of association, which leads us to place the chief value on those things in which man DIFFERS from man, and to forget or disregard the high dignities, which belong to HUMAN NATURE, the sense and the feeling, which *may* be, and *ought* to be, found in *all* ranks? The feelings with which, as Christians, we contemplate a mixed congregation rising or kneeling before their common Maker: Mr. Wordsworth would have us entertain at *all* times, as men, and as readers; and by the excitement of this lofty, yet prideless impartiality in *poetry*, he might hope to have encouraged its continuance in *real life*. The praise of good men be his! In real life, and, I trust, even in my imagination, I honor a virtuous and wise man, without reference to the presence or absence of artificial advantages. Whether in the person of an armed baron, a laurel'd bard, &c., or of an old pedlar, or still older leach-gatherer, the same qualities of head and heart must claim the same reverence. And even in poetry I am not conscious, that I have ever suffered my feelings to be disturbed or offended by any thoughts or images, which the poet himself has not presented.

But yet I object nevertheless and for the following reasons. First, because the object in view, as an *immediate* object, belongs to the moral philosopher, and would be pursued, not only more appropriately, but in my opinion with far greater probability of success, in sermons or moral essays, than in an elevated poem. It seems, indeed, to destroy the main fundamental distinction, not only between a poem and prose, but even between philosophy and works of fiction, inasmuch as it proposes *truth* for its immediate object, instead of *pleasure*. Now till the blessed time shall come, when truth itself shall be pleasure, and both shall be so united, as to be distinguishable in words only, not in feeling, it will remain the poet's office to proceed upon that state

of association, which actually exists as *general*; instead of attempting first to *make* it what it ought to be, and then to let the pleasure follow. But here is unfortunately a small *Hysteron-Proteron.* For the communication of pleasure is the introductory means by which alone the poet must expect to moralize his readers. Secondly: though I were to admit, for a moment, *this* argument to be groundless: yet how is the moral effect to be produced, by merely [illegible] the name of some low profession to powers which are *least* likely, and to qualities which are assuredly not *more* likely, to be found in it? The poet, speaking in his own person, may at once delight and improve us by sentiments, which teach us the independence of goodness, of wisdom, and even of genius, on the favors of fortune. And having made a due reverence before the throne of Antonine, he may bow with equal awe before Epictetus among his fellow-slaves—

——————"and rejoice
In the plain presence of his dignity."

Who is not at once delighted and improved, when the POET Wordsworth himself exclaims,

"O many are the poets that are sown
By Nature; man endowed with highest gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine,
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led
By circumstance to take unto the height
The measure of themselves, these favor'd beings,
All but a scatter'd few, live out their time
Husbanding that which they possess within,
And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least."

EXCURSION, B. I.

To use a colloquial phrase, such sentiments, in such language, do one's heart good; though I for my part, have not the fullest faith in the *truth* of the observation. On the contrary I believe the instances to be exceedingly rare; and

should feel almost as strong an objection to introduce such a character in a poetic fiction, as a pair of black swans on a lake in a fancy-landscape. When I think how many, and how much better books than Homer, or even than Herodotus, Pindar or Eschylus, could have read, are in the power of almost every man, in a country where almost every man is instructed to read and write; and how restless, how difficultly hidden, the powers of genius are; and yet find even in situations the most favorable, according to Mr. Wordsworth, for the formation of a pure and poetic language; in situations which ensure familiarity with the grandest objects of the imagination; but *one* BURNS, among the shepherds of *Scotland*, and not a single poet of humble life among those of *English* lakes and mountains; I conclude, that POETIC GENIUS is not only a very delicate but a very rare plant.

But be this as it may, the feelings with which

> "I think of CHATTERTON, the marvellous boy,
> The sleepless soul, that perished in his pride;
> Of BURNS, that walk'd in glory and in joy
> Behind his plough upon the mountain-side"—

are widely different from those with which I should read a *poem*, where the author, having occasion for the character of a poet and a philosopher in the fable of his narration, had chosen to make him a *chimney-sweeper*; and then, in order to remove all doubts on the subject, had *invented* an account of his birth, parentage and education, with all the strange and fortunate accidents which had concurred in making him at once poet, philosopher, and sweep! Nothing but biography can justify this. If it be admissible even in a *Novel*, it must be one in the manner of De Foe's, that were meant to pass for histories, not in the manner of Fielding's: in the life of Moll Flanders, or Colonel Jack, not in a Tom Jones, or even a Joseph Andrews. Much less then can it be legitimately introduced in a *poem*, the characters of which, amid the strongest individualization, must

still remain representative. The precepts of Horace, on this point, are grounded on the nature both of poetry and of the human mind. They are not more peremptory, than wise and prudent. For in the first place a deviation from them perplexes the reader's feelings, and all the circumstances, which are feigned in order to make such accidents less improbable, divide and disquiet his faith, rather than aid and support it. Spite of all attempts, the fiction *will* appear, and unfortunately not as *fictitious* but as *false*. The reader not only *knows*, that the sentiments and language are the poet's own, and his own too in his *artificial* character, *as poet*; but by the fruitless endeavours to make him think the contrary, he is not even suffered to *forget* it. The effect is similar to that produced by an epic poet, when the fable and the characters are *derived* from Scripture history, as in the *Messiah* of *Klopstock*, or in *Cumberland's Calvary*; and not merely *suggested* by it, as in the Paradise Lost of Milton. That *illusion*, contra-distinguished from *delusion*, that *negative* faith, which simply permits the images presented to work by their own force, without either denial or affirmation of their real existence by the judgement, is rendered impossible by their immediate neighbourhood to words and facts of known and absolute truth. A faith, which transcends even historic belief, must absolutely *put out* this mere poetic Analogon of faith, as the summer sun is said to extinguish our household fires, when it shines full upon them. What would otherwise have been yielded to as pleasing fiction, is repelled as revolting falsehood. The effect produced in this latter case by the solemn belief of the reader, is in a less degree brought about in the instances, to which I have been objecting, by the baffled attempts of the author to *make* him believe.

Add to all the foregoing the seeming uselessness both of the project and of the anecdotes from which it is to derive support. Is there one word, for instance, attributed to the

pedlar in the "EXCURSION," characteristic of a *pedlar*? One sentiment, that might not more plausibly, even without the aid of any previous explanation, have proceeded from any wise and beneficent old man, of a rank or profession in which the language of learning and refinement are natural and to be expected? Need the rank have been at all particularized, where nothing follows which the knowledge of that rank is to explain or illustrate? When on the contrary this information renders the man's language, feelings, sentiments, and information a riddle, which must itself be solved by episodes of anecdote? Finally when this, and this alone, could have induced a genuine *poet* to inweave in a poem of the loftiest style, and on subjects the loftiest and of most universal interest, such minute matters of fact, (not unlike those furnished for the obituary of a magazine by the friends of some obscure *ornament of society lately deceased* in some obscure town), as

> "Among the hills of Athol he was born:
> There, on a small hereditary farm,
> An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
> His Father dwelt; and died in poverty;
> While he, whose lowly fortune I retrace,
> The youngest of three sons, was yet a babe,
> A little one—unconscious of their loss.
> But, ere he had outgrown his infant days,
> His widowed mother, for a second mate,
> Espoused the teacher of the Village School;
> Who on her offspring zealously bestowed
> Needful instruction."

> "From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I speak,
> In summer tended cattle on the hills;
> But, through the inclement and the perilous days
> Of long-continuing winter, he repaired
> To his step-father's school,"—&c.

For all the admirable passages interposed in this narration, might, with trifling alterations, have been far more appro-

priately, and with far greater verisimilitude, told of a poet in the character of a poet; and without incurring another defect which I shall now mention, and a sufficient illustration of which will have been here anticipated.

Third; an undue predilection for the *dramatic* form in certain poems, from which one or other of two evils result. Either the thoughts and diction are different from that of the poet, and then there arises an incongruity of style; or they are the same and indistinguishable, and then it presents a species of ventriloquism, where two are represented as talking, while in truth one man only speaks.

The fourth class of defects is closely connected with the former; but yet are such as arise likewise from an intensity of feeling disproportionate to *such* knowledge and value of the objects described, as can be fairly anticipated of men in general, even of the most cultivated classes; and with which therefore few only, and those few particularly circumstanced, can be supposed to sympathize. In this class, I comprise occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying, instead of progression, of thought. As instances, see pages 27, 28, and 62 of the Poems, Vol. I. and the first eighty lines of the Sixth Book of the Excursion.

Fifth and last; thoughts and images too great for the subject. This is an approximation to what might be called *mental* bombast, as distinguished from verbal: for, as in the latter there is a disproportion of the expressions to the thoughts, so in this there is a disproportion of thought to the circumstance and occasion. This, by the bye, is a fault of which none but a man of genius is capable. It is the awkwardness and strength of Hercules with the distaff of Omphale.

It is a well-known fact, that bright colors in motion both make and leave the strongest impressions on the eye. Nothing is more likely too, than that a vivid image or visual spectrum, thus originated, may become the link of associa-

tion in recalling the feelings and images that had accompanied the original impression. But if we describe this in such lines, as

> "They flash upon that inward eye,
> Which is the bliss of solitude!"

in what words shall we describe the joy of retrospection, when the images and virtuous actions of a whole well-spent life, pass before that conscience which is indeed the *inward* eye: which is indeed "*the bliss of solitude?*" Assuredly we seem to sink most abruptly, not to say burlesquely, and almost as in a *medly*, from this couplet to—

> "And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the *daffodils*." Vol. I. p. 320.

The second instance is from Vol. II. page 12, where the poet, having gone out for a day's tour of pleasure, meets early in the morning with a knot of *gypsies*, who had pitched their blanket-tents and straw-beds, together with their children and asses, in some field by the road-side. At the close of the day on his return our tourist found them in the same place. "Twelve hours," says he,

> "Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone, while I
> Have been a traveller under open sky,
> Much witnessing of change and cheer,
> Yet as I left I find them here!"

Whereat the poet, without seeming to reflect that the poor tawny wanderers might probably have been tramping for weeks together through road and lane, over moor and mountain, and consequently must have been right glad to rest themselves, their children and cattle, for one whole day; and overlooking the obvious truth, that such repose might be quite as necessary for *them*, as a walk of the same continuance was pleasing or healthful for the more fortunate poet; expresses his indignation in a series of lines, the diction and imagery of which would have been rather above,

than below the mark, had they been applied to the immense empire of China improgressive for thirty centuries :

" The weary SUN betook himself to rest :—
—Then issued VESPER from the fulgent west,
Outshining, like a visible God,
The glorious path in which he trod !
And now, ascending, after one dark hour,
And one night's diminution of her power,
Behold the mighty MOON ! this way
She looks, as if at them—but they
Regard not her :—oh, better wrong and strife,
Better vain deeds or evil than such life !
The silent HEAVENS have goings on :
The STARS have tasks !—but *these* have none ! "

The last instance of this defect (for I know no other than these already cited) is from the Ode, page 351, Vol. II., where, speaking of a child, " a six years' darling of a pigmy size," he thus addresses him :

" Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage ! Thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the Eternal Mind,—
Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find !
Thou, over whom thy immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er the slave,
A presence that is not to be put by ! "

Now here, not to stop at the daring spirit of metaphor which connects the epithets " deaf and silent," with the apostrophized *eye* : or (if we are to refer it to the preceding word, philosopher) the faulty and equivocal syntax of the passage ; and without examining the propriety of making a " master *brood* o'er a slave," or the *day* brood *at all* ; we will merely ask, what does all this mean ? In what sense is a child of that age a *philosopher* ? In what sense does he *read* " the eternal deep " ? In what sense is he declared to

be "*for ever haunted*" by the Supreme Being? or so inspired as to deserve the splendid titles of a *mighty prophet*, a *blessed seer*? By reflection? by knowledge? by conscious intuition? or by *any* form or modification of consciousness? These would be tidings indeed; but such as would presuppose an immediate revelation to the inspired communicator, and require miracles to authenticate his inspiration. Children at this age give us no such information of themselves; and at what time were we dipped in the Lethe, which has produced such utter oblivion of a state so godlike? There are many of us that still possess some remembrances, more or less distinct, respecting themselves at six years old; pity that the worthless straws only should float, while treasures, compared with which all the mines of Golconda and Mexico were but straws, should be absorbed by some unknown gulf into some unknown abyss.

But if this be too wild and exorbitant to be suspected as having been the poet's meaning; if these mysterious gifts, faculties, and operations, are *not* accompanied with consciousness; who *else* is conscious of them? or how can it be called the child, if it be no part of the child's conscious being? For aught I know, the thinking Spirit within me may be *substantially* one with the principle of life, and of vital operation. For aught I know, it might be employed as a secondary agent in the marvellous organization and organic movements of my body. But, surely, it would be strange language to say, that *I* construct my *heart!* or that *I* propel the finer influences through my *nerves!* or that *I* compress my brain, and draw the curtains of sleep round my own eyes! SPINOZA and BEHMEN were, on different systems, both Pantheists; and among the ancients there were philosophers, teachers of the ΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝ, who not only taught that God was All, but that this All constituted God. Yet not even these would confound the *part, as* a part, with the Whole, *as* the whole. Nay, in no system is

the distinction between the individual and God, between the Modification, and the one only Substance, more sharply drawn, than in that of SPINOZA. JACOBI indeed relates of LESSING, that, after a conversation with him at the house of the poet, GLEIM (the Tyrtæus and Anacreon of the German Parnassus) in which conversation L. had avowed privately to Jacobi his reluctance to admit any *personal* existence of the Supreme Being, or the *possibility* of personality except in a finite Intellect, and while they were sitting at table, a shower of rain came on unexpectedly. Gleim expressed his regret at the circumstance, because they had meant to drink their wine in the garden: upon which Lessing in one of his half-earnest half-joking moods, nodded to Jacobi, and said, "It is *I*, perhaps, that am doing *that*," i. e. *raining!* and J. answered, "or perhaps I"; Gleim contented himself with staring at them both, without asking for any explanation.

So with regard to this passage. In what sense can the magnificent attributes, above quoted, be appropriated to a *child*, which would not make them equally suitable to a *bee*, or a *dog*, or a *field of corn*: or even to a ship, or to the wind and waves that propel it? The omnipresent Spirit works equally in them, as in the child; and the child is equally unconscious of it as they. It cannot surely be, that the four lines, immediately following, are to contain the explanation?

> "To whom the grave
> Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
> Of day or the warm light,
> A place of thought where we in waiting lie."

Surely, it cannot be that this wonder-rousing apostrophe is but a comment on the little poem, "We are seven?" that the whole meaning of the passage is reducible to the assertion, that a *child*, who by the bye at six years old would have been better instructed in most Christian families, has no other notion of death than that of lying in a dark, cold

place? And still, I hope, not as in a *place of thought!* not the frightful notion of lying *awake* in his grave! The analogy between death and sleep is too simple, too natural, to render so horrid a belief possible for children; even had they not been in the habit, as all Christian children are, of hearing the latter term used to express the former. But if the child's belief be only, that "he is not dead, but sleepeth:" wherein does it differ from that of his father and mother, or any other adult and instructed person? To form an idea of a thing's becoming nothing; or of nothing becoming a thing; is impossible to all finite beings alike, of whatever age, and however educated or uneducated. Thus it is with splendid paradoxes in general. If the words are taken in the common sense, they convey an absurdity; and if, in contempt of dictionaries and custom, they are so interpreted as to avoid the absurdity, the meaning dwindles into some bald truism. Thus you must at once understand the words *contrary* to their common import, in order to arrive at any *sense*; and *according* to their common import, if you are to receive from them any feeling of *sublimity* or *admiration*.

Though the instances of this defect in Mr. Wordsworth's poems are so few, that for themselves it would have been scarce just to attract the reader's attention toward them; yet I have dwelt on it, and perhaps the more for this very reason. For being so very few, they cannot sensibly detract from the reputation of an author, who is even characterized by the number of profound truths in his writings, which will stand the severest analysis; and yet few as they are, they are exactly those passages which his *blind* admirers would be most likely, and best able, to imitate. But WORDSWORTH, where he is indeed Wordsworth, may be mimicked by Copyists, he may be plundered by Plagiarists; but he can not be imitated, except by those who are not born to be imitators. For without his depth of feeling and his imaginative power his *sense* would want its vital warmth and

peculiarity; and without his strong sense, his *mysticism* would become *sickly*—mere fog, and dimness!

To these defects which, as appears by the extracts, are only occasional, I may oppose, with far less fear of encountering the dissent of any candid and intelligent reader, the following (for the most part correspondent) excellences. First, an austere purity of language both grammatically and logically; in short a perfect appropriateness of the words to the meaning. Of how high value I deem this, and how particularly estimable I hold the example at the present day, has been already stated: and in part too the reasons on which I ground both the moral and intellectual importance of habituating ourselves to a strict accuracy of expression. It is noticeable, how limited an acquaintance with the masterpieces of art will suffice to form a correct and even a sensitive taste, where none but master-pieces have been seen and admired: while on the other hand, the most correct notions, and the widest acquaintance with the works of excellence of all ages and countries, will not perfectly secure us against the contagious familiarity with the far more numerous offspring of tastelessness or of a perverted taste. If this be the case, as it notoriously is, with the arts of music and painting, much more difficult will it be to avoid the infection of multiplied and daily examples in the practice of an art, which uses words, and words only, as its instruments. In poetry, in which every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that ultimatum which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style; its *untranslatableness* in words of the same language without injury to the meaning. Be it observed, however, that I include in the *meaning* of a word not only its correspondent object, but likewise all the associations which it recalls. For language is framed to convey not the object alone, but likewise the character, mood and intentions of

the person who is representing it. In poetry it *is* practicable to preserve the diction uncorrupted by the affectations and misappropriations, which promiscuous authorship, and reading not promiscuous only because it is disproportionally most conversant with the compositions of the day, have rendered general. Yet even to the poet, composing in his own province, it is an arduous work: and as the result and pledge of a watchful good sense, of fine and luminous distinction, and of complete self-possession, may justly claim all the honor which belongs to an attainment equally difficult and valuable, and the more valuable for being rare. It is at *all* times the proper food of the understanding; but in an age of corrupt eloquence it is both food and antidote.

In prose I doubt whether it be even possible to preserve our style wholly unalloyed by the vicious phraseology which meets us everywhere, from the sermon to the newspaper, from the harangue of the legislator to the speech from the convivial chair, announcing a *toast* or sentiment. Our chains rattle, even while we are complaining of them. The poems of Boetius rise high in our estimation when we compare them with those of his contemporaries, as Sidonius Apollinarius, &c. They might even be referred to a purer age, but that the prose, in which they are set, as jewels in a crown of lead or iron, betrays the true age of the writer. Much however may be effected by education. I believe not only from grounds of reason, but from having in great measure assured myself of the fact by actual though limited experience, that, to a youth led from his first boyhood to investigate the meaning of every word and the reason of its choice and position, Logic presents itself as an old acquaintance under new names.

On some future occasion, more especially demanding such disquisition, I shall attempt to prove the close connection between veracity and habits of mental accuracy; the beneficial after-effects of verbal precision in the preclusion of

fanaticism, which masters the feelings more especially by indistinct watch-words; and to display the advantages which language alone, at least which language with incomparably greater ease and certainty than any other means, presents to the instructor of impressing modes of intellectual energy so constantly, so imperceptibly, and as it were by such elements and atoms, as to secure in due time the formation of a second nature. When we reflect, that the cultivation of the judgement is a positive command of the moral law, since the reason can give the *principle* alone, and the conscience bears witness only to the *motive*, while the application and effects must depend on the judgement: when we consider, that the greater part of our success and comfort in life depends on distinguishing the similar from the same, that which is peculiar in each thing from that which it has in common with others, so as still to select the most probable, instead of the merely possible or positively unfit, we shall learn to value earnestly and with a practical seriousness a mean, already prepared for us by nature and society, of teaching the young mind to think well and wisely by the same unremembered process and with the same never forgotten results, as those by which it is taught to speak and converse. Now how much warmer the interest is, how much more genial the feelings of reality and practicability, and thence how much stronger the impulses to imitation are, which a *contemporary* writer, and especially a contemporary *poet*, excites in youth and commencing manhood, has been treated of in the earlier pages of these sketches. I have only to add, that all the praise which is due to the exertion of such influence for a purpose so important, joined with that which must be claimed for the infrequency of the same excellence in the same perfection, belongs in full right to Mr. Wordsworth. I am far however from denying that we have poets whose *general* style possesses the same excellence, as Mr. Moore, Lord Byron, Mr. Bowles, and, in all his later

and more important works, our laurel-honoring Laureate. But there are none, in whose works I do not appear to myself to find *more* exceptions, than in those of Wordsworth. Quotations or specimens would here be wholly out of place, and must be left for the critic who doubts and would invalidate the justice of this eulogy so applied.

The second characteristic excellence of Mr. W's work is: a correspondent weight and sanity of the Thoughts and Sentiments, won—not from books, but—from the poet's own meditative observation. They are *fresh* and have the dew upon them. His muse, at least when in her strength of wing, and when she hovers aloft in her proper element,

> "Makes audible a linked lay of truth,
> Of truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
> Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes!"
> S. T. C.

Even throughout his smaller poems there is scarcely one, which is not rendered valuable by some just and original reflection.

See page 25, vol. 2nd.: or the two following passages in one of his humblest compositions.

> "O Reader! had you in your mind
> Such stores as silent thought can bring,
> O gentle Reader! you would find
> A tale in every thing;"

and

> "I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
> With coldness still returning;
> Alas! the gratitude of men
> Has oftener left me mourning"

or in a still higher strain the six beautiful quatrains, page 134.

> "Thus fares it still in our decay:
> And yet the wiser mind
> Mourns less for what age takes away
> Than what it leaves behind.

The Blackbird in the summer trees,
The Lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free!

But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there is one, who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

or the sonnet on Buonaparte, page 202, vol. 2; or finally (for a volume would scarce suffice to exhaust the instances) the last stanza of the poem on the withered Celandine, vol. 2, p. 212.

"To be a prodigal's favorite—then, worse truth,
A miser's pensioner—behold our lot!
O man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things youth needed not."

Both in respect of this and of the former excellence, Mr. Wordsworth strikingly resembles Samuel Daniel, one of the golden writers of our golden Elizabethan age, now most causelessly neglected: Samuel Daniel, whose diction bears no mark of time, no distinction of age, which has been, and as long as our language shall last, will be so far the language of the to-day and for ever, as that it is more intelligible to

us, than the transitory fashions of our own particular age. A similar praise is due to his sentiments. No frequency of perusal can deprive them of their freshness. For though they are brought into the full day-light of every reader's comprehension; yet are they drawn up from depths which few in any age are priviledged to visit, into which few in any age have courage or inclination to descend. If Mr. Wordsworth is not equally with Daniel alike intelligible to all readers of average understanding in all passages of his works, the comparative difficulty does not arise from the greater impurity of the ore, but from the nature and uses of the metal. A poem is not necessarily obscure, because it does not aim to be popular. It is enough, if a work be perspicuous to those for whom it is written, and

"Fit audience find, though few."

To the "Ode on the intimation of immortality from recollections of early childhood" the poet might have prefixed the lines which Dante addresses to one of his own Canzoni—

"Canzon, io credo, che saranno radi
Che tua ragione intendan bene,
Tanto lor sei faticoso ed alto."

"O lyric song, there will be few, think I,
Who may thy import understand aright:
Thou art for *them* so arduous and so high!"

But the ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet can not be conveyed save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the

Platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe, that Plato himself ever meant or taught it.

Πολλά μοι ὑπ' ἀγκῶ-
νος ὠκέα βέλη
ἔνδον ἐντὶ φαρέτρας
φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν· ἐς
δὲ τὸ πὰν ἑρμηνέων
χατίζει. σοφὸς ὁ πολ-
λὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ.
μαθόντες δέ, λάβροι
παγγλωσσίᾳ, κόρακες ὥς,
ἄκραντα γαρύετον
Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον.

Third (and wherein he soars far above Daniel) the sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs: the frequent curiosa felicitas of his diction, of which I need not here give specimens, having anticipated them in a preceding page. This beauty, and as eminently characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry, his rudest assailants have felt themselves compelled to acknowledge and admire.

Fourth; the perfect truth of nature in his images and descriptions, as taken immediately from nature, and proving a long and genial intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all the works of nature. Like a green field reflected in a calm and perfectly transparent lake, the image is distinguished from the reality only by its greater softness and lustre. Like the moisture or the polish on a pebble, genius neither distorts nor false-colours its objects; but on the contrary brings out many a vein and many a tint, which escapes the eye of common observation, thus raising to the rank of gems what had been often kicked away by the hurrying foot of the traveller on the dusty high road of custom.

Let me refer to the whole description of skating, vol. I., page 42 to 47, especially to the lines

"So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle: with the din
Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while the distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were [illegible] clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away."

Or to the poem on the green linnet, vol. I. page 244. What can be more accurate yet more lovely than the two concluding stanzas?

"Upon yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

While thus before my eyes he gleams,
A brother of the leaves he seems;
When in a moment forth he teems
His little song in gushes:
As if it pleased him to disdain
And mock the form which he did feign,
While he was dancing with the train
Of leaves among the bushes."

Or the description of the blue-cap, and of the noon-tide silence, page 284; or the poem to the cuckoo, page 299; or, lastly, though I might multiply the references to ten times the number, to the poem, so completely Wordsworth's, commencing

"Three years she grew in sun and shower," &c.

Fifth: a meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; a sympathy with man as man; the sympathy indeed of a contemplator, rather than a

fellow-sufferer or co-mate, (spectator, haud particeps) but of a contemplator, from whose view no difference of rank conceals the sameness of the nature; no injuries of wind or weather, or toil, or even of ignorance, wholly disguise the human face divine. The superscription and the image of the Creator still remain legible to *him* under the dark lines, with which guilt or calamity had cancelled or cross-barred it. Here the man and the poet lose and find themselves in each other, the one as glorified, the latter as substantiated. In this mild and philosophic pathos, Wordsworth appears to me without a compeer. Such he *is*: so he *writes*. See vol. I. page 134 to 136, or that most affecting composition, the "Affliction of Margaret —— of ——," page 165 to 168, which no mother, and, if I may judge by my own experience, no parent can read without a tear. Or turn to that genuine lyric, in the former edition, entitled "The Mad Mother," page 174 to 178, of which I cannot refrain from quoting two of the stanzas, both of them for their pathos, and the former for the fine transition in the two concluding lines of the stanza, so expressive of that deranged state, in which from the increased sensibility the sufferer's attention is abruptly drawn off by every trifle, and in the same instant plucked back again by the one despotic thought, bringing home with it, by the blending, *fusing* power of Imagination and Passion, the alien object to which it had been so abruptly diverted, no longer an alien but an ally and an inmate.

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!
It cools my blood; it cools my brain:
Thy lips, I feel them, baby! they
Draw from my heart the pain away.
Oh! press me with thy little hand;
It loosens something at my chest:
About that tight and deadly band
I feel thy little fingers prest.
The breeze I see is in the tree!
It comes to cool my babe and me."

"Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest,
'Tis all thine own!—and, if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!
My beauty, little child, is flown,
But thou wilt live with me in love;
And what if my poor cheek be brown?
'Tis well for me, thou canst not see
How pale and wan it else would be."

Last, and pre-eminently, I challenge for this poet the gift of IMAGINATION in the highest and strictest sense of the word. In the play of *Fancy*, Wordsworth, to my feelings, is not always graceful, and sometimes *recondite*. The *likeness* is occasionally too strange, or demands too peculiar a point of view, or is such as appears the creature of predetermined research, rather than spontaneous presentation. Indeed his fancy seldom displays itself, as mere and unmodified fancy. But in imaginative power, he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton; and yet in a kind perfectly unborrowed and his own. To employ his own words, which are at once an instance and an illustration, he does indeed to all thoughts and to all objects

"————————add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream."

I shall select a few examples as most obviously manifesting this faculty; but if I should ever be fortunate enough to render my analysis of imagination, its origin and characters, thoroughly intelligible to the reader, he will scarcely open on a page of this poet's works without recognising, more or less, the presence and the influences of this faculty.

From the poem on the Yew Trees, vol. I. page 303, 304.

"But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove:

Huge trunks !—and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved,—
Not uninformed with phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane ;—a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the pinal umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose decked
With unrejoicing berries, ghostly shapes
May meet at noontide—FEAR and trembling HOPE,
SILENCE and FORESIGHT—DEATH, the skeleton,
And TIME, the shadow—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship ; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves."

The effect of the old man's figure in the poem of Resignation and Independence, vol. II. page 33.

"While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old man's shape, and speech, all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently."

Or the 8th, 9th, 19th, 26th, 31st, and 33d, in the collection of miscellaneous sonnets—the sonnet on the subjugation of Switzerland, page 210, or the last ode, from which I especially select the two following stanzas or paragraphs, page 349 to 350.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home :

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy;
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy!
The youth who daily further from the East
Must travel, still is nature's priest,
And by the splendid vision
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day."

And page 352 to 354 of the same ode.

"O joy that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised!
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence; truths that wake
To perish never:
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,

Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

And since it would be unfair to conclude with an extract, which, though highly characteristic, must yet, from the nature of the thoughts and the subject, be interesting, or perhaps intelligible, to but a limited number of readers; I will add, from the poet's last published work, a passage equally Wordsworthian; of the beauty of which, and of the imaginative power displayed therein, there can be but one opinion, and one feeling. See "White Doe," page 5.

"Fast the church-yard fills;—anon
Look again and they are gone;
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the prior's oak!
And scarcely have they disappear'd,
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard;—
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!
They sing a service which they feel,
For 'tis the sun-rise of their zeal;
And faith and hope are in their prime
In great Eliza's golden time.

"A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within;
For though the priest, more tranquilly,
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
When soft!—the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open green,
Where is no living thing to be seen;

And through yon gateway, where is found,
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the church-yard ground;
And right across the verdant sod,
Towards the very house of God;
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary doe!
White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver moon
When out of sight the clouds are driven
And she is left alone in heaven!
Or like a ship some gentle day
In sunshine sailing far away—
A glittering ship, that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain.

* * * * * *

"What harmonious pensive changes
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and through this pile of state
Overthrown and desolate!
Now a step or two her way
Is through space of open day,
Where the enamoured sunny light
Brightens her that was so bright;
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
Falls upon her like a breath,
From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath."

The following analogy will, I am apprehensive, appear dim and fantastic, but in reading Bartram's Travels I could not help transcribing the following lines as a sort of allegory, or connected simile and metaphor of Wordsworth's intellect and genius.—"The soil is a deep, rich, dark mould, on a deep stratum of tenacious clay; and that on a foundation of rocks, which often break through both strata, lifting their back above the surface. The trees which chiefly grow here are the gigantic black oak; magnolia magni-floria; fraxi-

nus excelsior; platane; and a few stately tulip trees." What Mr. Wordsworth *will* produce, it is not for me to prophecy: but I could pronounce with the liveliest convictions what he is capable of producing. It is the FIRST GENUINE PHILOSOPHIC POEM.

The preceding criticism will not, I am aware, avail to overcome the prejudices of those, who have made it a business to attack and ridicule Mr. Wordsworth's compositions.

Truth and prudence might be imaged as concentric circles. The poet may perhaps have passed beyond the latter, but he has confined himself far within the bounds of the former, in designating these critics, as too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him;—"men of palsied imaginations, in whose minds all healthy action is languid;—who, therefore, feed as the many direct them, or with the many are greedy after vicious provocatives."

Let not Mr. Wordsworth be charged with having expressed himself too indignantly, till the wantonness and the systematic and malignant perseverance of the aggressions have been taken into fair consideration. I myself heard the commander in chief of this unmanly warfare make a boast of his private admiration of Wordsworth's genius. I have heard him declare, that whoever came into his room would probably find the Lyrical Ballads lying open on his table, and that (speaking exclusively of those written by Mr. Wordsworth himself) he could nearly repeat the whole of them by heart. *But* a Review, in order to be a saleable article, must be *personal, sharp,* and *pointed*: and, *since then,* the poet has made himself, and with himself all who were, or were supposed to be, his friends and admirers, the object of the critic's revenge—how? by having spoken of a work so conducted in the terms which it deserved! I once heard a clergyman in boots and buckskin avow, that he would cheat his own father *in a horse.* A moral system of a similar nature seems to have been adopted by too many

anonymous critics. As we used to say at school, in reviewing they *make* being rogues: and he, who complains, is to be laughed at for his ignorance of *the game*. With the pen out of their hand they are *honorable men*. They exert indeed power (which is to that of the injured party who should attempt to expose their glaring perversions and misstatements, as twenty to one) to write down, and (where the author's circumstances permit) to *impoverish* the man, whose learning and genius they themselves in private have repeatedly admitted. They knowingly strive to make it impossible for the man even to publish * any future work without exposing himself to all the wretchedness of debt and embarrassment. But this is all *in their vocation*: and, hating what they do in their *vocation*, "*who can say that black is the white of their eye?*"

So much for the detractors from Wordsworth's merits. On the other hand, much as I might wish for their fuller sympathy, I dare not flatter myself, that the freedom with which I have declared my opinions concerning both his theory and his defects, most of which are more or less connected with his theory, either as cause or effect, will be satisfactory or pleasing to *all* the poet's admirers and advocates. More indiscriminate than mine their admiration may be: deeper and more sincere it can not be. But I have advanced no opinion either for praise or censure, other than as texts introductory to the reasons which compel me to form it. Above all, I was fully convinced that such a criticism was not only wanted; but that, if executed with adequate ability, it must conduce, in no mean degree, to Mr. Wordsworth's *reputation*. His *fame* belongs to another age,

* Not many months ago an eminent bookseller was asked what he thought of——? The answer was: "I have heard his powers very highly spoken of by some of our first-rate men; but I would not have a work of his if any one would give it me: for he is spoken but slightly of, or not at all, in the QuarterlyReview: and the Edinburgh, you know, is decided to cut him up!"

and can neither be accelerated nor retarded. How small the proportion of the defects are to the beauties, I have repeatedly declared; and that no one of them originates in deficiency of poetic genius. Had they been more and greater, I should still, as a friend to his literary character in the present age, consider an analytic display of them as *pure gain*; if only it removed, as surely to all reflecting minds even the foregoing analysis must have removed, the strange mistake, so slightly grounded, yet so widely and industriously propagated, of Mr. Wordsworth's turn for SIMPLICITY! I am not half so much irritated by hearing his enemies abuse him for vulgarity of style, subject, and conception; as I am disgusted with the gilded side of the same meaning, as displayed by some affected admirers, with whom he is, forsooth, a *sweet, simple poet!* and *so* natural, that little master Charles and his younger sister are *so* charmed with them, that they play at "Goody Blake," or at "Johnny and Betty Foy!"

Were the collection of poems, published with these biographical sketches, important enough, (which I am not vain enough to believe), to deserve such a distinction; EVEN AS I HAVE DONE, SO WOULD I BE DONE UNTO.

For more than eighteen months have the volume of Poems, entitled SIBYLLINE LEAVES, and the present volumes, up to this page, been printed, and ready for publication. But, ere I speak of myself in the tones, which are alone natural to me under the circumstances of late years, I would fain present myself to the Reader as I was in the first dawn of my literary life:

"When Hope grew round me, like the climbing vine,
And fruits and foliage, not my own, seem'd mine!"

For this purpose I have selected from the letters, which I wrote home from Germany, those which appeared likely to be most interesting, and at the same time most pertinent to the title of this work.

SATYRANE'S LETTERS

LETTER I

ON Sunday morning, September 16, 1798, the Hamburg Pacquet set sail from Yarmouth; and I, for the first time in my life, beheld my native land retiring from me. At the moment of its disappearance—in all the kirks, churches, chapels, and meeting-houses, in which the greater number, I hope, of my countrymen were at that time assembled, I will dare question whether there was one more ardent prayer offered up to heaven, than that which I then preferred for my country. "Now, then," (said I to a gentleman who was standing near me), "we are out of our country." "Not yet, not yet!" he replied, and pointed to the sea; "This, too, is a Briton's country." This bon mot gave a fillip to my spirits, I rose and looked round on my fellow-passengers, who were all on the deck. We were eighteen in number, videlicet, five Englishmen, an English lady, a French gentleman and his servant, an Hanoverian and his servant, a Prussian, a Swede, two Danes, and a Mulatto boy, a German tailor and his wife, (the smallest couple I ever beheld), and a Jew. We were all on the deck; but in a short time I observed marks of dismay. The lady retired to the cabin in some confusion, and many of the faces round me assumed a very doleful and frog-coloured appearance; and within an hour the number of those on deck was lessened by one half. I was giddy, but not sick, and the giddiness soon went away, but left a feverishness and want of appetite, which I attributed, in great measure, to the *sæva Mephitis* of the bilge-water; and it was certainly not decreased by the exportations from the cabin. However, I was well enough to join the able-bodied passengers, one of whom observed not inaptly, that Momus might have dis-

covered an easier way to see a man's inside, than by placing a window in his breast. He needed only have taken a salt-water trip in a pacquet-boat.

I am inclined to believe, that a pacquet is far superior to a stage-coach, as a means of making men open out to each other. In the latter the uniformity of posture disposes to dozing, and the definiteness of the period, at which the company will separate, makes each individual think more of those *to* whom he is going, than of those *with* whom he is going. But at sea, more curiosity is excited, if only on this account, that the pleasant or unpleasant qualities of your companions are of greater importance to you, from the uncertainty how long you may be obliged to house with them. Besides, if you are countrymen, that now begins to form a distinction and a bond of brotherhood; and if of different countries, there are new incitements of conversation, more to ask and more to communicate. I found that I had interested the Danes in no common degree. I had crept into the boat on the deck and fallen asleep; but was awaked by one of them, about three o'clock in the afternoon, who told me that they had been seeking me in every hole and corner, and insisted that I should join their party and drink with them. He talked English with such fluency, as left me wholly unable to account for the singular and even ludicrous incorrectness with which he spoke it. I went, and found some excellent wines and a dessert of grapes with a pineapple. The Danes had christened me Doctor Teology, and dressed as I was all in black, with large shoes and black worsted stockings, I might certainly have passed very well for a Methodist missionary. However I disclaimed my title. What then may you be? A man of fortune? No!—A merchant? No! A merchant's traveller? No!—A clerk? No!—Un Philosophe, perhaps? It was at that time in my life, in which of all possible names and characters I had the greatest disgust to that of "un Philosophe." But I was weary

of being questioned, and rather than be nothing, or at best only the abstract idea of a man, I submitted by a bow, even to the aspersion implied in the word "un Philosophe."—The Dane then informed me, that all in the present party were philosophers likewise. Certes we were not of the stoic school. For we drank and talked and sung, till we talked and sung all together; and then we rose and danced on the deck a set of dances, which in *one* sense of the word at least, were very intelligibly and appropriately intitled *reels*. The passengers, who lay in the cabin below in all the agonies of sea-sickness, must have found our bacchanalian merriment

"————————————————a tune
Harsh and of dissonant mood from their complaint."

I thought so at the time; and (by way, I suppose, of supporting my newly assumed philosophical character) I thought too, how closely the greater number of our virtues are connected with the fear of death, and how little sympathy we bestow on pain, where there is no danger.

The two Danes were brothers. The one was a man with a clear white complexion, white hair, and white eyebrows; looked silly, and nothing that he uttered gave the lie to his looks. The other, whom by way of eminence I have called THE DANE, had likewise white hair, but was much shorter than his brother, with slender limbs, and a very thin face slightly pock-fretten. This man convinced me of the justice of an old remark, that many a faithful portrait in our novels and farces has been rashly censured for an outrageous caricature, or perhaps nonentity. I had retired to my station in the boat—he came and seated himself by my side, and appeared not a little tipsy. He commenced the conversation in the most magnific style, and, as a sort of pioneering to his own vanity, he flattered me with *such* grossness! The parasites of the old comedy were modest in the comparison. His language and accentuation were so

exceedingly singular, that I determined for once in my life to take notes of a conversation. Here it follows, somewhat abridged indeed, but in all other respects as accurately as my memory permitted.

THE DANE. Vat imagination! vat language! vat vast science! and vat eyes! vat a milk-vite forehead! O my heafen! vy, you're a Got!

ANSWER. You do me too much honour, Sir.

THE DANE. O me! if you should dink I is flattering you!—No, no, no! I haf ten tousand a year—yes, ten tousand a year—yes, ten tousand pound a year! Vel—and vat is dhat? a mere trifle! I 'ouldn't gif my sincere heart for ten times dhe money.—Yes, you're a Got! I a mere man! But, my dear friend! dhink of me, as a man! Is, is —I mean to ask you now, my dear friend—is I not very eloquent? Is I not speak English very fine?

ANSW. Most admirably! Believe me, Sir! I have seldom heard even a native talk so *fluently*.

THE DANE. (*squeezing my hand with great vehemence.*) My *dear* friend! vat an affection and fidelity ve have for each odher! But tell me, do tell me,—Is I not, now and den, speak some fault? Is I not in some wrong?

ANSW. Why, Sir! perhaps it might be observed by nice critics in the English language, that you occasionally use the word "Is" instead of "am." In our best companies we generally say I am, and not I is or I'se. Excuse me, Sir! it is a mere trifle.

THE DANE. O!—is, is, am, am, am. Yes, yes—I know, I know.

ANSW. I am, thou art, he is, we are, ye are, they are.

THE DANE. Yes, yes,—I know, I know—Am, am, am, is dhe presens, and Is is dhe perfectum—yes, yes—and *are* is dhe plusquam perfectum.

ANSW. And "Art," Sir! is——?

THE DANE. My dear friend! it is dhe plusquam perfec-

tum, no, no—dhat is a great lie. "Are" is dhe plusquam perfectum—and "art" is dhe plusquam plueperfectum—(*then swinging my hand to and fro, and cocking his little bright hazel eyes at me, that danced with vanity and wine*) You see, my dear friend! that I too have *some* lehrning.

ANSW. Learning, Sir? Who dares suspect it? Who can listen to you for a minute, who can even look at you, without perceiving the extent of it?

THE DANE. My *dear* friend!—(*then with a would-be humble look, and in a tone of voice as if he was reasoning*) I could not talk so of presens and imperfectum, and futurum and and plusquamplue perfectum, and all dhat, my dear friend! without *some* lehrning?

ANSW. Sir! a man like you cannot talk on any subject without discovering the depth of his information.

THE DANE. Dhe grammatic Greek, my friend! ha! ha! ha! (*laughing, and swinging my hand to and fro—then with a sudden transition to great solemnity*) Now I will tell you, my dear friend! Dhere did happen about me vat de whole historia of Denmark record no instance about nobody else. Dhe bishop did ask me all dhe questions about all dhe religion in dhe Latin grammar.

ANSW. The grammar, Sir? The language, I presume—

THE DANE. (*A little offended.*) Grammar is language, and language is grammar—

ANSW. Ten thousands pardons!

THE DANE. Vell, and I was only fourteen years—

ANSW. Only fourteen years old?

THE DANE. No more. I vas fourteen years old—and he asked me all questions, religion and philosophy, and all in dhe Latin language—and I answered him all every one, my dear friend! all in dhe Latin language.

ANSW. A prodigy! an absolute prodigy!

THE DANE. No, no, no! he was a bishop, a great superintendent.

ANSW. Yes! a bishop.

THE DANE. A bishop—not a mere predicant, not a prediger—

ANSW. My dear Sir! we have misunderstood each other. I said that your answering in Latin at so early an age was a prodigy, that is, a thing that is wonderful, that does not often happen.

THE DANE. Often! Dhere is not von instance recorded in dhe whole historia of Denmark.

ANSW. And since then Sir—— ?

THE DANE. I was sent ofer to dhe Vest Indies—to our Island, and dhere I had no more to do vid books. No! no! I put my genius anodher way—and I haf made ten tousand pound a year. Is not dhat *ghenius*, my dear friend ?—But vat is money ? I dhink dhe poorest man alive my equal. Yes, my dear friend; my little fortune is pleasant to my generous heart, because I can do good—no man with so little a fortune ever did so much generosity—no person, no man person, no woman person ever denies it. But we are all Got's children.

Here the Hanoverian interrupted him, and the other Dane, the Swede, and the Prussian, joined us, together with a young Englishman who spoke the German fluently, and interpreted to me many of the Prussian's jokes. The Prussian was a travelling merchant, turned of threescore, a hale man, tall, strong, and stout, full of stories, gesticulations, and buffoonery, with the soul as well as the look of a mountebank, who, while he is making you laugh, picks your pocket. Amid all his droll looks and droll gestures, there remained one look untouched by laughter; and that one look was the true face, the others were but its mask. The Hanoverian was a pale, fat, bloated young man, whose father had made a large fortune in London, as an army-contractor. He seemed to emulate the manners of young Englishmen of fortune. He was a good-natured fellow, not without infor-

mation or literature ; but a most egregious coxcomb. He had been in the habit of attending the House of Commons, and had once spoken, as he informed me, with great applause in a debating society. For this he appeared to have qualified himself with laudable industry : for he was perfect in Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary, and with an accent which forcibly reminded me of the Scotchman in Roderic Random, who professed to teach the English pronunciation, he was constantly *deferring* to my superior judgement, whether or no I had pronounced this or that word with propriety, or "the true delicacy." When he spoke, though it were only half a dozen sentences, he always rose ; for which I could detect no other motive, than his partiality to that elegant phrase so liberally introduced in the orations of our British legislators, "While I am on my legs." The Swede, whom for reasons that will soon appear, I shall distinguish by the name of "Nobility," was a strong-featured, scurvy-faced man, his complexion resembling in color a red hot poker beginning to cool. He appeared miserably dependent on the Dane ; but was, however, incomparably the best informed and most rational of the party. Indeed his manners and conversation discovered him to be both a man of the world and a gentleman. The Jew was in the hold : the French gentleman was lying on the deck so ill, that I could observe nothing concerning him, except the affectionate attentions of his servant to him. The poor fellow was very sick himself, and every now and then ran to the side of the vessel, still keeping his eye on his master, but returned in a moment and seated himself again by him, now supporting his head, now wiping his forehead and talking to him all the while in the most soothing tones. There had been a matrimonial squabble of a very ludicrous kind in the cabin, between the little German tailor and his little wife. He had secured two beds, one for himself and one for her. This had struck the little woman as a very cruel action ; she insisted

upon their having but one, and assured the mate in the most piteous tones, that she was his lawful wife. The mate and the cabin boy decided in her favor, abused the little man for his want of tenderness with much humor, and hoisted him into the same compartment with his sea-sick wife. This quarrel was interesting to me, as it procured me a bed, which I otherwise should not have had.

In the evening, at 7 o'clock, the sea rolled higher, and the Dane, by means of the greater agitation, eliminated enough of what he had been swallowing to make room for a great deal more. His favorite potation was sugar and brandy, i. e. a very little warm water with a large quantity of brandy, sugar, and nut-meg. His servant boy, a black-eyed Mulatto, had a good-natured round face, exactly the color of the skin of the walnut-kernel. The Dane and I were again seated, tête-à-tête, in the ship's boat. The conversation, which was now indeed rather an oration than a dialogue, became extravagant beyond all that I ever heard. He told me that he had made a large fortune in the island of Santa Cruz, and was now returning to Denmark to enjoy it. He expatiated on the style in which he meant to live, and the great undertakings which he proposed to himself to commence, till, the brandy aiding his vanity, and his vanity and garrulity aiding the brandy, he talked like a mad-man—entreated me to accompany him to Denmark—there I should see his influence with the government, and he would introduce me to the king, &c., &c. Thus he went on dreaming aloud, and then passing with a very lyrical transition to the subject of general politics, he declaimed, like a member of the Corresponding Society, *about* (not concerning) the Rights of Man, and assured me that, notwithstanding his fortune, he thought the poorest man alive his equal. "All are equal, my dear friend! all are equal! Ve are all Got's children. The poorest man haf the same rights with me. Jack! Jack! some more sugar and brandy. Dhere is dhat

fellow now! He is a Mulatto—but he is my equal.—That's right, Jack! (*taking the sugar and brandy*). Here you Sir! shake hands with dhis gentleman! Shake hands with me, you dog! Dhere, dhere!—We are all equal, my dear friend! —Do I not speak like Socrates, and Plato, and Cato—they were all philosophers, my dear philosophe! all very great men!—and so was Homer and Virgil—but they were poets, yes, yes! I know all about it!—But what can anybody say more than this? We are all equal, all Got's children. I haf ten tousand a year, but I am no more dhan de meanest man alive. I haf no pride; and yet, my dear friend! I can say, do! and it is done. Ha! ha! ha! my dear friend! Now dhere is dhat gentleman (*pointing to Nobility*) he is a Swedish baron—you shall see. Ho! (*calling to the Swede*) get me, will you, a bottle of wine from the cabin. *Swede.*—Here, Jack! go and get your master a bottle of wine from the cabin. *Dane.* No, no, no! do *you* go now—you go yourself —*you* go now! *Swede.* Pah!—*Dane.* Now go! Go, I pray you. AND THE SWEDE WENT!!

After this the Dane commenced an harangue on religion, and mistaking me for "un philosophe" in the continental sense of the word, he talked of Deity in a declamatory style, very much resembling the devotional rants of that rude blunderer, Mr. Thomas Paine, in his Age of Reason, and whispered in my ear, what damned *hypocrism* all Jesus Christ's business was. I dare aver, that few men have less reason to charge themselves with indulging in *persiflage* than myself. I should hate it, if it were only that it is a Frenchman's vice, and feel a pride in avoiding it, because our own language is too honest to have a word to express it by. But in this instance the temptation had been too powerful, and I have placed it on the list of my offences. Pericles answered one of his dearest friends, who had solicited him on a case of life and death, to take an equivocal oath, for his preservation: *Debeo amicis opitulari, sed usque*

*ad Deos**. Friendship herself must place her last and boldest step on this side the altar. What Pericles would not do to save a friend's life, you may be assured, I would not hazard merely to mill the chocolate-pot of a drunken fool's vanity till it frothed over. Assuming a serious look, I professed myself a believer, and sunk at once an hundred fathoms in his good graces. He retired to his cabin, and I wrapped myself up in my great coat, and looked at the water. A beautiful white cloud of foam at momently intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it : and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness.

It was cold, the cabin was at open war with my olfactories, and I found reason to rejoice in my great coat, a weighty high-caped, respectable rug, the collar of which turned over, and played the part of a night-cap very passably. In looking up at two or three bright stars, which oscillated with the motion of the sails, I fell asleep, but was awakened at one o'clock, Monday morning, by a shower of rain. I found myself compelled to go down into the cabin, where I slept very soundly, and awoke with a very good appetite at breakfast time, my nostrils, the most placable of all the senses, reconciled to or indeed insensible of the mephitis.

Monday, September 17th, I had a long conversation with the Swede, who spoke with the most poignant contempt of the Dane, whom he described as a fool, purse-mad ; but he confirmed the boasts of the Dane respecting the largeness of his fortune, which he had acquired in the first instance as an advocate, and afterwards as a planter. From the Dane and from himself I collected that he was indeed a Swedish noble-

* *Translation.* It behoves me to side with my friends, but only as far as the gods.

man, who had squandered a fortune, that was never very large, and had made over his property to the Dane, on whom he was now utterly dependent. He seemed to suffer very little pain from the Dane's insolence. He was in a high degree humane and attentive to the English lady, who suffered most fearfully, and for whom he performed many little offices with a tenderness and delicacy which seemed to prove real goodness of heart. Indeed his general manners and conversation were not only pleasing, but even interesting; and I struggled to believe his insensibility respecting the Dane philosophical fortitude. For though the Dane was now quite sober, his character oozed out of him at every pore. And after dinner, when he was again flushed with wine, every quarter of an hour or perhaps oftener he would shout out to the Swede, "Ho! Nobility, go—do such a thing! Mr. Nobility!—tell the gentlemen such a story, and so forth;" with an insolence which must have excited disgust and detestation, if his vulgar rants on the sacred rights of equality, joined to his wild havoc of general grammar, no less than of the English language, had not rendered it so irresistibly laughable.

At four o'clock I observed a wild duck swimming on the waves, a single solitary wild duck. It is not easy to conceive, how interesting a thing it looked in that round objectless desert of waters. I had associated such a feeling of immensity with the ocean, that I felt exceedingly disappointed, when I was out of sight of all land, at the narrowness and *nearness*, as it were, of the circle of the horizon. So little are images capable of satisfying the obscure feelings connected with words. In the evening the sails were lowered, lest we should run foul of the land, which can be seen only at a small distance. And at four o'clock, on Tuesday morning, I was awakened by the cry of land! land! It was an ugly island rock at a distance on our left, called Heiligeland, well known to many passengers from Yarmouth to

Hamburg, who have been obliged by stormy weather to pass weeks and weeks in weary captivity on it, stripped of all their money by the exorbitant demands of the wretches who inhabit it. So at least the sailors informed me.—About nine o'clock we saw the main land, which seemed scarcely able to hold its head above water, low, flat, and dreary, with light-houses and land-marks which seemed to give a character and language to the dreariness. We entered the mouth of the Elbe, passing Neu-werk; though as yet the right bank only of the river was visible to us. On this I saw a church, and thanked God for my safe voyage, not without affectionate thoughts of those I had left in England. At eleven o'clock on the same morning we arrived at Cuxhaven, the ship dropped anchor, and the boat was hoisted out, to carry the Hanoverian and a few others on shore. The captain agreed to take us, who remained, to Hamburg for ten guineas, to which the Dane contributed so largely, that the other passengers paid but half a guinea each. Accordingly we hauled anchor, and passed gently up the river. At Cuxhaven both sides of the river may be seen in clear weather; we could now see the right bank only. We passed a multitude of English traders that had been waiting many weeks for a wind. In a short time both banks became visible, both flat and evidencing the labor of human hands by their extreme neatness. On the left bank I saw a church or two in the distance; on the right bank we passed by steeple and windmill and cottage, and windmill and single house, windmill and windmill, and neat single house, and steeple. These were the objects and in this succession. The shores were very green and planted with trees not inelegantly. Thirty-five miles from Cuxhaven the night came on us, and, as the navigation of the Elbe is perilous, we dropped anchor.

Over what place, thought I, does the moon hang to *your* eye, my dearest friend? To me it hung over the left bank of the Elbe. Close above the moon was a huge volume of

deep black cloud, while a very thin fillet crossed the middle of the orb, as narrow and thin and black as a ribbon of crape. The long trembling road of moonlight, which lay on the water and reached to the stern of our vessel, glimmered dimly and obscurely. We saw two or three lights from the right bank, probably from bed-rooms. I felt the striking contrast between the silence of this majestic stream, whose banks are populous with men and women and children, and flocks and herds—between the silence by night of this peopled river, and the ceaseless noise, and uproar, and loud agitations of the desolate solitude of the ocean. The passengers below had all retired to their beds; and I felt the interest of this quiet scene the more deeply from the circumstance of having just quitted them. For the Prussian had during the whole of the evening displayed all his talents to captivate the Dane, who had admitted him into the train of his dependents. The young Englishman continued to interpret the Prussian's jokes to me. They were all without exception profane and abominable, but some sufficiently witty, and a few incidents, which he related in his own person, were valuable as illustrating the manners of the countries in which they had taken place.

Five o'clock on Wednesday morning we hauled the anchor, but were soon obliged to drop it again in consequence of a thick fog, which our captain feared would continue the whole day; but about nine it cleared off, and we sailed slowly along, close by the shore of a very beautiful island, forty miles from Cuxhaven, the wind continuing slack. This holme or island is about a mile and a half in length, wedge-shaped, well wooded, with glades of the liveliest green, and rendered more interesting by the remarkably neat farm house on it. It seemed made for retirement without solitude—a place that would allure one's friends, while it precluded the impertinent calls of mere visitors. The shores of the Elbe now became more beautiful, with rich meadows

and trees running like a low wall along the river's edge; and peering over them, neat houses and (especially on the right bank) a profusion of steeple-spires, white, black, or red. An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeples, which, as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sun-set, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. I remember once, and once only, to have seen a spire in a narrow valley of a mountainous country. The effect was not only mean but ludicrous, and reminded me against my will of an *extinguisher*; the close neighbourhood of the high mountain, at the foot of which it stood, had so completely dwarfed it, and deprived it of all connection with the clouds or sky. Forty-six English miles from Cuxhaven, and sixteen from Hamburg, the Danish village Veder ornaments the left bank with its black steeple, and close by it the wild and pastoral hamlet of Schulau. Hitherto both the right and left bank, green to the very brink, and level with the river, resembled the shores of a park canal. The trees and houses were alike low, sometimes the low trees overtopping the yet lower houses, sometimes the low houses rising above the yet lower trees. But at Schulau the left bank rises at once forty or fifty feet, and stares on the river with its perpendicular fassade of sand, thinly patched with tufts of green. The Elbe continued to present a more and more lively spectacle from the multitude of fishing boats and the flocks of sea gulls wheeling round them, the clamorous rivals and companions of the fishermen; till we come to Blankaness, a most interesting village scattered amid scattered trees, over three hills in three divisions. Each of the three hills stares upon the river, with faces of bare sand, with which the boats with their bare poles, standing in files along the banks, made a sort of fantastic harmony. Between each fassade lies a green

and woody dell, each deeper than the other. In short it is a large village made up of individual cottages, each cottage in the centre of its own little wood or orchard, and each with its own separate path : a village with a labyrinth of paths, or rather a *neighbourhood* of houses ! It is inhabited by fishermen and boat-makers, the Blankaness boats being in great request through the whole navigation of the Elbe. Here first we saw the spires of Hamburg, and from hence as far as Altona the left bank of the Elbe is uncommonly pleasing, considered as the vicinity of an industrious and republican city—in that style of beauty, or rather prettiness, that might tempt the citizen into the country, and yet gratify the taste which he had acquired in the town. Summer-houses and Chinese show-work are every where scattered along the high and green banks ; the boards of the farm-houses left unplaistered and gaily painted with green and yellow ; and scarcely a tree not cut into shapes and made to remind the human being of his own power and intelligence instead of the wisdom of nature. Still, however, these are links of connection between town and country, and far better than the affectation of tastes and enjoyments for which men's habits have disqualified them. Pass them by on Saturdays and Sundays with the burgers of Hamburg smoking their pipes, the women and children feasting in the alcoves of box and yew, and it becomes a nature of its own. On Wednesday, four o'clock, we left the vessel, and passing with trouble through the huge masses of shipping that seemed to choke the wide Elbe from Altona upward, we were at length landed at the Boom House, Hamburg.

LETTER II (To a Lady)

RATZEBURG.

Meine liebe Freundin,

See how natural the German comes from me, though I have not yet been six weeks in the country !—almost as fluently

as English from my neighbour the Amptschreiber, (or public secretary), who as often as we meet, though it should be half a dozen times in the same day, never fails to greet me with—"* * *ddam your ploot unt eyes, my dearest Englander! vhee goes it!*"—which is certainly a proof of great generosity on his part, these words being his whole stock of English. I had, however, a better reason than the desire of displaying my proficiency: for I wished to put you in good humour with a language, from the acquirement of which I have promised myself much edification and the means too of communicating a new pleasure to you and your sister, during our winter readings. And how can I do this better than by pointing out its gallant attention to the ladies? Our English affix *ess* is, I believe, confined either to words derived from the Latin, as *actress*, *directress*, &c., or from the French, as *mistress*, *duchess*, and the like. But the German *in* enables us to designate the sex in every possible relation of life. Thus the Amptman's lady is the *Frau* Amptman*in*—the secretary's wife, (by the bye, the handsomest woman I have yet seen in Germany), is die allerliebste Frau Amptschreiber*in*—the colonel's lady, die Frau Obrist*in* or Colone*lin*—and even the parson's wife, die Frau Pastor*in*. But I am especially pleased with their *freundin*, which, unlike the *amica* of the Romans, is seldom used but in its best and purest sense. Now I know it will be said, that a friend is already something more than a friend, when a man feels an anxiety to express to himself that this friend is a female; but this I deny—in that sense at least in which the objection will be made. I would hazard the impeachment of heresy, rather than abandon my belief that there is a sex in our SOULS as well as in their perishable garments; and he who does not feel it, never truly loved a sister—nay, is not capable even of loving a wife as she deserves to be loved, if she indeed be worthy of that holy name.

Now I know, my gentle friend, what you are murmuring

to yourself—"This is so like him! running away after the first bubble, that chance had blown off from the surface of his fancy; when one is anxious to learn where he is and what he has seen." Well then! that I am settled at Ratzeburg, with my motives and the particulars of my journey hither, —— will inform you. My first letter to him, with which, doubtless, he has edified your whole fireside, left me safely landed at Hamburg on the Elbe Stairs, at the Boom House. While standing on the stairs, I was amused by the contents of the passage-boat, which crosses the river once or twice a day from Hamburg to Harburg. It was stowed close with all people of all nations, in all sorts of dresses; the men all with pipes in their mouths, and these pipes of all shapes and fancies—straight and wreathed, simple and complex, long and short, cane, clay, porcelain, wood, tin, silver, and ivory; most of them with silver chains and silver bole-covers. Pipes and boots are the first universal characteristic of the male Hamburgers that would strike the eye of a raw traveller. But I forgot my promise of journalizing as much as possible.—Therefore, *Septr.* 19 *Afternoon.* My companion, who, you recollect, speaks the French language with unusual propriety, had formed a kind of confidential acquaintance with the emigrant, who appeared to be a man of sense, and whose manners were those of a perfect gentleman. He seemed about fifty or rather more. Whatever is unpleasant in French manners from excess in the *degree*, had been softened down by age or affliction; and all that is delightful in the *kind*, alacrity and delicacy in little attentions, &c., remained, and without bustle, gesticulation, or disproportionate eagerness. His demeanour exhibited the minute philanthropy of a polished Frenchman, tempered by the sobriety of the English character disunited from its reserve. There is something strangely attractive in the character of a *gentleman* when you apply the word emphatically, and yet in that sense of the term which it is more easy to

feel than to define. It neither includes the possession of high moral excellence, nor of necessity even the ornamental graces of manner. I have now in my mind's eye a person whose life would scarcely stand scrutiny even in the court of honor, much less in that of conscience; and his manners, if nicely observed, would of the two excite an idea of awkwardness rather than of elegance: and yet every one who conversed with him felt and acknowledged *the gentleman.* The secret of the matter, I believe to be this—we feel the gentlemanly character present to us, whenever, under all the circumstances of social intercourse, the trivial not less than the important, through the whole *detail* of his manners and deportment, and with the ease of a habit, a person shows respect to others in *such a way*, as at the same time implies in his own feelings an habitual and assured anticipation of reciprocal respect from them to himself. In short, the *gentlemanly* character arises out of the feeling of Equality, acting as a Habit, yet flexible to the varieties of Rank, and modified without being disturbed or superseded by them. This description will perhaps explain to you the ground of one of your own remarks, as I was englishing to you the interesting dialogue concerning the causes of the corruption of eloquence. "What perfect gentlemen these old Romans must have been! I was impressed, I remember, with the same feeling at the time I was reading a translation of Cicero's philosophical dialogues and of his epistolary correspondence: while in Pliny's Letters I seemed to have a different feeling—he gave me the notion of a very *fine* gentleman." You uttered the words as if you had felt that the adjunct had injured the substance and the encreased degree altered the kind. Pliny was the courtier of an absolute monarch—Cicero an aristocratic republican. For this reason the character of gentleman, in the sense to which I have confined it, is frequent in England, rare in France, and found, where it is found, in age or the latest period

of manhood; while in Germany the character is almost unknown. But the proper *antipodes* of a gentleman is to be sought for among the Anglo-American democrats.

I owe this digression, as an act of justice to this amiable Frenchman, and of humiliation for myself. For in a little controversy between us on the subject of French poetry, he made me feel my own ill behaviour by the silent reproof of contrast, and when I afterwards apologized to him for the warmth of my language, he answered me with a chearful expression of surprize, and an immediate compliment, which a gentleman might both make with dignity and receive with pleasure. I was pleased, therefore to find it agreed on, that we should, if possible, take up our quarters in the same house. My friend went with him in search of an hotel, and I to deliver my letters of recommendation.

I walked onward at a brisk pace, enlivened not so much by anything I actually saw, as by the confused sense that I was for the first time in my life on the *continent* of our planet. I seemed to myself like a liberated bird that had been hatched in an aviary, who now after his first soar of freedom poises himself in the upper air. Very naturally I began to wonder at *all* things, some for being so like and some for being so unlike the things in England—Dutch women with large umbrella hats shooting out half a yard before them, with a prodigal plumpness of petticoat behind —the women of Hamburg with caps plaited on the caul with silver, or gold, or both, bordered round with stiffened lace, which *stood out* before their eyes, but not lower, so that the eyes sparkled through it—the Hanoverian women with the fore part of the head bare, then a stiff lace standing up like a wall perpendicular on the cap, and the cap behind *tailed* with an enormous quantity of ribbon which lies or tosses on the back:

> "Their visnomies seem'd like a goodly banner
> Spread in defiance of all enemies." SPENSER.

—The ladies all in English dresses, all *rouged*, and all with bad teeth: which you notice instantly from their contrast to the almost *animal, too* glossy mother-of-pearl whiteness and the regularity of the teeth of the laughing, loud-talking country-women and servant-girls, who with their clean white stockings and with slippers without heel-quarters tripped along the dirty streets, as if they were secured by a charm from the dirt: with a lightness, too, which surprised me, who had always considered it as one of the annoyances of sleeping *in an Inn*, that I had to clatter up stairs in a pair of them. The streets narrow; to my English nose sufficiently offensive, and explaining at first sight the universal use of boots; without any appropriate path for the foot-passengers; the gable ends of the houses all towards the street, some in the ordinary triangular form, and *entire*, as the botanists say, but the greater number notched and scolloped with more than Chinese grotesqueness. Above all, I was struck with the profusion of windows, so large and so many, that the houses look all glass. Mr. Pitt's Window Tax, with its pretty little *additionals* sprouting out from it like young toadlets on the back of a Surinam toad, would certainly improve the appearance of the Hamburg houses, which have a slight summer look, not *in keeping* with their size, incongruous with the climate, and precluding that feeling of retirement and self-content, which one wishes to associate with a house in a noisy city. But a conflagration would, I fear, be the previous requisite to the production of any architectural beauty in Hamburg: for verily it is a filthy town. I moved on and crossed a multitude of ugly bridges, with huge black deformities of water wheels close by them. The water intersects the city every where, and would have furnished to the genius of Italy the capabilities of all that is most beautiful and magnificent in architecture. It might have been the rival of Venice, and it is huddle and ugliness, stench and stagnation. The Jungfer Stieg (i.e., Young Ladies'

Walk), to which my letters directed me, made an exception. It was a walk or promenade planted with treble rows of elm trees, which, being yearly pruned and cropped, remain slim and dwarf-like. This walk occupies one side of a square piece of water, with many swans on it perfectly tame, and, moving among the swans, shewy pleasure boats with ladies in them, rowed by their husbands or lovers. ********

(*Some paragraphs have been here omitted.*)

** Thus embarrassed by sad and solemn politeness, still more than by broken English, it sounded like the voice of an old friend when I heard the emigrant's servant inquiring after me. He had come for the purpose of guiding me to our hotel. Through streets and streets I pressed on as happy as a child, and, I doubt not, with a childish expression of wonderment in my busy eyes, amused by the wicker waggons with moveable benches across them, one behind the other, (these were the hackney coaches); amused by the sign-boards of the shops, on which all the articles sold within are painted, and that too very exactly, though in a grotesque confusion, (a useful substitute for language in this great mart of nations); amused with the incessant tinkling of the shop and house door bells, the bell hanging over each door and struck with a small iron rod at every entrance and exit; —and finally, amused by looking in at the windows, as I passed along; the ladies and gentlemen drinking coffee or playing cards, and the gentlemen all smoking. I wished myself a painter, that I might have sent you a sketch of one of the card parties. The long pipe of one gentleman rested on the table, its bole half a yard from his mouth, fuming like a censer by the fish-pool—the other gentleman, who was dealing the cards, and of course had both hands employed, held his pipe in his teeth, which, hanging down between his knees, smoked beside his ancles. Hogarth himself never drew a more ludicrous distortion both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effort occasioned: nor was

there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces, as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius !) neither acts, nor is *meant* to act as a contrast ; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness ; and, even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter : and thus prevents the instructive merriment at the whims of nature or the foibles or humours of our fellow-men from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred.

Our hotel DER WILDE MAN, (the sign of which was no bad likeness of the landlord, who had ingrafted on a very grim face a restless grin, that was at every man's service, and which, indeed, like an actor rehearsing to himself, he kept playing in *expectation* of an occasion for it) neither our hotel, I say, nor its landlord were of the genteelest class. But it has one great advantage for a stranger, by being in the market place, and the next neighbour of the huge church of St. Nicholas : a church with shops and houses built up against it, out of which *wens* and *warts* its high massy steeple rises, *necklaced* near the top with a round of large gilt balls. A better pole-star could scarcely be desired. Long shall I retain the impression made on my mind by the awful echo, so loud and long and tremulous, of the deep-toned clock within this church, which awoke me at two in the morning from a distressful dream, occasioned, I believe, by the feather bed, which is used here instead of bed-clothes. I will rather carry my blanket about with me like a wild Indian, than submit to this abominable custom. Our emigrant acquaintance was, we found, an intimate friend of the celebrated Abbé de Lisle : and from the large fortune, which he pos-

sessed under the monarchy, had rescued sufficient not only for independence, but for respectability. He had offended some of his fellow-emigrants in London, whom he had obliged with considerable sums, by a refusal to make further advances, and in consequence of their intrigues had received an order to quit the kingdom. I thought it one proof of his innocence, that he attached no blame either to the alien act, or to the minister who had exerted it against him; and a still greater, that he spoke of London with rapture, and of his favorite niece, who had married and settled in England, with all the fervor and all the pride of a fond parent. A man sent by force out of a country, obliged to sell out of the stocks at a great loss, and exiled from those pleasures and that style of society which habit had rendered essential to his happiness, whose predominant feelings were yet all of a private nature, resentment for friendship outraged, and anguish for domestic affections interrupted—such a man, I think, I could dare warrant guiltless of *espionage* in any service, most of all in that of the present French Directory. He spoke with extacy of Paris under the Monarchy: and yet the particular facts, which made up his description, left as deep a conviction on my mind of French worthlessness, as his own tale had done of emigrant ingratitude. Since my arrival in Germany, I have not met a single person, even among those who abhor the Revolution, that spoke with favor, or even charity, of the French emigrants. Though the belief of their influence in the origination of this disastrous war (from the horrors of which North Germany deems itself only reprieved, not secured) may have some share in the general aversion with which they are regarded: yet I am deeply persuaded that the far greater part is owing to their own profligacy, to their treachery and hardheartedness to each other, and the domestic misery or corrupt principles which so many of them have carried into the families of their protectors. My heart dilated with honest

pride, as I recalled to mind the stern yet amiable characters of the English patriots, who sought refuge on the Continent at the Restoration! O let not our civil war under the first Charles be parallelled with the French revolution! In the former, the chalice overflowed from excess of principle; in the latter, from the fermentation of the dregs! The former was a civil war between the virtues and virtuous prejudices of the two parties; the latter, between the vices. The Venetian glass of the French monarchy shivered and flew asunder with the working of a double poison.

Sept. 20th. I was introduced to Mr. Klopstock, the brother of the poet, who again introduced me to professor Ebeling, an intelligent and lively man, though deaf: so deaf, indeed, that it was a painful effort to talk with him, as we were obliged to drop all our pearls into a huge ear-trumpet. From this courteous and kind-hearted man of letters (I hope the German literati in general may resemble this first specimen) I heard a tolerable Italian pun, and an interesting anecdote. When Buonaparte was in Italy, having been irritated by some instance of perfidy, he said in a loud and vehement tone, in a public company—"'tis a true proverb, *gli Italiani tutti ladroni*"—(i.e. *the Italians all plunderers.*) A lady had the courage to reply, "Non tutti; ma BUONA PARTE," (*not all, but a good part*, or *Buonaparte.*) This, I confess, sounded to *my* ears, as one of the many good things that *might have been* said. The anecdote is more valuable; for it instances the ways and means of French insinuation. Hoche had received much information concerning the face of the country from a map of unusual fulness and accuracy, the maker of which, he heard, resided at Düsseldorf. At the storming of Düsseldorf by the French army, Hoche previously ordered, that the house and property of this man should be preserved, and intrusted the performance of the order to an officer on whose troop he could rely. Finding afterwards, that the man had escaped before the storming commenced, Hoche

exclaimed, "HE had no reason to flee! It is *for* such men, not *against* them, that the French nation makes war, and consents to shed the blood of its children." You remember Milton's sonnet—

> "The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
> The house of Pindarus when temple and tower
> Went to the ground"———————————

Now though the Düsseldorf map-maker may stand in the same relation to the Theban bard, as the snail that marks its path by lines of film on the wall it creeps over, to the eagle that soars sunward and beats the tempest with its wings; it does not therefore follow, that the Jacobin of France may not be as valiant a general and as good a politician as the madman of Macedon.

From Professor Ebeling's Mr. Klopstock accompanied my friend and me to his own house, where I saw a fine bust of his brother. There was a solemn and heavy greatness in his countenance, which corresponded to my preconceptions of his style and genius.—I saw there, likewise, a very fine portrait of Lessing, whose works are at present the chief object of my admiration. His eyes were uncommonly like mine; if any thing, rather larger and more prominent. But the lower part of his face, and his nose—O what an exquisite expression of elegance and sensibility!—There appeared no depth, weight, or comprehensiveness in the forehead.—The whole face seemed to say, that Lessing was a man of quick and voluptuous feelings; of an active but light fancy; acute; yet acute not in the observation of actual life, but in the arrangements and management of the ideal world, i. e. in taste and in metaphysics. I assure you that I wrote these very words in my memorandum-book with the portrait before my eyes, and when I knew nothing of Lessing but his name, and that he was a German writer of eminence.

We consumed two hours and more over a bad dinner, at

the table d'Hôte. "PATIENCE *at a German ordinary, smiling at time.*" The Germans are the worst cooks in Europe. There is placed for every two persons a bottle of common wine—Rhenish and Claret alternately; but in the houses of the opulent, during the many and long intervals of the dinner, the servants hand round glasses of richer wines. At the Lord of Culpin's they came in this order. Burgundy — Madeira — Port—Frontiniac — Pacchiaretti —Old Hock—Mountain—Champagne—Hock again—Bishop, and lastly, Punch. A tolerable quantum, methinks! The last dish at the ordinary, viz. slices of roast pork (for all the larger dishes are brought in, cut up, and first handed round and then set on the table) with stewed prunes and other sweet fruits, and this followed by cheese and butter, with plates of apples, reminded me of Shakespeare, * and Shakespeare put it in my head to go to the French comedy.

* * *

Bless me! why it is worse than our modern English plays! The first act informed me, that a court martial is to be held on a Count Vatron, who had drawn his sword on the Colonel, his brother-in-law. The officers plead in his behalf—in vain! His wife, the Colonel's sister, pleads with most tempestuous agonies—in vain! She falls into hysterics and faints away, to the dropping of the inner curtain! In the second act sentence of death is passed on the Count—his wife, as frantic and hysterical as before: more so (good industrious creature!) she could not be. The third and last act, the wife still frantic, very frantic indeed! the soldiers just about to fire, the handkerchief actually dropped; when reprieve! reprieve! is heard from behind the scenes: and

* "*Slender.* I bruised my shin with playing with sword and dagger for a dish of stewed prunes, and by my troth I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since." So again, *Evans.* "I will make an end of my dinner: there's pippins and cheese yet to come."

in comes Prince somebody, pardons the Count, and the wife is still frantic, only with joy; that was all!

O dear lady! this is one of the cases, in which laughter is followed by melancholy: for such is the *kind* of drama, which is now substituted every where for Shakespeare and Racine. You well know, that I offer violence to my own feelings in joining these names. But however meanly I may think of the French serious drama, even in its most perfect specimens; and with whatever right I may complain of its perpetual falsification of the language, and of the connections and transitions of thought, which Nature has appropriated to states of passion; still, however, the French tragedies are consistent works of art, and the offspring of great intellectual power. Preserving a fitness in the parts, and a harmony in the whole, they form a nature of their own, though a false nature. Still, they excite the minds of the spectators to active thought, to a striving after ideal excellence. The soul is not stupefied into mere sensations by a worthless sympathy with our own ordinary sufferings, or an empty curiosity for the surprising, undignified by the language or the situations which awe and delight the imagination. What (I would ask of the crowd, that press forward to the pantomimic tragedies and weeping comedies of Kotzebue and his imitators) what are you seeking? Is it comedy? But in the comedy of Shakespeare and Molière the more accurate my knowledge, and the more profoundly I think, the greater is the satisfaction that mingles with my laughter. For though the qualities which these writers pourtray are ludicrous indeed, either from the kind or the excess, and exquisitely ludicrous, yet are they the natural growth of the human mind and such as, with more or less change in the drapery, I can apply to my own heart, or at least to whole classes of my fellow-creatures. How often are not the moralist and the metaphysician obliged for the happiest illustrations of general truths and the subordinate laws of human thought

and action to quotations, not only from the tragic characters, but equally from the Jaques, Falstaff, and even from the fools and clowns of Shakespeare, or from the Miser, Hypochondriast, and Hypocrite, of Molière! Say not, that I am recommending abstractions: for these class-characteristics, which constitute the instructiveness of a character, are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shakesperian Drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence, and, (if I may mention his name without pedantry to a lady,) Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry it is the universal truth itself, which is uppermost in the consciousness, in poetry the individual form in which the Truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of *poetry*. They neither sought in comedy to make us laugh merely, much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, slang phrases for the day, or the clothing of common-place morals in metaphors drawn from the shops or mechanic occupations of their characters; nor did they condescend in tragedy to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them fac-similes of their own mean selves in all their existing meanness, or to work on their sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to affect us indeed, but within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to implant the germs of that greatness during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing we are" and of the peculiar state, in

which each man *happens* to be ; suspending our individual recollections and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

Hold ! (methinks I hear the spokesman of the crowd reply, and we will listen to him. I am the plaintiff, and be he the defendant.)

DEFENDANT. Hold ! are not our modern sentimental plays filled with the best Christian morality ?

PLAINTIFF. Yes ! just as much of it, and just that part of it, which you can exercise without a single Christian virtue— without a single sacrifice that is really painful to you !—just as much as *flatters* you, sends you away pleased with your own hearts, and quite reconciled to your vices, which can never be thought very ill of, when they keep such good company, and walk hand in hand with so much compassion and generosity ; adulation so loathsome, that you would spit in the man's face who dared offer it to you in a private company, unless you interpreted it as insulting irony, you appropriate with infinite satisfaction, when you share the garbage with the whole stye, and gobble it out of a common trough. No Cæsar must pace your boards—no Antony, no royal Dane, no Orestes, no Andromache !—

D. No : or as few of them as possible. What has a plain citizen of London, or Hamburg, to do with your kings and queens, and your old school-boy Pagan heroes ? Besides, every body knows the *stories ;* and what curiosity can we feel——

P. What, Sir, not for the *manner?* not for the delightful language of the poet ? not for the situations, the action and reaction of the passions ?

D. You are hasty, Sir ! the only curiosity, we feel, is in the story : and how can we be anxious concerning the end of a play, or be surprized by it, when we know how it will turn out ?

P. Your pardon, for having interrupted you ! we now

understand each other. You seek then, in a tragedy, which wise men of old held for the highest effort of human genius, the same gratification, as that you receive from a new novel, the last German romance, and other dainties of the day, which *can* be enjoyed but once. If you carry these feelings to the sister art of Painting, Michael Angelo's Sestine Chapel, and the Scripture Gallery of Raphael can expect no favor from you. *You know all about them beforehand;* and are, doubtless, more familiar with the subjects of those paintings, than with the tragic tales of the historic or heroic ages. There is a consistency, therefore, in your preference of contemporary writers: for the great men of former times, those at least who were deemed great by our ancestors, sought so little to gratify *this* kind of curiosity, that they seemed to have regarded the *story* in a not much higher light, than the painter regards his canvass: as that *on*, not *by*, which they were to display their appropriate excellence. No work, resembling a tale or romance, can well show less variety of invention in the incidents, or less anxiety in weaving them together, than the Don Quixote of Cervantes. Its admirers feel the disposition to go back and re-peruse some preceding chapter at least ten times for once that they find any eagerness to hurry forwards: or open the book on those parts which they best recollect, even as we visit those friends oftenest whom we love most, and with whose characters and actions we are the most intimately acquainted. In the divine Ariosto, (as his countrymen call this, their darling poet,) I question whether there be a single *tale* of his own invention, or the elements of which were not familiar to the readers of "old romance." I will pass by the ancient Greeks, who thought it even necessary to the fable of a tragedy, that its substance should be previously known. That there had been at least fifty tragedies with the same title, would be one of the motives which determined Sophocles and Euripides in the choice of Electra as a subject. But Milton—

D. Aye Milton, indeed!—but do not Dr. Johnson and other great men tell us, that nobody now reads Milton but as a task?

P. So much the worse for them, of whom this can be truly said! But why then do you pretend to admire *Shakespeare*? The greater part, if not all, of *his* dramas were, as far as the names and the main incidents are concerned, already stock plays. All the *stories*, at least, on which they are built, pre-existed in the chronicles, ballads, or translations of contemporary or preceding English writers. Why, I repeat, do you pretend to admire *Shakespeare?* Is it, perhaps, that you only *pretend* to admire him? However, as once for all you have dismissed the well-known events and personages of history, or the epic muse, what have you taken in their stead? Whom has *your* tragic muse armed with her bowl and dagger? the sentimental muse I should have said, whom you have seated in the throne of tragedy? What heroes has *she* reared on her buskins?

D. O! our good friends and next-door neighbours—honest tradesmen, valiant [illegible]-pay officers, philanthropic Jews, virtuous courtezans, tender-hearted braziers, and sentimental rat-catchers! (a little bluff or so, but all our very generous, tender-hearted characters *are* a little rude or misanthropic, and all our misanthropes very tender-hearted).

P. But I pray you, friend, in what actions great or interesting, can such men be engaged?

D. They give away a great deal of money; find rich dowries for young men and maidens who have all other good qualities; they brow-beat lords, baronets, and justices of the peace, (for they are as bold as Hector!)—they rescue stage coaches at the instant they are falling down precipices; carry away infants in the sight of opposing armies; and some of our performers act a muscular able-bodied man to such perfection, that our dramatic poets, who always have

the actors in their eye, seldom fail to make their favorite male character as strong as Samson. And then they take such prodigious leaps ! ! And what is *done* on the stage is more striking even than what is acted. I once remember such a deafening explosion, that I could not hear a word of the play for half an act after it : and a little real gunpowder being set fire to at the same time, and smelt by all the spectators, the naturalness of the scene was quite astonishing !

P. But how can you connect with such men and such actions that dependence of thousands on the fate of one, which gives so lofty an interest to the personages of Shakespeare, and the Greek Tragedians ? How can you connect with them that sublimest of all feelings, the power of destiny and the controlling might of heaven, which seems to elevate the characters which sink beneath its irresistible blow ?

D. O mere fancies! We seek and find on the present stage our own wants and passions, our own vexations, losses, and embarrassments.

P. It is your own poor pettifogging nature then, which you desire to have represented before you ? not human nature in its height and vigor ? But surely you might find the former with all its joys and sorrows, more conveniently in your own houses and parishes.

D. True ! but here comes a difference. Fortune is blind, but the poet has his eyes open, and is besides as complaisant as fortune is capricious. He makes every thing turn out exactly as we would wish it. He gratifies us by representing those as hateful or contemptible whom we hate and wish to despise.

P. (*aside.*) That is, he gratifies your envy by libelling your superiors.

D. He makes all those precise moralists, who affect to be better than their neighbours, turn out at last abject hypo-

crites, traitors, and hard-hearted villains ; and your men of spirit, who take their girl and their glass with equal freedom, prove the true men of honor, and (that no part of the audience may remain unsatisfied) reform in the last scene, and leave no doubt on the minds of the ladies, that they will make most faithful and excellent husbands : though it does seem a pity, that they should be obliged to get rid of qualities which had made them so interesting ! Besides, the poor become rich all at once ; and in the final matrimonial choice the opulent and high-born themselves are made to confess, that VIRTUE IS THE ONLY TRUE NOBILITY, AND THAT A LOVELY WOMAN IS A DOWRY OF HERSELF ! !

P. Excellent ! But you have forgotten those brilliant flashes of loyalty, those patriotic praises of the king and old England, which, especially if conveyed in a metaphor from the ship or the shop, so often solicit and so unfailingly receive the public plaudit ; I give your prudence credit for the omission. For the whole system of your drama is a moral and intellectual *Jacobinism* of the most [illegible] kind, and those common-place rants of loyalty are no better than hypocrisy in your playwrights, and your own sympathy with them a gross self-delusion. For the whole secret of dramatic popularity consists with you in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things, their causes and their effects ; in the excitement of surprise, by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honor (those things rather which pass among you for such) in persons and in classes of life where experience teaches us least to expect them ; and in rewarding with all the sympathies, that are the dues of virtue, those criminals whom law, reason, and religion have excommunicated from our esteem !

And now good night ! Truly ! I might have written this last sheet without having gone to Germany ; but I fancied myself talking to you by your own fireside, and can you

think it a small pleasure to me to forget now and then, that I am *not* there ? Besides, you and my other good friends have made up your minds to me as I am, and from whatever place I write you will expect that part of my " Travels " will consist of the excursions in my own mind.

LETTER III

RATZEBURG.

No little fish thrown back again into the water, no fly unimprisoned from a child's hand, could more buoyantly enjoy its element, than I this clean and peaceful house, with this lovely view of the town, groves, and lake of Ratzeburg, from the window at which I am writing. My spirits certainly, and my health I fancied, were beginning to sink under the noise, dirt, and unwholesome air of our Hamburg hotel. I left it on Sunday, Sept. 23rd, with a letter of introduction from the poet Klopstock, to the Amptman of Ratzeburg. The Amptman received me with kindness, and introduced me to the worthy pastor, who agreed to board and lodge me for any length of time not less than a month. The vehicle, in which I took my place, was considerably larger than an English stage coach, to which it bore much the same proportion and rude resemblance, that an elephant's ear does to the human. Its top was composed of naked boards of different colours, and seeming to have been parts of different wainscots. Instead of windows there were leathern curtains with a little eye of glass in each ; they perfectly answered the purpose of keeping out the prospect and letting in the cold. I could observe little therefore, but the inns and farm houses at which we stopped. They were all alike, except in size : one great room, like a barn, with a hay-loft over it, the straw and hay dangling in tufts through the boards which formed the ceiling of the room, and the floor of the loft. From this room, which is paved

like a street, sometimes one, sometimes two smaller ones, are enclosed at one end. These are commonly floored. In the large room, the cattle, pigs, poultry, men, women, and children, live in amicable community; yet there was an appearance of cleanliness and rustic comfort. One of these houses I measured. It was an hundred feet in length. The apartments were taken off from one corner. Between these and the stalls there was a small interspace, and here the breadth was forty-eight feet, but thirty-two where the stalls were; of course, the stalls were on each side eight feet in depth. The faces of the cows, &c. were turned towards the room; indeed they were in it, so that they had at least the comfort of seeing each other's faces. Stall-feeding is universal in this part of Germany, a practice concerning which the agriculturist and the poet are likely to entertain opposite opinions—or at least, to have very different feelings. The woodwork of these buildings on the outside is left unplastered, as in old houses among us, and, being painted red and green, it cuts and tesselates the [illegible] very gaily. From within three miles of Hamburg almost to Molln, which is thirty miles from it, the country, as far as I could see it, was a dead flat, only varied by woods. At Molln it became more beautiful. I observed a small lake nearly surrounded with groves, and a palace in view belonging to the King of Great Britain, and inhabited by the Inspector of the Forests. We were nearly the same time in travelling the thirty-five miles from Hamburg to Ratzeburg, as we had been in going from London to Yarmouth, one hundred and twenty-six miles.

The lake of Ratzeburg runs from south to north, about nine miles in length, and varying in breadth from three miles to half a mile. About a mile from the southernmost point it is divided into two, of course very unequal, parts by an island, which, being connected by a bridge and a narrow slip of land, with the one shore, and by another

bridge of immense length with the other shore, forms a complete isthmus. On this island the town of Ratzeburg is built. The pastor's house or vicarage, together with the Amptman's, Amptschreiber's, and the church, stands near the summit of a hill, which slopes down to the slip of land and the little bridge, from which, through a superb military gate, you step into the island town of Ratzeburg. This again is itself a little hill, by ascending and descending which, you arrive at the long bridge, and so to the other shore. The water to the south of the town is called the Little Lake, which however almost engrosses the beauties of the whole: the shores being just often enough green and bare to give the proper effect to the magnificent groves which occupy the greater part of their circumference. From the turnings, windings, and indentations of the shore, the views vary almost every ten steps, and the whole has a sort of majestic beauty, a feminine grandeur. At the north of the Great Lake, and peeping over it, I see the seven church towers of Lubec, at the distance of twelve or thirteen miles, yet as distinctly as if they were not three. The only defect in the view is, that Ratzeburg is built entirely of red bricks, and all the houses roofed with red tiles. To the eye, therefore, it presents a clump of brick-dust red. Yet this evening, Oct. 10th, twenty minutes past five, I saw the town perfectly beautiful, and the whole softened down into *complete keeping*, if I may borrow a term from the painters. The sky over Ratzeburg and all the east was a pure evening blue, while over the west it was covered with light sandy clouds. Hence a deep red light spread over the whole prospect, in undisturbed harmony with the red town, the brown-red woods, and the yellow-red reeds on the skirts of the lake. Two or three boats, with single persons paddling them, floated up and down in the rich light, which not only was itself in harmony with all, but brought all into harmony.

I should have told you that I went back to Hamburg on Thursday (Sept. 27th) to take leave of my friend, who travels southward, and returned hither on the Monday following. From Empfelde, a village half way from Ratzeburg, I walked to Hamburg through deep sandy roads and a dreary flat: the soil everywhere white, hungry, and excessively pulverised; but the approach to the city is pleasing. Light cool country houses, which you can look through and see the gardens behind them, with arbours and trellis work, and thick vegetable walls, and trees in cloisters and piazzas, each house with neat rails before it, and green seats within the rails. Every object, whether the growth of nature or the work of man, was neat and artificial. It pleased me far better, than if the houses and gardens, and pleasure fields, had been in a nobler taste: for this nobler taste would have been mere apery. The busy, anxious, money-loving merchant of Hamburg could only have *adopted*, he could not have *enjoyed* the simplicity of nature. The mind begins to love nature by imitating human conveniences in nature; but this is a step in intellect, though a low one—and were it not so, yet all around me spoke of innocent enjoyment and sensitive comforts, and I entered with unscrupulous sympathy into the enjoyments and comforts even of the busy, anxious, money-loving merchants of Hamburg. In this charitable and *catholic* mood I reached the vast ramparts of the city. These are huge green cushions, one rising above the other, with trees growing in the interspaces, pledges and symbols of a long peace. Of my return I have nothing worth communicating, except that I took extra post, which answers to posting in England. These north German post chaises are uncovered wicker carts. An English dust-cart is a piece of finery, a chef d'œuvre of mechanism, compared with them: and the horses! a savage might use their ribs instead of his fingers for a numeration table. Wherever we stopped, the postilion fed

his cattle with the brown rye bread of which he eat himself, all breakfasting together; only the horses had no gin to their water, and the postillion no water to his gin. Now and henceforward for subjects of more interest to you, and to the objects in search of which I left you: namely, the literati and literature of Germany.

Believe me, I walked with an impression of awe on my spirits, as W—— and myself accompanied Mr. Klopstock to the house of his brother, the poet, which stands about a quarter of a mile from the city gate. It is one of a row of little common-place summer-houses (for so they looked) with four or five rows of young meagre elm trees before the windows, beyond which is a green, and then a dead flat intersected with several roads. Whatever beauty (thought I) may be before the poet's eyes at present, it must certainly be purely of his own creation. We waited a few minutes in a neat little parlour, ornamented with the figures of two of the Muses and with prints, the subjects of which were from Klopstock's odes. The poet entered. I was much disappointed in his countenance, and recognised in it no likeness to the bust. There was no comprehension in the forehead, no weight over the eye-brows, no expression of peculiarity, moral or intellectual, on the eyes, no massiveness in the general countenance. He is, if anything, rather below the middle size. He wore very large half-boots, which his legs filled, so fearfully were they swoln. However, though neither W—— nor myself could discover any indications of sublimity or enthusiasm in his physiognomy, we were both equally impressed with his liveliness, and his kind and ready courtesy. He talked in French with my friend, and with difficulty spoke a few sentences to me in English. His enunciation was not in the least affected by the entire want of his upper teeth. The conversation began on his part by the expression of his rapture at the surrender of the detachment of French troops under General Humbert.

Their proceedings in Ireland with regard to the committee which they had appointed, with the rest of their organizing system, seemed to have given the poet great entertainment. He then declared his sanguine belief in Nelson's victory, and anticipated its confirmation with a keen and triumphant pleasure. His words, tones, looks, implied the most vehement Anti-Gallicanism. The subject changed to literature, and I inquired in Latin concerning the history of German poetry and the elder German poets. To my great astonishment he confessed that he knew very little on the subject. He had indeed occasionally read one or two of their elder writers, but not so as to enable him to speak of their merits. Professor Ebeling, he said, would probably give me every information of this kind: the subject had not particularly excited his curiosity. He then talked of Milton and Glover, and thought Glover's blank verse superior to Milton's. W—— and myself expressed our surprise: and my friend gave his definition and notion of harmonious verse, that it consisted (the English iambic blank verse above all) in the apt arrangement of pauses and cadences, and the sweep of whole paragraphs,

> ——————"with many a winding bout
> Of linked sweetness long drawn out,"

and not in the even flow, much less in the prominence or antithetic vigour, of single lines, which were indeed injurious to the total effect, except where they were introduced for some specific purpose. Klopstock assented, and said that he meant to confine Glover's superiority to single lines. He told us that he had read Milton, in a prose translation, when he was fourteen.* I understood him thus myself, and W——

* This was accidentally confirmed to me by an old German gentleman at Helmstadt, who had been Klopstock's school and bed-fellow. Among other boyish anecdotes, he related that the young poet set a particular value on a translation of the Paradise Lost, and always slept with it under his pillow.

interpreted Klopstock's French as I had already construed it. He appeared to know very little of Milton—or indeed of our poets in general. He spoke with great indignation of the English prose translation of his Messiah. All the translations had been bad, very bad—but the English was *no* translation—there were pages on pages not in the original: —and half the original was not to be found in the translation. W—— told him that I intended to translate a few of his odes as specimens of German lyrics—he then said to me in English, "I wish you would render into English some select passages of the Messiah, and *revenge* me of your countryman!" It was the liveliest thing which he produced in the whole conversation. He told us, that his first ode was fifty years older than his last. I looked at him with much emotion—I considered him as the venerable father of German poetry; as a good man; as a Christian; seventy-four years old; with legs enormously swoln; yet active, lively, chearful, and kind, and communicative. My eyes felt as if a tear were swelling into them. In the portrait of Lessing there was a toupee perriwig, which enormously injured the effect of his physiognomy—Klopstock wore the same, powdered and frizzled. By the bye, old men ought never to wear powder—the contrast between a large snow-white wig and the colour of an old man's skin is disgusting, and wrinkles in such a neighbourhood appear only channels for dirt. It is an honor to poets and great men, that you think of them as parts of nature; and anything of trick and fashion wounds you in them, as much as when you see venerable yews clipped into miserable peacocks.—The author of the Messiah should have worn his own grey hair. —His powder and perriwig were to the eye what Mr. Virgil would be to the ear.

Klopstock dwelt much on the superior power which the German language possessed of concentrating meaning. He said, he had often translated parts of Homer and Virgil,

line by line, and a German line proved always sufficient for a Greek or Latin one. In English you cannot do this. I answered, that in English we could commonly render one Greek heroic line in a line and a half of our common heroic metre, and I conjectured that this line and a half would be found to contain no more syllables than one German or Greek hexameter. He did not understand me: * and, I,

* Klopstock's observation was partly true and partly erroneous. In the literal sense of his words, and, if we confine the comparison to the average of space required for the expression of the same thought in the two languages, it is erroneous. I have translated some German hexameters into English hexameters, and find, that on the average three English lines will express four lines German. The reason is evident: our language abounds in monosyllables and dissyllables. The German, not less than the Greek, is a polysyllable language. But in another point of view the remark was not without foundation. For the German possessing the same unlimited privilege of forming compounds, both with prepositions and with epithets, as the Greek, it can express the richest single Greek word in a single German one, and is thus freed from the necessity of weak or ungraceful paraphrases. I will content myself with one example at present, viz. the use of the prefixed participles *ver*, *zer*, *ent*, and *weg*: thus reissen to rend, verreissen to rend away, zerreissen to rend to pieces, entreissen to rend off or out of a thing, in the active sense: or schmelzen to melt—*ver*, *zer*, *ent*, *schmelzen*—and in the like manner through all the verbs neuter and active. If you consider only how much we should feel the loss of the prefix *be*, as in bedropt, besprinkle, besot, especially in our poetical language, and then think that this same mode of composition is carried through all their simple and compound prepositions, and many of their adverbs; and that with most of these the Germans have the same privilege as we have of dividing them from the verb and placing them at the end of the sentence; you will have no difficulty in comprehending the reality and the cause of this superior power in the German of condensing meaning, in which its great poet exulted. It is impossible to read half a dozen pages of Wieland without perceiving that in this respect the German has no rival but the Greek. And yet I feel, that concentration or condensation is not the happiest mode of expressing this excellence, which seems to consist not so much in the less time required for conveying an impression, as in the unity and simultaneousness with which the impression is conveyed. It tends to make their language more picturesque: it *depictures* images better. We

who wished to hear his opinions, not to correct them, was glad that he did not.

We now took our leave. At the beginning of the French Revolution Klopstock wrote odes of congratulation. He received some honorary presents from the French Republic, (a golden crown I believe), and, like our Priestley, was invited to a seat in the legislature, which he declined. But when French liberty metamorphosed herself into a fury, he sent back these presents with a palinodia, declaring his abhorrence of their proceedings: and since then he has been perhaps more than enough an Anti-Gallican. I mean, that in his just contempt and detestation of the crimes and follies of the Revolutionists, he suffers himself to forget that the Revolution itself is a process of the Divine Providence; and that as the folly of men is the wisdom of God, so are their iniquities instruments of his goodness. From Klopstock's house we walked to the ramparts, discoursing together on the poet and his conversation, till our attention was diverted to the beauty and singularity of the sunset and its effects on the objects around us. There were woods in the distance. A rich sandy light (nay, of a much deeper colour than sandy) lay over these woods, that blackened in the blaze. Over that part of the woods, which lay immediately under the intenser light, a brassy mist floated. The trees on the ramparts, and the people moving to and fro between them, were cut or divided into equal segments of deep shade and brassy light. Had the trees, and the bodies of the men and women, been divided into equal segments

have obtained this power in part by our compound verbs derived from the Latin: and the sense of its great effect no doubt induced our Milton both to the use and the abuse of Latin derivatives. But still these prefixed particles, conveying no separate or separable meaning to the mere English reader, cannot possibly act on the mind with the force or liveliness of an original and homogeneous language such as the German is, and besides are confined to certain words.

by a rule or pair of compasses, the portions could not have been more regular. All else was obscure. It was a fairy scene! and to encrease its romantic character, among the moving objects, thus divided into alternate shade and brightness, was a beautiful child, dressed with the elegant simplicity of an English child, riding on a stately goat, the saddle, bridle, and other accoutrements of which were in a high degree costly and splendid. Before I quit the subject of Hamburg, let me say, that I remained a day or two longer than I otherwise should have done, in order to be present at the feast of St. Michael, the patron saint of Hamburg, expecting to see the civic pomp of this commercial Republic. I was however disappointed. There were no processions, two or three sermons were preached to two or three old women in two or three churches, and St. Michael and his patronage wished elsewhere by the higher classes, all places of entertainment, theatre, &c. being shut up on this day. In Hamburg, there seems to be no religion at all; in Lubec it is confined to the women. The men seemed determined to be divorced from their wives in the other world, if they cannot in this. You will not easily conceive a more singular sight, than is presented by the vast aisle of the principal church at Lubec, seen from the organ loft: for being filled with female servants and persons in the same class of life, and all their caps having gold and silver cauls, it appears like a rich pavement of gold and silver.

I will conclude this letter with the mere transcription of notes, which my friend W—— made of his conversations with Klopstock, during the interviews that took place after my departure. On these I shall make but one remark at present, and that will appear a presumptuous one, namely, that Klopstock's remarks on the venerable sage of Koenigsberg are to my own knowledge injurious and mistaken; and so far is it from being true, that his system is now given up, that throughout the Universities of Germany there is not

a single professor who is not either a Kantean, or a disciple of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantean, and presupposes its truth ; or lastly, who, though an antagonist of Kant, as to his theoretical work, has not embraced wholly or in part his moral system, and adopted part of his nomenclature. "Klopstock having wished to see the Calvary of Cumberland, and asked what was thought of it in England, I went to Remnant's (the English bookseller) where I procured the Analytical Review, in which is contained the review of Cumberland's Calvary. I remembered to have read there some specimens of a blank verse translation of the Messiah. I had mentioned this to Klopstock, and he had a great desire to see them. I walked over to his house and put the book into his hands. On adverting to his own poem, he told me he began the Messiah when he was seventeen : he devoted three entire years to the plan without composing a single line. He was greatly at a loss in what manner to execute his work. There were no successful specimens of versification in the German language before this time. The first three cantos he wrote in a species of measured or numerous prose. This, though done with much labor and some success, was far from satisfying him. He had composed hexameters both Latin and Greek as a school exercise, and there had been also in the German language attempts in that style of versification. These were only of very moderate merit.—One day he was struck with the idea of what could be done in this way—he kept his room a whole day, even went without his dinner, and found that in the evening he had written twenty-three hexameters, versifying a part of what he had before written in prose. From that time, pleased with his efforts, he composed no more in prose. To-day he informed me that he had finished his plan before he read Milton. He was enchanted to see an author who before him had trod the same path. This is a contradiction of what he said before. He did not wish to

speak of his poem to any one till it was finished: but some of his friends who had seen what he had finished, tormented him till he had consented to publish a few books in a journal. He was then, I believe, very young, about twenty-five. The rest was printed at different periods, four books at a time. The reception given to the first specimens was highly flattering. He was nearly thirty years in finishing the whole poem, but of these thirty years not more than two were employed in the composition. He only composed in favorable moments; besides he had other occupations. He values himself upon the plan of his odes, and accuses the modern lyrical writers of gross deficiency in this respect. I laid the same accusation against Horace: he would not hear of it—but waived the discussion. He called Rousseau's Ode to Fortune a moral dissertation in stanzas. I spoke of Dryden's St. Cecilia; but he did not seem familiar with our writers. He wished to know the distinctions between our dramatic and epic blank verse. He recommended me to read his Hermann before I read either The Messiah or the odes. He flattered himself that some time or other his dramatic poems would be known in England. He had not heard of Cowper. He thought that Voss in his translation of the Iliad had done violence to the idiom of the Germans, and had sacrificed it to the Greeks, not remembering sufficiently that each language has its particular spirit and genius. He said Lessing was the first of their dramatic writers. I complained of Nathan as tedious. He said there was not enough of action in it; but that Lessing was the most chaste of their writers. He spoke favourably of Goethe; but said that his 'Sorrows of Werter' was his best work, better than any of his dramas: he preferred the first written to the rest of Goethe's dramas. Schiller's 'Robbers' he found so extravagant, that he could not read it. I spoke of the scene of the setting sun. He did not know it. He said Schiller could not live. He thought Don Carlos the

best of his dramas; but said that the plot was inextricable. —It was evident he knew little of Schiller's works: indeed, he said, he could not read them. Bürger, he said, was a true poet, and would live; that Schiller, on the contrary, must soon be forgotten; that he gave himself up to the imitation of Shakespeare, who often was extravagant, but that Schiller was ten thousand times more so. He spoke very slightingly of Kotzebue, as an immoral author in the first place, and next, as deficient in power. At Vienna, said he, they are transported with him; but we do not reckon the people of Vienna either the wisest or the wittiest people of Germany. He said Wieland was a charming author, and a sovereign master of his own language: that in this respect Goethe could not be compared to him, nor indeed could any body else. He said that his fault was to be fertile to exuberance. I told him the Oberon had just been translated into English. He asked me if I was not delighted with the poem. I answered, that I thought the story began to flag about the seventh or eighth book; and observed, that it was unworthy of a man of genius to make the interest of a long poem turn entirely upon animal gratification. He seemed at first disposed to excuse this by saying, that there are different subjects for poetry, and that poets are not willing to be restricted in their choice. I answered, that I thought the *passion* of love as well suited to the purposes of poetry as any other passion; but that it was a cheap way of pleasing to fix the attention of the reader through a long poem on the mere *appetite*. Well! but, said he, you see, that such poems please every body. I answered, that it was the province of a great poet to raise people up to his own level, not to descend to theirs. He agreed, and confessed, that on no account whatsoever would he have written a work like the Oberon. He spoke in raptures of Wieland's style, and pointed out the passage where Retzia is delivered of her child, as exquisitely beautiful. I said that

I did not perceive any very striking passages; but that I made allowance for the imperfections of a translation. Of the thefts of Wieland, he said, they were so exquisitely managed, that the greatest writers might be proud to steal as he did. He considered the books and fables of old romance writers in the light of the ancient mythology, as a sort of common property, from which a man was free to take whatever he could make a good use of. An Englishman had presented him with the Odes of Collins, which he had read with pleasure. He knew little or nothing of Gray, except his Elegy in the Churchyard. He complained of the fool in Lear. I observed that he seemed to give a terrible wildness to the distress; but still he complained. He asked whether it was not allowed, that Pope had written rhymed poetry with more skill than any of our writers—I said I preferred Dryden, because his couplets had greater variety in their movement. He thought my reason a good one; but asked whether the rhymes of Pope were not more exact. This question I understood as applying to the final terminations, and observed to him that I believed it was the case; but that I thought it was easy to excuse some inaccuracy in the final sounds, if the general sweep of the verse was superior. I told him that we were not so exact with regard to the final endings of the lines as the French. He did not seem to know that we made no distinction between masculine and feminine (i.e. single or double) rhymes: at least he put inquiries to me on this subject. He seemed to think that no language could ever be so far formed as that it might not be enriched by idioms borrowed from another tongue. I said this was a very dangerous practice; and added, that I thought Milton had often injured both his prose and verse by taking this liberty too frequently. I recommended to him the prose works of Dryden as models of pure and native English. I was treading upon tender ground, as I have reason to suppose that he has himself liberally indulged in the practice.

The same day I dined at Mr. Klopstock's, where I had the pleasure of a third interview with the poet. We talked principally about indifferent things. I asked him what he thought of Kant. He said that his reputation was much on the decline in Germany. That for his own part he was not surprised to find it so, as the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible—that he had often been pestered by the Kanteans, but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion. He spoke of Wolf as the first Metaphysician they had in Germany. Wolf had followers; but they could hardly be called a sect, and luckily till the appearance of Kant, about fifteen years ago, Germany had not been pestered by any sect of philosophers whatsoever; but that each man had separately pursued his enquiries uncontrolled by the dogmas of a Master. Kant had appeared ambitious to be the founder of a sect; that he had succeeded: but that the Germans were now coming to their senses again. That Nicolai and Engel had in different ways contributed to disenchant the nation; but above all the incomprehensibility of the philosopher and his philosophy. He seemed pleased to hear, that as yet Kant's doctrines had not met with many admirers in England—did not doubt but that we had too much wisdom to be duped by a writer who set at defiance the common sense and common understandings of men. We talked of tragedy. He seemed to rate highly the power of exciting tears—I said that nothing was more easy than to deluge an audience, that it was done every day by the meanest writers."

I must remind you, my friend, first, that these notes

are not intended as specimens of Klopstock's intellectual power, or even "*colloquial prowess*," to judge of which by an accidental conversation, and this with strangers, and those too foreigners, would be not only unreasonable, but calumnious. Secondly, I attribute little other interest to the remarks than what is derived from the celebrity of the person who made them. Lastly, if you ask me, whether I have read the Messiah, and what I think of it? I answer —as yet the first four books only: and as to my opinion (the reasons of which hereafter) you may guess it from what I could not help muttering to myself, when the good pastor this morning told me, that Klopstock was the German Milton——"a very *German* Milton indeed!!!"——Heaven preserve you, and S. T. COLERIDGE.

CHAPTER XXIII

> "Quid quod præfatione præmunierim libellum, quâ conor omnem offendiculi ansam præcidere? Neque quicquam addubito, quin ea candidis omnibus faciat satis. Quid autem facias istis, qui vel ob ingenii pertinaciam sibi satisfieri nolint, vel stupidiores sint, quam ut satisfactionem intelligant? Nam quemadmodum Simonides dixit, Thessalos hebetiores esse, quam ut possint a se decipi, ita quosdam videas stupidiores, quam ut placari queant. Adhæc, non mirum est, invenire quod calumnietur, qui nihil aliud quærit, nisi quod calumnietur."
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> *Erasmus ad Dorpium Theologum.*

IN the rifacciamento of THE FRIEND, I have inserted extracts from the Conciones ad Populum, printed, though scarcely published, in the year 1795, in the very heat and height of my anti-ministerial enthusiasm: these in proof that my principles of *politics* have sustained no change.—In the present chapter, I have annexed to my Letters from Germany, with particular reference to that, which contains a disquisition on the modern drama, a critique on the Tragedy

of Bertram, written within the last twelve months: in proof, that I have been as falsely charged with any fickleness in my principles of *taste*.—The letter was written to a friend: and the apparent abruptness with which it begins, is owing to the omission of the introductory sentences.

You remember, my dear Sir, that Mr. Whitbread, shortly before his death, proposed to the assembled subscribers of Drury-Lane Theatre, that the concern should be farmed to some responsible individual under certain conditions and limitations: and that his proposal was rejected, not without indignation, as subversive of the main object, for the attainment of which the enlightened and patriotic assemblage of philo-dramatists had been induced to risk their subscriptions. Now this object was avowed to be no less than the redemption of the British stage not only from horses, dogs, elephants, and the like zoological rarities, but also from the more pernicious barbarisms and Kotzebuisms in morals and taste. Drury Lane was to be restored to its former classical renown; Shakespeare, Jonson, and Otway, with the expurgated muses of Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Wycherley, were to be reinaugurated in their rightful dominion over British audiences; and the Herculean process was to commence, by exterminating the speaking monsters imported from the banks of the Danube, compared with which their mute relations, the emigrants from Exeter 'Change, and Polito's (late Pidcock's) show-carts, were tame and inoffensive. Could an heroic project, at once so refined and so arduous, be consistently entrusted to, could its success be rationally expected from, a mercenary manager, at whose critical quarantine the *lucri bonus odor* would conciliate a bill of health to the plague in person? No! As the work proposed, such must be the work-masters. Rank, fortune, liberal education, and (their natural accompaniments, or consequences) critical discernment, delicate tact, disinterestedness, unsuspected morals, notorious patriotism, and tried Mæcenasship, these were the

recommendations that influenced the votes of the proprietary subscribers of Drury Lane Theatre, these the motives that occasioned the election of its Supreme Committee of Management. This circumstance alone would have excited a strong interest in the public mind, respecting the first production of the Tragic Muse which had been announced under such auspices, and had passed the ordeal of such judgements; and the Tragedy, on which you have requested my judgement, was the work on which the great expectations, justified by so many causes, were doomed at length to settle.

But before I enter on the examination of *Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand*, I shall interpose a few words, on the phrase *German Drama*, which I hold to be altogether a misnomer. At the time of Lessing, the German stage, such as it was, appears to have been a flat and servile copy of the French. It was Lessing who first introduced the name and the works of Shakespeare to the admiration of the Germans; and I should not perhaps go too far, if I add, that it was Lessing who first proved to all thinking men, even to Shakespeare's own countrymen, the true nature of his apparent irregularities. These, he demonstrated, were deviations only from the *accidents* of the Greek tragedy; and from such accidents as hung a heavy weight on the wings of the Greek poets, and narrowed their flight within the limits of what we may call the *Heroic Opera*. He proved that in all the essentials of art, no less than in the truth of nature, the plays of Shakespeare were incomparably more coincident with the principles of Aristotle, than the productions of Corneille and Racine, notwithstanding the boasted regularity of the latter. Under these convictions were Lessing's own dramatic works composed. Their deficiency is in depth and imagination; their excellence is in the construction of the plot; the good sense of the sentiments; the sobriety of the morals; and the high polish of the diction and dialogue. In short, his dramas are the very

antipodes of all those which it has been the fashion of late years at once to abuse and enjoy, under the name of the German Drama. Of this latter, Schiller's *Robbers* was the earliest specimen; the first fruits of his youth (I had almost said of his boyhood) and, as such, the pledge and promise of no ordinary genius. Only as *such* did the mature judgement of the author tolerate the Play. During his whole life he expressed himself concerning this production with more than needful asperity, as a monster not less offensive to good taste, than to sound morals; and, in his latter years, his indignation at the unwonted popularity of the *Robbers* seduced him into the *contrary* extremes, viz. a studied feebleness of interest, (as far as the interest was to be derived from incidents and the excitement of curiosity); a diction elaborately metrical; the affectation of rhymes; and the pedantry of the chorus.

But to understand the true character of the ROBBERS, and of the countless imitations which were its spawn, I must inform you, or at least call to your recollection, that, about that time, and for some years before it, three of the most popular books in the German language were the translations of *Young's Night Thoughts*, *Hervey's Meditations*, and *Richardson's Clarissa Harlow*. Now we have only to combine the bloated style and peculiar rhythm of Hervey, which is poetic only on account of its utter unfitness for prose, and might as appropriately be called prosaic, from its utter unfitness for poetry; we have only, I repeat, to combine these Herveyisms with the strained thoughts, the figurative metaphysics, and solemn epigrams of Young on the one hand; and with the loaded sensibility, the minute detail, the morbid consciousness of every thought and feeling in the whole flux and reflux of the mind, in short the self-involution and dreamlike continuity of Richardson on the other hand; and then to add the horrific incidents, and mysterious villains (geniuses of supernatural intellect, if you will take

the author's word for it, but on a level with the meanest ruffians of the condemned cells, if we are to judge by their actions and contrivances) to add the ruined castles, the dungeons, the trap-doors, the skeletons, the flesh-and-blood ghosts, and the perpetual moonshine of a modern author (themselves the literary brood of the *Castle of Otranto*, the translations of which, with the imitations and improvements aforesaid, were about that time beginning to make as much noise in Germany as their originals were making in England) and, as the compound of these ingredients duly mixed, you will recognize the so called *German* drama. The *Olla Podrida* thus cooked up was denounced by the best critics in Germany as the mere cramps of weakness and orgasms of a sickly imagination on the part of the author, and the lowest provocation of torpid feeling on that of the readers. The old blunder, however, concerning the irregularity and wildness of Shakespeare, in which the German did but echo the French, who again were but the echoes of our own critics, was still in vogue, and Shakespeare was quoted as authority for the most anti-Shakespearean drama. We have indeed two poets who wrote as one, near the age of Shakespeare, to whom, (as the worst characteristic of their writings) the Coryphæus of the present drama may challenge the honor of being a poor relation, or impoverished descendant. For if we would charitably consent to forget the comic humor, the wit, the felicities of style, in other words, *all* the poetry, and nine-tenths of all the genius of Beaumont and Fletcher, that which would remain becomes a Kotzebue.

The so called *German* drama, therefore, is *English* in its *origin*, *English* in its *materials*, and *English* by re-adoption; and till we can prove that Kotzebue, or any of the whole breed of Kotzebues, whether dramatists, or romantic writers, or writers of romantic dramas, were ever admitted to any other shelf in the libraries of well-educated Germans than were occupied by their originals and apes' apes in their

mother country, we should submit to carry our own brat on our own shoulders; or rather consider it as a lack-grace returned from transportation with such improvements only in growth and manners as young transported convicts usually come home with.

I know nothing that contributes more to a clearer insight into the true nature of any literary phenomenon, than the comparison of it with some elder production, the *likeness* of which is *striking*, yet only *apparent*, while the *difference* is *real*. In the present case this opportunity is furnished us, by the old Spanish play, entitled *Atheista Fulminato*, formerly, and perhaps still, acted in the churches and monasteries of Spain, and which, under various names (*Don Juan, the Libertine, &c.*) has had its day of favor in every country throughout Europe. A popularity so extensive, and of a work so grotesque and extravagant, claims and merits philosophical attention and investigation. The first point to be noticed is, that the play is throughout *imaginative*. Nothing of it belongs to the real world, but the names of the places and persons. The comic parts, equally with the tragic; the living, equally with the defunct characters, are creatures of the brain; as little amenable to the rules of ordinary probability, as the *Satan* of *Paradise Lost*, or the *Caliban* of *the Tempest*, and therefore to be understood and judged of as impersonated *abstractions*. Rank, fortune, wit, talent, acquired knowledge, and liberal accomplishments, with beauty of person, vigorous health, and constitutional hardihood,—all these advantages, elevated by the habits and sympathies of noble birth and national character, are supposed to have combined in *Don Juan*, so as to give him the means of carrying into all its *practical* consequences the doctrine of a godless nature, as the sole ground and efficient cause not only of all things, events, and appearances, but likewise of all our thoughts, sensations, impulses and actions. Obedience to nature is the only

virtue: the gratification of the passions and appetites her only dictate: each individual's self-will the sole organ through which nature utters her commands, and

> "Self-contradiction is the only wrong!
> For, by the laws of spirit, in the right
> Is every individual character
> That acts in strict consistence with itself."

That speculative opinions, however impious and daring they may be, are not always followed by correspondent conduct, is most true, as well as that they can scarcely in any instance be *systematically* realized, on account of their unsuitableness to human nature and to the institutions of society. It can be hell, only where it is *all* hell; and a separate world of devils is necessary for the existence of any one complete devil. But on the other hand it is no less clear, nor, with the biography of Carrier and his fellow-atheists before us, can it be denied without wilful blindness, that the (so called) *system of nature* (i.e. materialism, with the utter rejection of moral responsibility, of a present providence, and of both present and future retribution) may influence the characters and actions of individuals, and even of communities, to a degree that almost does away the distinction between men and devils, and will make the page of the future historian resemble the narration of a madman's dreams. It is not the *wickedness* of *Don Juan*, therefore, which constitutes the character an *abstraction*, and removes it from the rules of probability; but the rapid succession of the correspondent acts and incidents, his intellectual superiority, and the splendid accumulation of his gifts and desireable qualities, as co-existent with entire wickedness in one and the same person. But this likewise is the very circumstance which gives to this strange play its charm and universal interest. *Don Juan* is, from beginning to end, an *intelligible* character: as much so as the *Satan* of Milton. The poet asks only of the reader, what, as a poet, he is

privileged to ask: namely, that sort of negative faith in the existence of such a being, which we willingly give to productions *professedly ideal*, and a disposition to the same state of feeling, as that with which we contemplate the *idealized* figures of the Apollo Belvedere, and the Farnese Hercules. What the Hercules is to the *eye* in *corporeal* strength, *Don Juan* is to the *mind* in strength of *character*. The ideal consists in the happy balance of the generic with the individual. The former makes the character representative and symbolical, therefore instructive; because, *mutatis mutandis*, it is applicable to whole classes of men. The latter gives it *living* interest; for nothing *lives* or is *real*, but as definite and individual. To understand this completely, the reader need only recollect the specific state of his feelings, when in looking at a picture of the historic (more properly of the poetic or heroic) class, he objects to a particular figure as being too much of a *portrait;* and this interruption of his complacency he feels without the least reference to, or the least acquaintance with, any person in real life whom he might recognise in this figure. It is enough that such a figure is not ideal: and therefore not ideal, because one of the two factors or elements of the ideal is in excess. A similar and more powerful objection he would feel towards a set of figures which were *mere* abstractions, like those of Cipriani, and what have been called Greek forms and faces, i.e. outlines drawn according to a recipe. *These* again are not *ideal;* because in these the other element is in excess. "*Forma formans per formam formatam translucens*," is the definition and perfection of *ideal* art.

This excellence is so happily achieved in the *Don Juan*, that it is capable of interesting without poetry, nay, even without words, as in our pantomime of that name. We see clearly how the character is formed; and the very extravagance of the incidents, and the super-human *entireness* of *Don Juan's* agency, prevents the wickedness from shocking

our minds to any painful degree. (We do not ***believe*** it enough for this effect; no, not even with that kind of temporary and negative belief or acquiescence which I have described above.) Meantime the qualities of his character are too desireable, too flattering to our pride and our wishes, not to make up on this side as much additional faith as was lost on the other. There is no danger (thinks the spectator or reader) of *my* becoming such a monster of iniquity as *Don Juan*! *I* never shall be an atheist! *I* shall never disallow all distinction between right and wrong! *I* have not the least inclination to be so outrageous a drawcansir in my love affairs! But to possess such a power of captivating and enchanting the affections of the other sex!—to be capable of inspiring in a charming and even a virtuous woman, a love so deep, and so entirely personal to *me!*— that even my worst vices (if I *were* vicious), even my cruelty and perfidy (if I *were* cruel and perfidious), could not eradicate the passion! to be so loved for my *own self*, that even with a distinct knowledge of my character, she yet died to save me! this, sir, takes hold of two sides of our nature, the better and the worse. For the heroic disinterestedness, to which love can transport a woman, can not be contemplated without an honourable emotion of reverence towards womanhood: and, on the other hand, it is among the miseries, and abides in the dark ground-work of our nature, to crave an outward confirmation of that *something* within us, which is our *very self*, that something, not *made up* of our qualities and relations, but itself the supporter and substantial basis of all these. Love *me*, and not my qualities, may be a vicious and an insane wish, but it is not a wish wholly without a meaning.

Without power, virtue would be insufficient and incapable of revealing its being. It would resemble the magic transformation of Tasso's heroine into a tree, in which she could only groan and bleed. Hence power is necessarily an object

of our desire and of our admiration. But of all power, that of the mind is, on every account, the grand desideratum of human ambition. We shall be as Gods in knowledge, was and must have been the *first* temptation: and the co-existence of great intellectual lordship with guilt has never been adequately represented without exciting the strongest interest, and for this reason, that in this bad and heterogeneous co-ordination we can contemplate the intellect of man more exclusively as a separate self-subsistence, than in its proper state of subordination to his own conscience, or to the will of an infinitely superior being.

This is the sacred charm of Shakespeare's male characters in general. They are all cast in the mould of Shakespeare's own gigantic intellect; and this is the open attraction of his *Richard, Iago, Edmund,* &c. in particular. But again; of all intellectual power, that of superiority to the fear of the invisible world is the most dazzling. Its influence is abundantly proved by the one circumstance, that it can bribe us into a voluntary submission of our better knowledge, into suspension of all our judgement derived from constant experience, and enable us to peruse with the liveliest interest the wildest tales of ghosts, wizards, genii, and secret talismans. On this propensity, so deeply rooted in our nature, a specific *dramatic* probability may be raised by a true poet, if the whole of his work be in harmony: a *dramatic* probability, sufficient for dramatic pleasure, even when the component characters and incidents border on impossibility. The poet does not require us to be awake and believe; he solicits us only to yield ourselves to a dream; and this too with our eyes open, and with our judgement *perdue* behind the curtain, ready to awaken us at the first motion of our will: and meantime, only, not to *dis*believe. And in such a state of mind, who but must be impressed with the cool intrepidity of *Don John* on the appearance of his father's ghost:

GHOST.—Monster! behold these wounds!

D. JOHN.—I do! They were well meant, and well performed, I see.

GHOST.———Repent, repent of all thy villanies.
My clamorous blood to heaven for vengeance cries,
Heaven will pour out his judgements on you all.
Hell gapes for you, for you each fiend doth call,
And hourly waits your unrepenting fall.
You with eternal horrors they'll torment,
Except of all your crimes you suddenly repent.

(Ghost sinks.)

D. JOHN.—Farewell, thou art a foolish ghost. Repent, quoth he! what could this mean? Our senses are all in a mist, sure.

D. ANTONIO.—(one of D. Juan's reprobate companions.) They are not! 'Twas a ghost.

D. LOPEZ.—(another reprobate.) I ne'er believed those foolish tales before.

D. JOHN.—Come! 'Tis no matter. Let it be what it will, it must be natural.

D. ANT.—And nature is unalterable in us too.

D. JOHN.—'Tis true! The nature of a ghost can not change ours.

Who also can deny a portion of sublimity to the tremendous consistency with which he stands out the last fearful trial, like a second Prometheus?

Chorus of Devils.

STATUE-GHOST.—Will you not relent and feel remorse?

D. JOHN.—Could'st thou bestow another heart on me I might. But with this heart I have, I can not.

D. LOPEZ.—These things are prodigious.

D. ANTON.—I have a sort of grudging to relent, but something holds me back.

D. LOP.—If we could, 'tis now too late. I will not.

D. ANT.—We defy thee!

GHOST.—Perish, ye impious wretches, go and find the punishments laid up in store for you!

(Thunder and lightning. D. Lop. and D. Ant. are swallowed up.)

GHOST TO D. JOHN.—Behold their dreadful fates, and know that thy last moment's come!

D. JOHN.—Think not to fright me, foolish ghost; I'll break your marble body in pieces and pull down your horse.

(Thunder and lightning—chorus of devils, &c.)

D. JOHN.—These things I see with wonder, but no fear.
Were all the elements to be confounded,
And shuffled all into their former chaos;
Were seas of sulphur flaming round about me,
And all mankind roaring within those fires,
I could not fear, or feel the least remorse.
To the last instant I would dare thy power.
Here I stand firm, and all thy threats contemn.
Thy murderer (*to the ghost of one whom he had murdered*) stands here! Now do thy worst!

(*He is swallowed up in a cloud of fire.*)

In fine the character of *Don John* consists in the union of every thing desireable to human nature, as *means*, and which therefore by the well known law of association become at length desireable on their own account. On their own account, and, in their own dignity, they are here displayed, as being employed to *ends* so *un*human, that in the effect they appear almost as *means* without an *end*. The ingredients too are mixed in the happiest proportion, so as to uphold and relieve each other—more especially in that constant interpoise of wit, gaiety, and social generosity, which prevents the criminal, even in his most atrocious moments, from sinking into the mere ruffian, as far, at least, as our *imagination* sits in judgement. Above all, the fine suffusion, through the whole, with the characteristic manners and feelings of a highly-bred gentleman gives life to the drama. Thus having invited the *statue-ghost* of the governor, whom he had murdered, to supper, which invitation the marble ghost accepted by a nod of the head, *Don John* has prepared a banquet.

D. JOHN.—Some wine, sirrah! Here's to Don Pedro's ghost—he should have been welcome.

D. LOP.—The rascal is afraid of you after death.

(*One knocks hard at the door.*)

D. JOHN.—(*to the servant*)—Rise and do your duty.

SERV.—Oh the devil, the devil!" (*marble ghost enters.*)
D. JOHN.—Ha! 'tis the ghost! Let's rise and receive him!
Come, Governor, you are welcome, sit there; if we had thought you would have come, we would have staid for you.

* * * * * *

Here, Governor, your health! Friends, put it about! Here's excellent meat, taste of this ragout. Come, I'll help you, come, eat, and let old quarrels be forgotten.
(*The ghost threatens him with vengeance.*)
D. JOHN.—We are too much confirmed—curse on this dry discourse. Come, here's to your mistress, you had one when you were living: not forgetting your sweet sister.
(*devils enter.*)
D. JOHN.—Are these some of your retinue? Devils, say you? I'm sorry I have no burnt brandy to treat 'em with, that's drink fit for devils, &c.

Nor is the scene, from which we quote, interesting in *dramatic* probability alone; it is susceptible likewise of a sound moral; of a moral that has more than common claims on the notice of a too numerous class, who are ready to receive the qualities of gentlemanly courage, and scrupulous honor (in all the recognised laws of honor) as the *substitutes* of virtue, instead of its *ornaments*. This, indeed, is the moral value of the play at large, and that which places it at a world's distance from the spirit of modern Jacobinism. The latter introduces to us clumsy copies of these showy instrumental qualities, in order to *reconcile* us to vice and want of principle; while the *Atheista Fulminato* presents an exquisite portraiture of the same qualities, in all their gloss and glow, but presents them for the sole purpose of displaying their hollowness, and in order to put us on our guard by demonstrating their utter indifference to vice and virtue, whenever these and the like accomplishments are contemplated for themselves alone.

Eighteen years ago I observed, that the whole secret of the modern Jacobinical drama (which, and not the German,

is its appropriate designation) and of all its popularity, consists in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things in their causes and effects: namely, in the excitement of surprise by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honor (those things rather which pass amongst us for such) in persons and in classes where experience teaches us least to expect them; and by rewarding with all the sympathies which are the due of virtue, those criminals whom law, reason, and religion have excommunicated from our esteem.

This of itself would lead me back to *Bertram*, or the *Castle of St. Aldobrand;* but, in my own mind, this tragedy was brought into connection with the *Libertine* (Shadwell's adaptation of the *Atheista Fulminato* to the English stage in the reign of Charles the Second) by the fact, that our modern drama is taken, in the substance of it, from the first scene of the third act of the *Libertine*. But with what palpable superiority of judgement in the original! Earth and hell, men and spirits, are up in arms against Don John; the two former acts of the play have not only prepared us for the supernatural, but accustomed us to the prodigious. It is, therefore, neither more nor less than we anticipate, when the Captain exclaims; "In all the dangers I have been, such horrors I never knew. I am quite unmanned:" and when the Hermit says, that he had "beheld the ocean in wildest rage, yet ne'er before saw a storm so dreadful; such horrid flashes of [illegible] and such claps of thunder, were never in my remembrance." And *Don John's* burst of startling impiety is equally intelligible in its motive, as dramatic in its effect.

But what is there to account for the prodigy of the tempest at *Bertram's* shipwreck? It is a mere supernatural effect, without even a hint of any supernatural agency; a prodigy, without any circumstance mentioned that is prodigious; and a miracle introduced without a ground, and ending

without a result. Every event and every scene of the play might have taken place as well if Bertram and his vessel had been driven in by a common hard gale, or from want of provisions. The first act would have indeed lost its greatest and most *sonorous* picture; a scene for the sake of a scene, without a word spoken; as *such*, therefore (a rarity without a precedent) we must take it, and be thankful! In the opinion of not a few, it was, in every sense of the word, the best scene in the play. I am quite certain it was the most *innocent*: and the steady, quiet uprightness of the flame of the wax-candles, which the monks held over the roaring billows amid the storm of wind and rain, was *really* miraculous.

The Sicilian sea coast: a convent of monks: night: a most portentous, unearthly storm: a vessel is wrecked: contrary to all human expectation, one man saves himself by his [illegible] powers as a swimmer, aided by the peculiarity of his destination—

PRIOR.———All, all did perish—
FIRST MONK.—Change, change those drenched weeds—
PRIOR.—I wist not of them—every soul did perish—
Enter 3d Monk hastily.
3D MONK.—No, there was one did battle with the storm
With careless desperate force; full many times
His life was won and lost, as tho' he recked not—
No hand did aid him, and he aided none—
Alone he breasted the broad wave, alone
That man was saved.

Well! This man is led in by the monks, supposed dripping wet, and to very natural inquiries he either remains silent, or gives most brief and surly answers, and after three or four of these half-line courtesies, "*dashing off the monks*" who had saved him, he exclaims in the true sublimity of our modern misanthropic heroism—

Off! ye are men—there's poison in your touch.
But I must yield, for this (*What?*) hath left me strengthless.

So end the first three scenes. In the next (the Castle of St. Aldobrand) we find the servants there equally frightened with this unearthly storm, though wherein it differed from other violent storms we are not told, except that Hugo informs us, page 9—

> PIET.—Hugo, well met. Does e'en thy age bear
> Memory of so terrible a storm ?
> HUGO.—They have been frequent lately.
> PIET.—They are ever so in Sicily.
> HUGO.—So it is said. But storms when I was young
> Would still pass o'er like Nature's fitful fevers,
> And rendered all more wholesome. Now their rage,
> Sent thus unseasonable and profitless,
> Speaks like the threats of heaven.

A most perplexing theory of Sicilian storms is this of old Hugo! and what is very remarkable, not apparently founded on any great familiarity of his own with this troublesome article. For when Pietro asserts the "*ever more frequency*." of tempests in Sicily, the old man professes to know nothing more of the fact, but by hearsay. "So it is said."—But why he assumed this storm to be unseasonable, and on what he grounded his prophecy (for the storm is still in full fury), that it would be profitless, and without the physical powers common to all other violent sea-winds in purifying the atmosphere, we are left in the dark; as well concerning the particular points in which he knew it, during its continuance, to differ from those that he had been acquainted with in his youth. We are at length introduced to the Lady Imogine, who, we learn, had not rested "*through*" the night; not on account of the tempest, for

> "Long ere the storm arose, her restless gestures
> Forbade all hope to see her blest with sleep."

Sitting at a table, and looking at a portrait, she informs us—First, that portrait-painters may make a portrait from memory,

> "The limner's art may trace the absent feature."

For surely these words could never mean, that a painter may have a person sit to him who afterwards may leave the room or perhaps the country? Secondly, that a portrait-painter can enable a mourning lady to possess a good likeness of her absent lover, but that the portrait-painter cannot, and who shall—

"Restore the *scenes* in which they met and parted?"

The natural answer would have been—Why the scene-painter to be sure! But this unreasonable lady requires in addition sundry things to be painted that have neither lines nor colours—

"The thoughts, the recollections, sweet and bitter,
Or the Elysian dreams of lovers when they loved."

Which last sentence must be supposed to mean; *when they were present, and* making love to each other.—Then, if this portrait could speak, it would "acquit the faith of woman-kind." How? Had she remained constant? No, she has been married to another man, whose wife she now is. How then? Why, that, in spite of her marriage vow, she had continued to yearn and crave for her former lover—

"This has her body, that her mind:
Which has the better bargain?"

The lover, however, was not contented with this precious arrangement, as we shall soon find. The lady proceeds to inform us that, during the many years of their separation, there have happened in the different parts of the world, a number of "*such things;*" even such, as in a course of years always have, and till the Millennium, doubtless always will happen somewhere or other. Yet this passage, both in language and in metre, is perhaps amongst the best parts of the play. The lady's loved companion and most esteemed attendant, Clotilda, now enters and explains this love and esteem by proving herself a most passive and dispassionate

listener, as well as a brief and lucky querist, who asks, by *chance,* questions that we should have thought made for the very sake of the answers. In short, she very much reminds us of those puppet-heroines, for whom the showman contrives [illegible] without any skill in ventriloquism. This, notwithstanding, is the best scene in the Play, and though crowded with solecisms, corrupt diction, and offences against metre, would possess merits sufficient to out-weigh them, if we could suspend the moral sense during the perusal. It tells well and passionately the preliminary circumstances, and thus overcomes the main difficulty of most first acts, viz. that of retrospective narration. It tells us of her having been honorably addressed by a noble youth, of rank and fortune vastly superior to her own: of their mutual love, heightened on her part by gratitude; of his loss of his sovereign's favor; his disgrace; attainder; and flight; that he (thus degraded) sank into a vile ruffian, the chieftain of a murderous banditti; and that from the habitual indulgence of the most reprobate habits and ferocious passions, he had become so changed, even in appearance, and features,

> "That she who bore him had recoiled from him,
> Nor known the alien visage of her child,
> Yet still *she* (Imogine) lov'd him."

She is compelled by the silent entreaties of a father, perishing with "bitter shameful want on the cold earth," to give her hand, with a heart thus irrevocably pre-engaged, to Lord Aldobrand, the enemy of her lover, even to the very man who had baffled his ambitious schemes, and was, at the present time, entrusted with the execution of the sentence of death which had been passed on Bertram. Now, the proof of "woman's love," so industriously held forth for the sympathy, if not for the esteem of the audience, consists in this, that, though Bertram had become a robber and a murderer by trade, a ruffian in manners, yea, with form

and features at which his *own mother* could not but "recoil," yet she (Lady Imogine) "the wife of a most noble, honored Lord," estimable as a man, exemplary and affectionate as a husband, and the fond father of her only child—that she, notwithstanding all this, striking her heart, dares to say to it—

"But thou art Bertram's still, and Bertram's ever."

A Monk now enters, and entreats in his Prior's name for the wonted hospitality, and "free *noble usage*" of the Castle of St. Aldobrand for some wretched ship-wrecked souls, and from this we learn, for the first time, to our infinite surprise, that notwithstanding the supernaturalness of the storm aforesaid, not only Bertram, but the whole of his gang, had been saved, by what means we are left to conjecture, and can only conclude that they had all the same desperate swimming powers, and the same saving destiny as the Hero, Bertram himself. So ends the first act, and with it the tale of the events, both those with which the Tragedy begins, and those which had occurred previous to the date of its commencement. The second displays Bertram in disturbed sleep, which the Prior, who hangs over him, prefers calling a "starting trance," and with a strained voice, that would have awakened one of the seven sleepers, observes to the audience—

"How the lip works! How the bare teeth *do* grind!
And beaded drops course * down his writhen brow!"

> ——————"The big round tears
> Cours'd one another down his innocent nose
> In piteous chase,"

says Shakespeare of a wounded stag hanging its head over a stream: naturally, from the position of the head, and most beautifully, from the association of the preceding image of the chase, in which "the poor sequester'd stag from the hunter's aim had ta'en hurt." In the supposed position of Bertram, the metaphor, if not false, loses all the propriety of the original.

The dramatic effect of which passage we not only concede to the admirers of this tragedy, but acknowledge the further advantages of preparing the audience for the most surprising series of wry faces, proflated mouths, and lunatic gestures that were ever "*launched*" on an audience to "*sear* the sense.*"

PRIOR.—I will awake him from this *horrid trance.*
This is no natural sleep! Ho, *wake thee,* stranger!

This is rather a whimsical application of the verb reflex, we must confess, though we remember a similar transfer of the agent to the patient in a manuscript tragedy, in which the Bertram of the piece, prostrating a man with a single blow of his fist, exclaims—"Knock me thee down, then ask thee if thou liv'st."—Well; the stranger obeys, and whatever his sleep might have been, his waking was perfectly natural; for lethargy itself could not withstand the scolding stentorship of Mr. Holland, the Prior. We next learn from the best authority, his own confession, that the misanthropic hero, whose destiny was incompatible with drowning, is Count Bertram, who not only reveals his past fortunes, but avows with open atrocity, his Satanic hatred of Imogine's Lord, and his frantic thirst of revenge; and so the raving character raves, and the scolding character scolds—and what else? Does not the Prior *act?* Does he not send for a posse of constables or thief-takers to handcuff the villain, or take him either to Bedlam or Newgate? Nothing of the

* Among a number of other instances of words chosen without reason, Imogine in the first act declares, that thunder-storms were not able to intercept her prayers for "the desperate man, in desperate *ways* who *dealt*"———

"Yea, when the launched bolt did sear her sense,
Her soul's deep orisons were breathed for him;"

i. e. when a red-hot bolt, launched at her from a thunder-cloud, had cauterized her sense, in plain English, burnt her eyes out of her head, she kept still praying on.

"Was not *this* love? Yea, thus doth woman love!"

kind; the author preserves the unity of character, and the scolding Prior from first to last does nothing but scold, with the exception indeed of the last scene of the last act, in which, with a most surprizing revolution, he whines, weeps, and kneels to the condemned blaspheming assassin out of pure affection to the high-hearted man, the sublimity of whose angel-sin rivals the star-bright apostate (i. e. who was as proud as Lucifer, and as wicked as the Devil), and, "had thrilled him" (Prior Holland aforesaid), with wild admiration.

Accordingly, in the very next scene, we have this tragic Macheath, with his whole gang, in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, without any attempt on the Prior's part either to prevent him, or to put the mistress and servants of the Castle on their guard against their new inmates; though he (the Prior) knew, and confesses that he knew, that Bertram's "fearful mates" were assassins so habituated and naturalized to guilt, that—

"When their *drenched hold* forsook both gold and gear,
They griped their daggers with a murderer's instinct;"

and though he also knew, that Bertram was the leader of a band whose trade was blood. To the Castle however he goes thus, with the holy Prior's consent, if not with his assistance; and thither let us follow him.

No sooner is our hero safely housed in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, than he attracts the notice of the lady and her confidante, by his "wild and terrible dark eyes," "muffled form," "fearful form," * "darkly wild," "proudly stern,"

* This sort of repetition is one of this writer's peculiarities, and there is scarce a page which does not furnish one or more instances—Ex. gr. in the first page or two. Act I, line 7, "and *deemed* that I might sleep."—Line 10, "Did rock and quiver in the bickering *glare*."—Lines 14, 15, 16, &c., "But by the momently *gleams* of sheeted blue, Did the pale marbles *glare* so *sternly* on me, I almost *deemed* they lived."—Line 37, "The *glare* of Hell."—Line 35, "O holy Prior, this is no *earthly storm*."

and the like common-place indefinites, seasoned by merely verbal antitheses, and at best, copied, with very slight change, from the CONRADE of Southey's Joan of Arc. The lady Imogine, who has been (as is the case, she tells us, with all soft and solemn spirits) *worshipping* the moon on a terrace or rampart within view of the Castle, insists on having an interview with our hero, and this too tête-à-tête. Would the reader learn why and wherefore the confidante is excluded, who very properly remonstrates against such "conference, alone, at night, with one who bears such fearful form;" the reason follows—"why, *therefore* send him:" I say, *follows*, because the next line, "all things of fear have lost their power over me," is separated from the former by a break or pause, and, besides that it is a very poor answer to the danger, is no answer at all to the gross indelicacy of this wilful exposure. We must therefore regard it as a mere after-thought, that a little softens the rudeness, but adds nothing to the weight, of that exquisite woman's reason aforesaid. And so exit Clotilda and enter Bertram, who "stands without looking at her," that is, with his lower limbs forked, his arms akimbo, his side to the lady's front, the whole figure resembling an inverted Y. He is soon however roused from the state surly to the state frantic, and then follow raving, yelling, cursing, she fainting, he relenting, in runs Imogine's child, squeaks "mother!" He snatches it up, and with a "God bless thee, child! Bertram has kissed thy child,"—the curtain drops. The third act is short, and short be our account of it. It introduces Lord St. Aldobrand on his road homeward, and next Imogine in the convent, confessing the foulness of her heart to the Prior, who first indulges his old humour with a

—Line 38, "This is no *earthly storm*."—Line 42, "*Dealing* with us."—Line 43, "*Deal* thus sternly."—Line 44, "Speak! thou hast *something seen?*"—"A *fearful sight!*"—Line 45, "What hast thou *seen?* A piteous, *fearful sight*."—Line 48, "*quivering gleams*."—Line 50, "In the hollow *pauses of the storm*."—Line 61, "The *pauses of the storm*, &c."

fit of senseless scolding, then leaves her alone with her ruffian paramour, with whom she makes at once an infamous appointment, and the curtain drops, that it may be carried into act and consummation.

I want words to describe the mingled horror and disgust with which I witnessed the opening of the fourth act, considering it as a melancholy proof of the depravation of the public mind. The shocking spirit of Jacobinism seemed no longer confined to politics. The familiarity with atrocious events and characters appeared to have poisoned the taste, even where it had not directly disorganized the moral principles, and left the feelings callous to all the mild appeals, and craving alone for the grossest and most outrageous stimulants. The very fact then present to our senses, that a British audience could remain passive under such an insult to common decency, nay, receive with a thunder of applause, a human being supposed to have come reeking from the consummation of this complex foulness and baseness, these and the like reflections so pressed as with the weight of lead upon my heart, that actor, author, and tragedy would have been forgotten, had it not been for a plain elderly man sitting beside me, who, with a very serious face, that at once expressed surprize and aversion, touched my elbow, and, pointing to the actor, said to me in a half-whisper—"Do you see that little fellow there? he has just been committing adultery!" Somewhat relieved by the laugh which this droll address occasioned, I forced back my attention to the stage sufficiently to learn, that Bertram is recovered from a transient fit of remorse by the information, that St. Aldobrand was commissioned (to do, what every honest man must have done without commission, if he did his duty) to seize him and deliver him to the just vengeance of the law; an information which (as he had long known himself to be an attainted traitor and proclaimed outlaw, and not only a trader in blood himself, but notoriously the *Captain* of a gang of thieves, pirates, and assassins)

assuredly could not have been new to him. It is this, however, which alone and instantly restores him to his accustomed state of raving, blasphemy, and nonsense. Next follows Imogine's constrained interview with her injured husband, and his sudden departure again, all in love and kindness, in order to attend the feast of St. Anselm at the convent. This was, it must be owned, a very strange engagement for so tender a husband to make within a few minutes after so long an absence. But first his lady has told him that she has "a vow on her," and wishes "that black perdition may gulf her perjured soul"—(Note: she is lying at the very time)—if she ascends his bed, till her penance is accomplished. How, therefore, is the poor husband to amuse himself in this interval of her penance? But do not be distressed, reader, on account of St. Aldobrand's absence! As the author has contrived to send him out of the house, when a husband would be in his, and the lover's way, so he will doubtless not be at a loss to bring him back again as soon as he is wanted. Well! the husband gone in on the one side, out pops the lover from the other, and for the fiendish purpose of harrowing up the soul of his wretched accomplice in guilt, by announcing to her, with most brutal and blasphemous execrations, his fixed and deliberate resolve to assassinate her husband; all this too is for no discoverable purpose on the part of the author, but that of introducing a series of super-tragic starts, pauses, screams, [illegible] dagger-throwing, falling on the ground, starting up again wildly, swearing, outcries for help, falling again on the ground, rising again, faintly tottering towards the door, and, to end the scene, a most convenient fainting fit of our lady's, just in time to give Bertram an opportunity of seeking the object of his hatred, before she alarms the house, which indeed she has had full time to have done before, but that the author rather chose she should amuse herself and the audience by the above-described ravings and startings. She recovers

slowly, and to her enter Clotilda, the confidante and mother confessor; then commences, what in theatrical language is called the madness, but which the author more accurately entitles delirium, it appearing indeed a sort of intermittent fever with fits of light-headedness off and on, whenever occasion and stage effect happen to call for it. A convenient return of the storm (we told the reader beforehand how it would be) had changed—

> "The rivulet, that bathed the convent walls,
> Into a foaming flood: upon its brink
> The Lord and his small train *do* stand appalled.
> With torch and bell from their high battlements
> The monks *do* summon to the pass in vain;
> He must return to-night."—

Talk of the devil, and his horns appear, says the proverb: and sure enough, within ten lines of the exit of the messenger, sent to stop him, the arrival of Lord St. Aldobrand is announced. Bertram's ruffian band now enter, and range themselves across the stage, giving fresh cause for Imogine's screams and madness. St. Aldobrand, having received his mortal wound behind the scenes, totters in to welter in his blood, and to die at the feet of this double-damned adultress.

Of her, as far as she is concerned in this 4th act, we have two additional points to notice: first, the low cunning and Jesuitical trick with which she deludes her husband into *words* of forgiveness, which he himself does not understand; and secondly, that everywhere she is made the object of interest and sympathy, and it is not the author's fault, if, at any moment, she excites feelings less gentle, than those we are accustomed to associate with the self-accusations of a sincere religious penitent. And did a British audience endure all this?—They received it with plaudits, which, but for the rivalry of the carts and hackney coaches, might have disturbed the evening-prayers of the scanty week day congregation at St. Paul's cathedral.

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

Of the fifth act, the only thing noticeable (for rant and nonsense, though abundant as ever, have long before the last act become things of course), is the profane representation of the high altar in a chapel, with all the vessels and other preparations for the holy sacrament. A hymn is actually sung on the stage by the chorister boys! For the rest, Imogine, who now and then *talks* deliriously, but who is always light-headed as far as her *gown* and *hair* can make her so, wanders about in dark woods with cavern-rocks and precipices in the back-scene; and a number of mute dramatis personæ move in and out continually, for whose presence there is always at least this reason, that they afford something to be *seen*, by that very large part of a Drury Lane audience who have small chance of *hearing* a word. She had, it appears, taken her child with her, but what becomes of the child, whether she murdered it or not, nobody can tell, nobody can learn; it was a riddle at the *representation*, and after a most attentive *perusal* of the play, a riddle it remains.

> "No more I know, I wish I did,
> And I would tell it all to you;
> For what became of this poor child
> There's none that ever knew."
>
> WORDSWORTH'S THORN.

Our whole information * is derived from the following words—

> Prior.—Where is thy child?
> Clotil.—(Pointing to the cavern into which she has looked) Oh, he lies cold within his cavern-tomb!
> Why dost thou urge her with the horrid theme?

* The child is an important personage, for I see not by what possible means the author could have ended the second and third acts but for its timely appearance. How ungrateful then not further to notice its fate!

Prior.—(who will not, the reader may observe, be disappointed of his dose of scolding)
It was to make (quere wake) one living cord o' th' heart,
And I will try, tho' my own breaks at it.
Where is thy child ?
Imog.—(with a frantic laugh)
The forest fiend hath snatched him—
He (who ? the fiend or the child ?) rides the night-mare thro' the wizzard woods.

Now these two lines consist in a senseless plagiarism from the counterfeited madness of Edgar in Lear, who, in imitation of the gipsey incantations, puns on the old word Mair, a Hag; and the no less senseless adoption of Dryden's forest-fiend, and the wizzard-stream by which Milton, in his Lycidas, so finely characterizes the spreading Deva, fabulosus Amnis. Observe too these images stand unique in the speeches of Imogine, without the slightest resemblance to anything she says before or after. But we are weary. The characters in this act frisk about, here, there, and every where, as teasingly as the Jack o' Lanthorn-lights which mischievous boys, from across a narrow street, throw with a looking glass on the faces of their opposite neighbours. Bertram disarmed, out-heroding Charles de Moor in the Robbers, befaces the collected knights of St. Anselm (all in complete armour), and so, by pure dint of black looks, he outdares them into passive poltroons. The sudden revolution in the Prior's manners we have before noticed, and it is indeed so outré, that a number of the audience imagined a great secret was to come out, viz. : that the Prior was one of the many instances of a youthful sinner metamorphosed into an old scold, and that this Bertram would appear at last to be his son. Imogine re-appears at the convent, and dies of her own accord. Bertram stabs himself, and dies by her side, and that the play may conclude as it began, viz. in a superfetation of blasphemy upon nonsense, because he had snatched a sword from a despicable coward, who retreats in

terror when it is pointed towards him in sport; this *felo de se*, and thief-captain, this loathsome and leprous confluence of robbery, adultery, murder, and cowardly assassination, this monster, whose best deed is, the having saved his betters from the degradation of hanging him, by turning jack ketch to himself; first recommends the charitable Monks and holy Prior to pray for his soul, and then has the folly and impudence to exclaim—

"I die no felon's death,
A warrior's weapon freed a warrior's soul!"

CHAPTER XXIV

CONCLUSION

IT sometimes happens that we are punished for our faults by incidents, in the causation of which these faults had no share: and this I have always felt the severest punishment. The wound indeed is of the same dimensions; but the edges are jagged, and there is a dull underpain that survives the smart which it had aggravated. For there is always a consolatory feeling that accompanies the sense of a proportion between antecedents and consequents. The sense of Before and After becomes both intelligible and intellectual when, and *only* when, we contemplate the succession in the relations of Cause and Effect, which, like the two poles of the magnet manifest the being and unity of the one power by relative opposites, and give, as it were, a substratum of permanence, of identity, and therefore of reality, to the shadowy flux of Time. It is Eternity revealing itself in the phenomena of Time: and the perception and acknowledgment of the proportionality and appropriateness of the Present to the Past, prove to the afflicted Soul, that it has not yet been deprived of the sight of God, that it can still recognise the effective presence of a Father, though through a darkened glass and

a turbid atmosphere, though of a Father that is [illegible] it. And for this cause, doubtless, are we so framed in mind, and even so organized in brain and nerve, that all confusion is painful.—It is within the experience of many medical practitioners, that a patient, with strange and unusual symptoms of disease, has been more distressed, in mind, more wretched, from the fact of being unintelligible to himself and others, than from the pain or danger of the disease: nay, that the patient has received the most solid comfort, and resumed a genial and enduring chearfulness, from some new symptom or product, that had at once determined the name and nature of his complaint, and rendered it an intelligible effect of an intelligible cause: even though the discovery did at the same moment preclude all hope of restoration. Hence the mystic theologians, whose delusions we may more confidently hope to separate from their actual intuitions, when we condescend to read their works without the presumption that whatever our fancy (always the ape, and too often the adulterator and counterfeit of our memory) has not made or cannot make a picture of, must be nonsense,—hence, I say, the Mystics have joined in representing the state of the reprobate spirits as a dreadful dream in which there is no sense of reality, not even of the pangs they are enduring—an eternity without time, and as it were below it—God present without manifestation of his presence. But these are depths, which we dare not linger over. Let us turn to an instance more on a level with the ordinary sympathies of mankind. Here then, and in this same healing influence of *Light* and distinct Beholding, we may detect the final cause of that instinct which, in the great majority of instances, leads, and almost compels the Afflicted to communicate their sorrows. Hence too flows the alleviation that results from "*opening out* our griefs:" which are thus presented in distinguishable forms instead of the mist, through which whatever is shapeless becomes magnified and

(literally) *enormous*. Casimir, in the fifth Ode of his third Book, has happily * expressed this thought.

"Me longus silendi
Edit amor, facilesque luctus
Hausit medullas. Fugerit ocius,
Simul negantem visere jusseris
Aures amicorum, et loquacem
Questibus evacuâris iram.

Olim querendo desinimus queri,
Ipsoque fletu lacryma perditur:
Nec fortis æque, si per omnes
Cura volat residetque ramos.

Vires amicis perdit in auribus,
Minorque semper dividitur dolor
Per multa permissus vagari
Pectora."— Id. Lib. iii. Od. 5.

I shall not make this an excuse, however, for troubling my Readers with any complaints or explanations, with which, as Readers, they have little or no concern. It may suffice (for the present at least) to declare, that the causes that have delayed the publication of these volumes for so long a period after they had been printed off, were not connected with any neglect of my own; and that they would form an instructive comment on the Chapter concerning Authorship

* *Classically* too, as far as consists with the allegorizing fancy of the *modern*, that still *striving to project* the inward, contra-distinguishes itself from the seeming ease with which the poetry of the ancients *reflects* the world without. Casimir affords, perhaps, the most striking instance of this characteristic difference.—For his *style* and *diction* are really classical: while Cowley, who resembles Casimir in many respects, compleatly barbarizes *his* Latinity, and even his metre, by the heterogeneous nature of his thoughts. That Dr. Johnson should have passed a contrary judgement, and have even preferred Cowley's Latin Poems to Milton's, is a caprice that has, if I mistake not, excited the surprise of all scholars. I was much amused last summer with the laughable *affright*, with which an Italian poet perused a page of Cowley's Davideis, contrasted with the enthusiasm with which he first ran through, and then read aloud, Milton's Mansus and Ad Patrem.

as a Trade, addressed to young men of genius in the first volume of this work. I remember the ludicrous effect of the first sentence of an autobiography, which, happily for the writer, was as meagre in incidents as it is well possible for the Life of an Individual to be—"The *eventful* Life which I am about to record, from the hour in which I rose into existence on this Planet, &c." Yet when, notwithstanding this warning example of Self-importance before me, I review my own life, I cannot refrain from applying the same epithet to it, and with more than ordinary emphasis—and no private feeling, that affected myself only, should prevent me from *publishing* the same (for *write* it I assuredly shall, should life and leisure be granted me), if continued reflection should strengthen my present belief, that my history would add its contingent to the enforcement of one important truth, viz. that we must not only love our neighbours as ourselves, but ourselves likewise as our neighbours; and that we can do neither unless we love God above both.

> "Who lives, that's not
> Depraved or depraves? Who dies, *that bears*
> *Not one spurn to the grave—of their friends' gift?*"

Strange as the delusion may appear, yet it is most true that three years ago I did not know or believe that I had an enemy in the world: and now even my strongest sensations of gratitude are mingled with fear, and I reproach myself for being too often disposed to ask,—Have I one friend?—During the many years which intervened between the composition and the publication of the CHRISTABEL, it became almost as well known among literary men as if it had been on common sale, the same references were made to it, and the same liberties taken with it, even to the very names of the imaginary persons in the poem. From almost all of our most celebrated Poets, and from some with whom I had no personal acquaintance, I either received or heard of expressions of admiration that (I can truly say) appeared to

myself utterly disproportionate to a work, that pretended to be nothing more than a common Faery Tale. Many, who had allowed no merit to my other poems, whether printed or manuscript, and who have frankly told me as much, uniformly made an exception in favour of the CHRISTABEL and the Poem entitled LOVE. Year after year, and in societies of the most different kinds, I had been entreated to recite it: and the result was still the same in all, and altogether different in this respect from the effect produced by the occasional recitation of any other poems I had composed.—This before the publication. And since then, with very few exceptions, I have heard nothing but abuse, and this too in a spirit of bitterness at least as disproportionate to the pretensions of the poem, had it been the most pitiably below mediocrity, as the previous eulogies, and far more inexplicable. In the Edinburgh Review it was assailed with a malignity and a spirit of personal hatred that ought to have injured only the work in which such a tirade appeared: and this review was generally attributed (whether rightly or no I know not) to a man, who both in my presence and in my absence has repeatedly pronounced it the finest poem in the language.—This may serve as a warning to authors, that in their calculations on the probable reception of a poem, they must subtract to a large amount from the panegyric, which may have encouraged them to publish it, however unsuspicious and however various the sources of this panegyric may have been. And, first, allowances must be made for private enmity, of the very existence of which they had perhaps entertained no suspicion—for personal enmity behind the mask of anonymous criticism: secondly for the necessity of a certain proportion of abuse and ridicule in a Review, in order to make it saleable, in consequence of which, if they have no friends behind the scenes, the chances must needs be against them; but lastly and chiefly, for the excitement and temporary sympathy of

feeling, which the recitation of the poem by an admirer, especially if he be at once a warm admirer, and a man of acknowledged celebrity, calls forth in the audience. For this is really a species of Animal Magnetism, in which the enkindling reciter, by perpetual comment of looks and tones, lends his own will and apprehensive faculty to his auditors. They *live* for the time within the dilated sphere of his intellectual being. It is equally possible, though not equally common, that a reader left to himself should sink below the poem, as that the poem left to itself should flag beneath the feelings of the reader.—But, in my own instance, I had the additional misfortune of having been gossiped about, as devoted to metaphysics, and worse than all, to a system incomparably nearer to the visionary flights of Plato, and even to the jargon of the Mystics, than to the established tenets of Locke. Whatever therefore appeared with my name was condemned beforehand, as predestined metaphysics. In a dramatic poem, which had been submitted by me to a gentleman of great influence in the theatrical world, occurred the following passage :—

> "O we are querulous creatures! Little less
> Than all things can suffice to make us happy:
> And little more than nothing is enough
> To make us wretched."

Aye, here now! (exclaimed the Critic) here comes Coleridge's *Metaphysics!* And the very same motive (that is, not that the lines were unfit for the present state of our immense Theatres; but that they were *Metaphysics* *) was assigned elsewhere for the rejection of the two following passages. The first is spoken in answer to a usurper, who had rested his

* Poor unlucky Metaphysics! and what are they? A single sentence expresses the object and thereby the contents of this science. Γνῶθι σεαυτόν: et Deum quantum licet, et in Deo omnia scibis. Know thyself: and so shalt thou know God, as far as is permitted to a creature, and in God all things.—Surely, there is a strange—nay, rather a too natural—aversion in many to know themselves.

plea on the circumstances, that he had been chosen by the acclamations of the people:—

"What people? How conven'd? or, if conven'd,
Must not the magic power that charms together
Millions of men in council, needs have power
To win or wield them? Rather, O far rather,
Shout forth thy titles to yon circling mountains,
And with a thousand-fold reverberation
Make the rocks flatter thee, and the volleying air,
Unbribed, shout back to thee, King Emerich!
By wholesome laws to embank the Sovereign Power,
To deepen by restraint, and by prevention
Of lawless will to amass and guide the flood
In its majestic channel, is man's task
And the true patriot's glory! In all else
Men safelier trust to heaven, than to themselves
When least themselves: even in those whirling crowds
Where folly is contagious, and too oft
Even wise men leave their better sense at home,
To chide and wonder at them, when return'd."

The second passage is in the mouth of an old and experienced Courtier, betrayed by the man in whom he had most trusted:—

"And yet Sarolta, simple, inexperienced,
Could see him as he was, and oft has warn'd me.
Whence learned she this? O she was innocent!
And to be innocent is Nature's wisdom!
The fledge-dove knows the prowlers of the air,
Fear'd soon as seen, and flutters back to shelter.
And the young steed recoils upon his haunches,
The never-yet-seen adder's hiss first heard!
Ah! surer than suspicion's hundred eyes
Is that fine sense, which to the pure in heart,
By mere oppugnancy of their own goodness,
Reveals the approach of evil."

As therefore my character as a writer could not easily be more injured by an overt act than it was already in consequence of the report, I published a work, a large portion of which was professedly metaphysical. A long delay occurred

between its first annunciation and its appearance; it was reviewed therefore by anticipation with a malignity so avowedly and exclusively personal, as is, I believe, unprecedented even in the present contempt of all common humanity that disgraces and endangers the liberty of the press. After its appearance, the author of this lampoon was chosen to review it in the Edinburgh Review; and under the single condition, that he should have written what he himself really thought, and have criticised the work as he would have done had its author been indifferent to him, I should have chosen that man myself, both from the vigor and the originality of his mind, and from his particular acuteness in speculative reasoning, before all others.—I remembered Catullus's lines:—

"Desine de quoquam quicquam bene velle mereri,
Aut aliquem fieri posse putare pium.
Omnia sunt ingrata: nihil fecisse benigne est:
Immo etiam tædet, tædet obestque magis;
Ut mihi, quem nemo gravius nec acerbius urget,
Quam modo qui me unum atque unicum amicum habuit."

But I can truly say, that the grief with which I read this rhapsody of predetermined insult, had the rhapsodist himself for its whole and sole object: and that the indignant contempt which it excited in me, was as exclusively confined to his employer and suborner. I refer to this review at present, in consequence of information having been given me, that the innuendo of my "potential infidelity," grounded on one passage of my first Lay Sermon, has been received and propagated with a degree of *credence*, of which I can safely acquit the originator of the calumny. I give the sentences, as they stand in the sermon, premising only that I was speaking exclusively of miracles worked for the outward senses of men. "It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through

the senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to. REASON AND RELIGION ARE THEIR OWN EVIDENCE. The natural sun is in this respect a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapours of the night-season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification : not surely in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception."

"Wherever, therefore, similar circumstances co-exist with the same moral causes, the principles revealed, and the examples recorded, in the inspired writings, render miracles superfluous : and if we neglect to apply truths in expectation of wonders, or under pretext of the cessation of the latter, we tempt God, and merit the same reply which our Lord gave to the Pharisees on a like occasion."

In the sermon and the notes both the historical truth and the necessity of the miracles are strongly and frequently asserted. "The testimony of books of history (i.e. relatively to the signs and wonders, with which Christ came) is one of the strong and stately *pillars* of the church : but it is not the *foundation !*" Instead, therefore, of defending myself, which I could easily effect by a series of passages, expressing the same opinion, from the Fathers and the most eminent Protestant Divines, from the Reformation to the Revolution, I shall merely state what my belief is, concerning the true evidences of Christianity. 1. Its consistency with right Reason, I consider as the outer Court of the Temple—the common area, within which it stands. 2. The miracles, with and through which the Religion was first revealed and attested, I regard as the steps, the vestibule, and the portal of the Temple. 3. The sense, the inward feeling, in the soul of each Believer of its exceeding *desireableness*—the experience, that he *needs* something, joined with the strong foretokening, that the Redemption and the Graces propounded to us in Christ are *what* he needs—this I hold to be

the true FOUNDATION of the spiritual Edifice. With the strong *a priori* probability that flows in from 1 and 3 on the correspondent historical evidence of 2, no man can refuse or neglect to make the experiment without guilt. But, 4, it is the experience derived from a practical conformity to the conditions of the Gospel—it is the opening Eye; the dawning Light: the terrors and the promises of spiritual Growth; the blessedness of loving God as God, the nascent sense of Sin hated as Sin, and of the incapability of attaining to either without Christ; it is the sorrow that still rises up from beneath and the consolation that meets it from above; the bosom treacheries of the Principal in the warfare and the exceeding faithfulness and long-suffering of the uninterested Ally;—in a word, it is the actual *Trial* of the Faith in Christ, with its accompaniments and results, that must form the arched ROOF, and the Faith itself is the completing KEYSTONE. In order to an efficient belief in Christianity, a man must have been a Christian, and this is the seeming argumentum in circulo, incident to all spiritual Truths, to every subject not presentable under the forms of Time and Space, as long as we attempt to master by the reflex acts of the Understanding what we can only *know* by the act of *becoming*. "Do the will of my Father, and ye shall KNOW whether I am of God." These four evidences I believe to have been and still to be, for the world, for the whole Church, all necessary, all equally necessary: but at present, and for the majority of Christians born in Christian countries, I believe the third and the fourth evidences to be the most operative, not as superseding but as [illegible] a glad [illegible] faith in the two former. Credidi, ideóque intellexi, appears to me the dictate equally of Philosophy and Religion, even as I believe Redemption to be the antecedent of Sanctification and not its consequent. All spiritual predicates may be construed indifferently as modes of Action or as states of Being. Thus Holiness and Blessedness are the same idea, now seen in re-

lation to act and now to existence. The ready belief which has been yielded to the slander of my "potential infidelity," I attribute in part to the openness with which I have avowed my doubts, whether the heavy interdict, under which the name of BENEDICT SPINOZA lies, is merited on the whole or to the whole extent. Be this as it may, I wish, however, that I could find in the books of philosophy, theoretical or moral, which are alone recommended to the present students of Theology in our established schools, a few passages as thoroughly *Pauline*, as compleatly accordant with the doctrines of the Established Church, as the following sentences in the concluding page of Spinoza's Ethics. "Deinde quó mens hoc amore divino seu beatitudine magis gaudet, eó plus *intelligit*, hoc est, eó majorem in affectus habet potentiam, et eó minus ab affectibus, qui mali sunt, patitur; atque adeó ex eo, quod mens hoc amore divino seu beatitudine gaudet, potestatem habet libidines coërcendi, nemo beatitudine gaudet quia affectus coërcuit; sed contra potestas libidines coërcendi ex ipsâ beatitudine oritur."

With regard to the Unitarians, it has been shamelessly asserted, that I have denied them to be Christians. God forbid! For how should I know, what the piety of the Heart may be, or what Quantum of Error in the Understanding may consist with a saving faith in the intentions and actual dispositions of the whole moral Being in any one Individual? Never will God reject a soul that sincerely loves him: be his speculative opinions what they may: and whether in any given instance certain opinions, be they Unbelief, or Misbelief, are compatible with a sincere Love of God, God can only know.—But this I have said, and shall continue to say: that if the doctrines, the sum of which I *believe* to constitute the Truth in Christ, *be* Christianity, then Unitarian*ism* is not, and vice versa: and that, in speaking [illegible] and *impersonally*, i.e. of PSILANTHROPISM and THEANTHROPISM as schemes of Belief, with-

out reference to Individuals who profess either the one or the other, it will be absurd to use a different language as long as it is the dictate of common sense, that two opposites cannot properly be called by the same name. I should feel no offence if a Unitarian applied the same to me, any more than if he were to say, that 2 and 2 being 4, 4 and 4 must be 8.

ἀλλὰ βροτῶν
τὸν μὲν κενεόφρονες αὐχαι
ἐξ ἀγαθῶν ἔβαλον·
τὸν δ' αὖ καταμεμφθέντ' ἄγαν
ἰσχὺν οἰκείων παρέσφαλεν καλῶν,
χειρὸς ἕλκων ὀπίσσω, θυμὸς ἄτολμος.

PINDAR, Nem. Ode xi.

This has been my Object, and this alone can be my Defence—and O! that with this my personal as well as my LITERARY LIFE might conclude! the unquenched desire I mean, not without the consciousness of having earnestly endeavoured, to kindle young minds, and to guard them against the temptations of Scorners, by showing that the Scheme of Christianity, as taught in the Liturgy and Homilies of our Church, though not discoverable by human Reason, is yet in accordance with it; that link follows link by necessary consequence; that Religion passes out of the ken of Reason only where the eye of Reason has reached its own Horizon; and that Faith is then but its continuation: even as the Day softens away into the sweet Twilight, and Twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the Darkness. It is Night, sacred Night! the upraised Eye views only the starry Heaven which manifests itself alone: and the outward Beholding is fixed on the sparks twinkling in the aweful depth, though Suns of other Worlds, only to preserve the Soul steady and collected in its pure *Act* of inward adoration to the great I AM, and to the filial WORD that re-affirmeth it from Eternity to Eternity, whose choral Echo is the universe.

ΘΕΩι ΜΟΝΩι ΔΟΞΑ.

FINIS.

ON THE
PRINCIPLES OF GENIAL CRITICISM
CONCERNING THE FINE ARTS,

MORE ESPECIALLY THOSE OF STATUARY AND PAINTING, DEDUCED FROM THE LAWS AND IMPULSES WHICH GUIDE THE TRUE ARTIST IN THE PRODUCTION OF HIS WORKS.

PRELIMINARY ESSAY.

"Unus ergo idemque perpetuo Sol perseverans atque manens aliis atque aliis, aliter atque aliter dispositis, alius efficitur atque alius. Haud secus de hac solari arte varii varie sentiunt, diversi diversa dicunt: quot capita, tot sententiae—et tot voces. Hinc corvi crocitant, cuculi cuculant, lupi ululant, sues grundiunt, oves balant, hinniunt equi, mugiunt boves, rudunt asini. Turpe est, dixit Aristoteles, solicitum esse ad quemlibet interrogantem respondere. Boves bobus admugiant, equi equis adhinniant, asinis adrudant asini! Nostrum est hominibus aliquid circa hominum excellentissimorum inventiones pertentare."—JORDAN: BRUNUS *de Umbris Idearum.*

IT will not appear complimentary to liken the Editors of Newspapers, in one respect, to galley-slaves; but the likeness is not the less apt on that account, and a simile is not expected *to go on all fours.* When storms blow high in the political atmosphere, the events of the day fill the sails, and the writer may draw in his oars, and let his brain rest; but when calm weather returns, then comes too "the tug of toil," hard work and little speed. Yet he not only sympathizes with the public joy, as a man and a citizen, but will seek to derive some advantages even for his editorial functions, from the cessation of battles and revolutions. He cannot indeed hope to excite the same keen and promis-

cuous sensation as when he had to announce events, which by the mere bond of interest brought home the movements of monarchs and empires to every individual's counting-house and fire-side; but he consoles himself by the reflection, that these troublesome times occasioned thousands to acquire a habit, and almost a necessity, of reading, which it now becomes his object to retain by the gradual substitution of a milder stimulant, which though less intense is more permanent, and by its greater divergency no less than duration, even more pleasureable.—And how can he hail and celebrate the return of peace more worthily or more appropriately, than by exerting his best faculties to direct the taste and affections of his readers to the noblest works of peace? The tranquillity of nations permits our patriotism to repose. We are now allowed to think and feel as men, for all that may confer honor on human nature; not ignorant, meantime, that the greatness of a nation is by no distant links connected with the celebrity of its individual citizens—that whatever raises our country in the eyes of the civilized world, will make that country dearer and more venerable to its inhabitants, and thence actually more powerful, and more worthy of love and veneration. Add too (what in a great commercial city will not be deemed trifling or inappertinent) the certain reaction of the Fine Arts on the more immediate utilities of life. The transfusion of the fairest forms of Greece and Rome into the articles of hourly domestic use by Mr. Wedgwood; the impulse given to our engravings by Boydell; the superior beauty of our patterns in the cotton manufactory, of our furniture and musical instruments, hold as honorable a rank in our archives of trade, as in those of taste.

Regarded from these points of view, painting and statuary call on our attention with superior claims. All the fine arts are different species of poetry. The same spirit speaks to the mind through different senses by manifestations of itself,

appropriate to each. They admit therefore of a natural division into poetry of language (poetry in the emphatic sense, because less subject to the accidents and limitations of time and space); poetry of the ear, or music; and poetry of the eye, which is again subdivided into plastic poetry, or statuary, and graphic poetry, or painting. The common essence of all consists in the excitement of emotion for the immediate purpose of pleasure through the medium of beauty; herein contra-distinguishing poetry from science, the immediate object and primary purpose of which is truth and possible utility. (The sciences indeed may and will give a high and pure pleasure; and the Fine Arts may lead to important truth, and be in various ways useful in the ordinary meaning of the word; but these are not the direct and characteristic ends, and we define things by their peculiar, not their common properties.)

Of the three sorts of poetry each possesses both exclusive and comparative advantages. The last (i. e. the plastic and graphic) is more permanent, and incomparably less dependent, than the second, i. e. music; and though yielding in both these respects to the first, yet it regains its balance and equality of rank by the universality of its language. Michael Angelo and Raphael are for all beholders; Dante and Ariosto only for the readers of Italian. Hence though the title of these essays proposes, as their subject, the Fine Arts in general, which as far as the main principles are in question, will be realized in proportion to the writer's ability; yet the application and illustration of them will be confined to those of Painting and Statuary, and of these, chiefly to the former,

> "Which, like a second and more lovely nature,
> Turns the blank canvas to a magic mirror;
> That makes the absent present, and to shadows
> Gives light, depth, substance, bloom, yea, thought and motion."

To this disquisition two obstacles suggest themselves—that enough has been already written on the subject (this we may suppose an objection on the part of the reader) and the writer's own feeling concerning the grandeur and delicacy of the subject itself. As to the first, he would consider himself as having grossly failed in his duty to the public, if he had not carefully perused all the works on the Fine Arts known to him; and let it not be rashly attributed to self-conceit, if he dares avow his conviction that much remains to be done; a conviction indeed, which every author must entertain, who, whether from disqualifying ignorance or utter want of thought, does not act with the full consciousness of acting to no wise purpose. The works, that have hitherto appeared, have been either technical, and useful only to the Artist himself (if indeed useful at all) or employed in explaining by the laws of association the effects produced on the spectator by such and such impressions. In the latter, as in Alison, &c., much has been said well and truly; but the principle itself is too vague for practical guidance.—Association in philosophy is like the term stimulus in medicine; explaining every thing, it explains nothing; and above all, leaves itself unexplained. It is an excellent charm to enable a man to talk *about* and *about* any thing he likes, and to make himself and his hearers as wise as before. Besides, the specific object of the present attempt is to enable the spectator to judge in the same spirit in which the Artist produced, or ought to have produced.

To the second objection, derived from the author's own feelings, he would find himself embarrassed in the attempt to answer, if the peculiar advantages of the subject itself did not aid him. His illustrations of his principles do not here depend on his own ingenuity—he writes for those, who can consult their own eyes and judgements. The various collections, as of Mr. Acraman (the father of the

Fine Arts in this city*), of Mr. Davis, Mr. Gibbons, &c.; to which many of our readers either will have had, or may procure, access; and the admirable works exhibiting now by Allston; whose great picture, with his Hebe, landscape, and sea-piece, would of themselves suffice to elucidate the fundamental doctrines of color, ideal form, and grouping; assist the reasoner in the same way as the diagrams aid the geometrician, but far more and more vividly. The writer therefore concludes this his preparatory Essay by two postulates, the only ones he deems necessary for his complete intelligibility: the first, that the reader would steadily look into his own mind to know whether the principles stated are ideally true; the second, to look at the works or parts of the works mentioned, as illustrating or exemplifying the principle, to judge whether or how far it has been realized.

ESSAY SECOND

In Mathematics the definitions, of necessity, precede not only the demonstrations, but likewise the postulates and axioms: they are the rock, which at once forms the foundation and supplies the materials of the edifice. Philosophy, on the contrary, concludes with the definition: it is the result, the compendium, the remembrancer of all the preceding facts and inferences. Whenever, therefore, it appears in the front, it ought to be considered as a faint outline, which answers all its intended purposes, if only it circumscribe the subject, and direct the reader's anticipation toward the one road, on which he is to travel.

Examined from this point of view, the definition of poetry, in the preliminary Essay, as the regulative idea of all the Fine Arts, appears to me after many experimental applications of it to general illustrations and to individual instances,

* Bristol.

liable to no just *logical* reversion, or complaint: "the excitement of emotion for the purpose of *immediate* pleasure, through the medium of beauty."—But like all previous statements in Philosophy (as distinguished from Mathematics) it has the inconvenience of presuming conceptions which do not perhaps consciously or distinctly exist. Thus, the former part of my definition might appear equally applicable to any object of our animal appetites, till by after-reasonings the attention has been directed to the full force of the word "*immediate*"; and till the mind, by being led to refer discriminatingly to its own experience, has become conscious that all objects of mere desire constitute an interest (i.e. aliquid quod est inter hoc et aliud, or that which is between the agent and his motive), and which is therefore valued only as the means to the end. To take a trivial but unexceptionable instance, the venison is agreeable because it gives pleasure; while the Apollo Belvedere is not beautiful because it pleases, but it pleases us because it is beautiful. The term, pleasure, is unfortunately so comprehensive, as frequently to become equivocal: and yet it is hard to discover a substitute. *Complacency*, which would indeed better express the intellectual nature of the enjoyment essentially involved in the sense of the beautiful, yet seems to preclude all emotion: and *delight*, on the other hand, conveys a comparative *degree* of pleasureable emotion, and is therefore unfit for a *general* definition, the object of which is to abstract the *kind*. For this reason, we added the words "through the medium of beauty." But here the same difficulty recurs from the promiscuous use of the term, Beauty. Many years ago, the writer, in company with an accidental party of travellers, was gazing on a cataract of great height, breadth, and impetuosity, the summit of which appeared to blend with the sky and clouds, while the lower part was hidden by rocks and trees; and on his observing, that it was, in the strictest sense of the word, a sublime

object, a lady present assented with warmth to the remark, adding—" Yes! and it is not only sublime, but beautiful and absolutely pretty."

And let not these distinctions be charged on the writer, as obscurity and needless subtlety; for it is in the nature of all disquisitions on matters of taste, that the reasoner must appeal for his very premises to facts of feeling and of inner sense, which all men do not possess, and which many, who do possess and even act upon them, yet have never reflectively adverted to, have never made them objects of a full and distinct consciousness. The geometrician refers to certain figures in space, and to the power of describing certain lines, which are intuitive to all men, as men; and therefore his demonstrations are throughout *compulsory*. The moralist and the philosophic critic lay claim to no *positive*, but only to a *conditional* necessity. It is not necessary, that A or B should judge *at all* concerning poetry; but *if* he does, in order to a just taste, such and such faculties *must have* been developed in his mind. If a man, upon questioning his own experience, can detect no difference in *kind* between the enjoyment derived from the eating of turtle, and that from the perception of a new truth; if in *his* feelings a taste *for* Milton is essentially the same as the taste *of* mutton, he may still be a sensible and a valuable member of society; but it would be desecration to argue with him on the Fine Arts; and should he himself dispute on them, or even publish a book (and such books *have* been perpetrated within the memory of man) we can answer him only by silence, or a courteous waiving of the subject. To tell a blind man, declaiming concerning light and color, " you should wait till you have got eyes to see with," would indeed be telling the truth, but at the same time be acting a useless as well as an inhuman part. An English critic, who assumes and proceeds on the identity in kind of the pleasures derived from the palate and from the intellect,

and who literally considers *taste* to mean one and the same thing, whether it be the taste of venison, or a taste for Virgil, and who, in strict consistence with his principles, passes sentence on Milton as a tiresome poet, because he finds nothing *amusing* in the Paradise Lost (i. e. damnat Musas, quia animum a musis non divertunt)—this taste-meter to the fashionable world gives a ludicrous portrait of an African belle, and concludes with a triumphant exclamation, "such is the ideal of beauty in Dahoma!" Now it is curious, that a very intelligent traveller, describing the low state of the human mind in this very country, gives as an instance, that in their whole language they have no word for beauty, or the beautiful; but say either it is nice, or it is good; doubtless, says he, because this very sense is as yet dormant, and the idea of beauty as little developed in their minds, as in that of an infant.—I give the substance of the meaning, not the words; as I quote both writers from memory.

There are few mental exertions more instructive, or which are capable of being rendered more entertaining, than the attempt to establish and exemplify the distinct meaning of terms, often confounded in common use, and considered as mere synonyms. Such are the words, Agreeable, Beautiful, Picturesque, Grand, Sublime: and to attach a distinct and separate sense to each of these, is a previous step of indispensable necessity to a writer, who would reason intelligibly, either to himself or to his readers, concerning the works of poetic genius, and the sources and the nature of the pleasure derived from them. But more especially on the essential difference of the beautiful and the agreeable, rests fundamentally the whole question, which assuredly must possess no vulgar or feeble interest for all who regard the dignity of their own nature: whether the noblest productions of human genius (such as the Iliad, the works of Shakspeare and Milton, the Pantheon, Raphael's Gallery, and Michael Angelo's Sistine Chapel, the Venus de Medici

and the Apollo Belvedere, involving, of course, the human forms that approximate to them in actual life) delight us merely by chance, from accidents of local associations—in short, please us because they please us (in which case it would be impossible either to praise or to condemn any man's taste, however opposite to our own, and we could be no more justified in assigning a corruption or absence of just taste to a man, who should prefer Blackmore to Homer or Milton, or the Castle Spectre to Othello, than to the same man for preferring a black-pudding to a sirloin of beef); or whether there exists in the constitution of the human soul a sense, and a regulative principle, which may indeed be stifled and latent in some, and be perverted and denaturalized in others, yet is nevertheless universal in a given state of intellectual and moral culture; which is independent of local and temporary circumstances, and dependent only on the degree in which the faculties of the mind are developed; and which, consequently, it is our duty to cultivate and improve, as soon as the sense of its actual existence dawns upon us.

The space allotted to these Essays obliges me to defer this attempt to the following week: and I will now conclude by requesting the candid reader not altogether to condemn this second Essay, without having considered, that the ground-works of an edifice cannot be as sightly as the superstructure, and that the philosopher, unlike the architect, must lay his foundations in sight; unlike the musician, must tune his instruments in the hearing of his audience.

TASTE is the intermediate faculty which connects the active with the passive powers of our nature, the intellect with the senses; and its appointed function is to elevate the *images* of the latter, while it realizes the *ideas* of the former. We must therefore have learned what is peculiar to each, before we can understand that "Third something," which is formed by a harmony of both.

ESSAY THIRD

" Sat vero, in hac vitae brevitate et naturae obscuritate, rerum est, quibus cognoscendis tempus impendatur, ut confusis et multivocis sermonibus intellegendis illud consumere non opus sit. Eheu ! quantas strages paravêre Verba nubila, quae tot dicunt, ut nihil dicant— nubes potius, e quibus et in rebus politicis et in ecclesiâ turbines et tonitrua erumpunt ! Et proinde rectè dictum putamus a Platone in Gorgia : ὀς ἂν τὰ ὀνόματα εἰδῇ εἴσεται καὶ τὰ πράγματα : et ab Epicteto—ἀρχὴ παιδεύσεως ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπίσκεψις : et prudentissime Galenus scribit—ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων χρῆσις ταραχθεῖσα καὶ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιταράττει γνῶσιν. Egregie verò J. C. Scaliger in Lib. I. de Plantis : Est *primum*, inquit, sapientis officium, *bene sentire*, ut sibi vivat: proximum, *bene loqui*, ut patriae vivat."

SENNERTUS *de Puls. Different.*

" Animadverte, quàm sit ab improprietate verborum pronum hominibus prolabi in errores circa res."

HOBBES : *Exam. et Emend. hod. Math.*

" Si tenebris sibilet Criticus sine dente malignus,
Stultorum adrudat si invidiosa Cohors ;
Fac, fugias ! Si nulla tibi sit Copia eundi,
Contemnas tacitè, scommata quæque ferens.
Frendeat, allatret, vacuas gannitibus aures
Impleat, haud cures : his placuisse nefas ! "

BURTON, *Anat. of Melanch.*

PEDANTRY consists in the use of words unsuitable to the time, place, and company. The language of the market would be as pedantic in the schools as that of the schools in the market. The mere man of the world, who insists that in a philosophic investigation of principles and general laws, no other terms should be used, than occur in common conversation, and with no greater definiteness, is at least as much a *pedant* as the man of learning, who, perhaps overrating the acquirements of his auditors, or deceived by his own familiarity with technical phrases, talks at the wine-table with his eye fixed on his study or laboratory ; even though, instead of desiring his wife to make the tea, he should bid her add to the usual quantum sufficit of Thea Sinensis the Oxyd of Hydrogen, saturated with Calorique.

If (to use the old metaphor) both smell of the shop, yet the odour from the Russia-leather bindings of the good old *authentic-looking* folios and quartos is less annoying than the steams from the tavern or tallow-vat. Nay, though the pedantry should originate in vanity, yet a good-natured man would more easily tolerate the Fox-brush of ostentatious erudition (" the fable is somewhat musty ") than the Sans-culotterie of a contemptuous ignorance, that assumes a merit from mutilation by a self-consoling grin at the pompous incumbrance of tails.

In a philosophic disquisition, besides the necessity of confining many words of ordinary use to one definite sense, the writer has to make his choice between two difficulties, whenever his purpose requires him to wean his reader's attention from the *degrees* of things, which alone form the dictionary of common life, to the *kind*, independent of *degree*: as when, for instance, a chemist discourses on the heat in ice, or on latent or fixed light. In this case, he must either use old words with new meanings, the plan adopted by Dr. Darwin in his Zoonomia; or he must borrow from the schools, or himself coin a nomenclature exclusively appropriated to his subject, after the example of the French chemists, and indeed of all eminent natural philosophers and historians in all countries. There seems to me little ground for hesitation as to which of the two shall be preferred: it being clear, that the former is a twofold exertion of mind in one and the same act. The reader is obliged, not only to recollect the new definition, but—which is incomparably more difficult and perplexing—to unlearn and keep out of view the old and habitual meaning: an evil, for which the *semblance* of eschewing pedantry is a very poor and inadequate compensation. I have, therefore, in two or three instances ventured on a disused or scholastic term, where without it I could not have avoided confusion or ambiguity. Thus, to express in one word what belongs to

the senses or the recipient and more passive faculty of the soul, I have re-introduced the word *sensuous*, used, among many others of our elder writers, by Milton, in his exquisite definition of poetry, as "simple, sensuous, passionate": because the term *sensual* is seldom used at present, except in a bad sense, and *sensitive* would convey a different meaning. Thus too I have restored the words, *intuition* and *intuitive*, to their original sense—"an intuition," says Hooker, "that is, a direct and immediate beholding or presentation of an object to the mind through the senses or the imagination." —Thus geometrical truths are all intuitive, or accompanied by an intuition. Nay, in order to express "*the many*," as simply contra-distinguished from "*the one*," I have hazarded the smile of the reader, by introducing to his acquaintance, from the forgotten terminology of the old schoolmen, the phrase, *multëity*, because I felt that I could not substitute *multitude*, without more or less connecting with it the notion of "a *great* many." Thus the Philosopher of the later Platonic, or Alexandrine school, named the triangle the first-born of beauty, it being the first and simplest symbol of *multëity in unity*. These are, I believe, the only liberties of this kind which I have found it necessary to attempt in the present essay: partly, because its object will be attained sufficiently for my present purpose, by attaching a clear and distinct meaning to the different terms used by us, in our appreciation of works of art, and partly because I am about to put to the press a large volume on the LOGOS, or the communicative intelligence in nature and in man, together with, and as preliminary to, a Commentary on the Gospel of St. John; and in this work I have labored to give real and adequate definitions of all the component faculties of our moral and intellectual being, exhibiting constructively the origin, development, and destined functions of each. And now with silent wishes that these explanatory prenotices may be attributed to their true cause, a sense of

respect for the understanding of my reflecting readers, I proceed to my promised and more amusing task, that of establishing, illustrating, and exemplifying the distinct powers of the different modes of pleasure excited by the works of nature or of human genius with their exponent and appropriable terms. "Harum indagatio subtilitatum etsi non est utilis ad machinas farinarias conficiendas, exuit animum tamen inscitiæ rubigine, acuitque ad alia."—*Scaliger, Exerc.* 307, § 3.

AGREEABLE.—We use this word in two senses; in the first for whatever agrees with our nature, for that which is congruous with the primary constitution of our senses. Thus green is naturally agreeable to the eye. In this sense the word expresses, at least involves, a pre-established harmony between the organs and their appointed objects. In the second sense, we convey by the word *agreeable*, that the thing has by force of habit (thence called a second nature) been made to agree with us; or that it has become agreeable to us by its recalling to our minds some one or more things that were dear and pleasing to us; or lastly, on account of some after pleasure or advantage, of which it has been the constant cause or occasion. Thus by force of custom men *make* the taste of tobacco, which was at first hateful to the palate, agreeable to them; thus too, as our Shakspeare observes,

> "Things base and vile, holding no quality,
> Love can transpose to form and dignity—"

the crutch that had supported a revered parent, after the first anguish of regret, becomes agreeable to the affectionate child; and I once knew a very sensible and accomplished Dutch gentleman, who, spite of his own sense of the ludicrous nature of the feeling, was more delighted by the first grand concert of frogs he heard in this country, than he had been by Catalina singing in the compositions of Cimarosa.

The last clause needs no illustrations, as it comprises all the objects that are agreeable to us, only because they are the means by which we gratify our smell, touch, palate, and mere bodily feeling.

The BEAUTIFUL, contemplated in its essentials, that is, in *kind* and not in *degree*, is that in which the *many*, still seen as many, becomes one. Take a familiar instance, one of a thousand. The frost on a window-pane has by accident crystallized into a striking resemblance of a tree or a sea-weed. With what pleasure we trace the parts, and their relations to each other, and to the whole! Here is the stalk or trunk, and here the branches or sprays—sometimes even the buds or flowers. Nor will our pleasure be less, should the caprice of the crystallization represent some object disagreeable to us, provided only we can see or fancy the component parts each in relation to each, and all forming a whole. A lady would see an admirably painted tiger with pleasure, and at once pronounce it beautiful,—nay, an owl, a frog, or a toad, who would have shrieked or shuddered at the sight of the things themselves. So far is the Beautiful from depending wholly on association, that it is frequently produced by the mere removal of associations. Many a sincere convert to the beauty of various insects, as of the dragon-fly, the fangless snake, &c., has Natural History made, by exploding the terror or aversion that had been connected with them.

The most general definition of beauty, therefore, is—that I may fulfil my threat of plaguing my readers with hard words—Multëity in Unity. Now it will be always found, that whatever is the definition of the *kind*, independent of degree, becomes likewise the definition of the highest degree of that kind. An old coach-wheel lies in the coachmaker's yard, disfigured with tar and dirt (I purposely take the most trivial instances)—if I turn away my attention from

these, and regard the *figure* abstractly, "still," I might say to my companion, "there is beauty in that wheel, and you yourself would not only admit, but would feel it, had you never seen a wheel before. See how the rays proceed from the centre to the circumferences, and how many different images are distinctly comprehended at one glance, as forming one whole, and each part in some harmonious relation to each and to all." But imagine the polished golden wheel of the chariot of the Sun, as the poets have described it: then the figure, and the real thing so figured, exactly coincide. There is nothing heterogeneous, nothing to abstract from: by its perfect smoothness and circularity in width, each part is (if I may borrow a metaphor from a sister sense) as perfect a melody, as the whole is a complete harmony. This, we should say, is beautiful throughout. Of all "the many," which I actually see, each and all are really reconciled into unity: while the effulgence from the whole coincides with, and seems to represent, the effluence of delight from my own mind in the intuition of it.

It seems evident then, first, that beauty is harmony, and subsists only in composition, and secondly, that the first species of the Agreeable can alone be a component part of the beautiful, that namely which is naturally consonant with our senses by the pre-established harmony between nature and the human mind; and thirdly, that even of this species, those objects only can be admitted (according to rule the first) which belong to the eye and ear, because they alone are susceptible of distinction of parts. Should an Englishman gazing on a mass of cloud rich with the rays of the rising sun exclaim, even without distinction of, or reference to its form, or its relation to other objects, how beautiful! I should have no quarrel with him. First, because by the law of association there is in all visual beholdings at least an indistinct subsumption of form and relation: and, secondly, because even in the coincidence

between the sight and the object there is an approximation to the reduction of the many into one. But who, that heard a Frenchman call the flavor of a leg of mutton a beautiful taste, would not immediately recognize him for a Frenchman, even though there should be neither grimace or characteristic nasal twang? The result, then, of the whole is that the shapely (i. e. *formosus*) joined with the naturally agreeable, constitutes what, speaking accurately, we mean by the word beautiful (i. e. *pulcher*).

But we are conscious of faculties far superior to the highest impressions of sense; we have life and free-will.—What then will be the result, when the Beautiful, arising from regular form, is so modified by the perception of life and spontaneous action, as that the latter only shall be the object of our conscious *perception*, while the former merely acts, and yet does effectively act, on our feelings? With pride and pleasure I reply by referring my reader to the group in Mr. Allston's grand picture of the "Dead Man reviving from the touch of the bones of the Prophet Elisha," beginning with the slave at the head of the reviving body, then proceeding to the daughter clasping her swooning mother; to the mother, the wife of the reviving man; then to the soldier behind who supports her; to the two figures eagerly conversing: and lastly, to the exquisitely graceful girl who is bending downward, and whose hand nearly touches the thumb of the slave! You will find, what you had not suspected, that you have here before you a circular group. But by what variety of life, motion, and passion is all the stiffness, that would result from an obvious regular figure, swallowed up, and the figure of the group as much concealed by the action and passion, as the skeleton, which gives the form of the human body, is hidden by the flesh and its endless outlines!

In Raphael's admirable Galatea (the print of which is doubtless familiar to most of my readers) the circle is per-

ceived at first sight; but with what multiplicity of rays and chords within the area of the circular group, with what elevations and depressions of the circumference, with what an endless variety and sportive wildness in the component figure, and in the junctions of the figures, is the balance, the perfect reconciliation, effected between these two conflicting principles of the FREE LIFE, and of the confining FORM! How entirely is the stiffness that would have resulted from the obvious regularity of the latter, *fused* and (if I may hazard so bold a metaphor) almost *volatilized* by the interpenetration and electrical flashes of the former.

But I shall recur to this consummate work for more specific illustrations hereafter: and have indeed in some measure offended already against the laws of method, by anticipating materials which rather belong to a more advanced stage of the disquisition. It is time to recapitulate, as briefly as possible, the arguments already advanced, and having summed up the result, to leave behind me this, the only portion of these essays, which, as far as the subject itself is concerned, will demand any *effort* of attention from a reflecting and intelligent reader. And let me be permitted to remind him, that the distinctions, which it is my object to prove and elucidate, have not merely a foundation in nature and the noblest faculties of the human mind, but are likewise the very ground-work, nay, an indispensable condition, of all *rational* enquiry concerning the Arts. For it is self-evident, that whatever may be judged of differently by different persons, in the very same degree of moral and intellectual cultivation, extolled by one and condemned by another, without any error being assignable to either, can never be an object of general principles: and *vice versâ*, that whatever can be brought to the test of general principles presupposes a distinct origin from these pleasures and tastes, which, for the wisest purposes, are made to depend on local and transitory fashions, accidental associations, and the

peculiarities of individual temperament: to all which the philosopher, equally with the well-bred man of the world, applies the old adage, *de gustibus non est disputandum.* Be it, however, observed that "de gustibus" is by no means the same as "de gustu," nor will it escape the scholar's recollection, that taste, in its metaphorical use, was first adopted by the Romans, and unknown to the less luxurious Greeks, who designated this faculty, sometimes by the word αἴσθησις, and sometimes by φιλοκαλία—"ἀνδρῶν τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοκαλώτατος γεγονώς—i. e. endowed by nature with the most exquisite taste of any man of our age," says Porphyry of his friend, Castricius. Still, this metaphor, borrowed from the pregustatores of the old Roman Banquets, is singularly happy and appropriate. In the palate, the perception of the object and its qualities is involved in the *sensation*, in the mental taste it is involved in the *sense.* We have a *sensation* of sweetness, in a healthy palate, from honey; a *sense* of beauty, in an uncorrupted taste, from the view of the rising or setting sun.

RECAPITULATION. *Principle the First.* That which has become, or which has been *made* agreeable to us, from causes not contained in its own nature, or in its original conformity to the human organs and faculties; that which is not pleasing for its own sake, but by connection or association with some other thing, separate or separable from it, is neither beautiful, nor capable of being a component part of Beauty: though it may greatly increase the sum of our pleasure, when it does not interfere with the beauty of the object, nay, even when it detracts from it. A moss-rose, with a sprig of myrtle and jasmine, is not more *beautiful* from having been plucked from the garden, or presented to us by the hand of the woman we love, but is abundantly more delightful. The total pleasure received from one of Mr. Bird's finest pictures may, without any impeachment of our

taste, be the greater from his having introduced into it the portrait of one of our friends, or from our pride in him as our townsman, or from our knowledge of his personal qualities; but the amiable artist would rightly consider it a coarse compliment, were it affirmed, that the *beauty* of the piece, or its merit as a work of genius, was the more perfect on this account. I am conscious that I look with a stronger and more pleasureable emotion at Mr. Allston's large landscape, in the spirit of Swiss scenery, from its having been the occasion of my first acquaintance with him in Rome. This may or may not be a compliment to *him*; but the true compliment to the picture was made by a lady of high rank and cultivated taste, who declared, in my hearing, that she never stood before that landscape without seeming to feel the breeze blow out of it upon her. But the most striking instance is afforded by the portrait of a departed or absent friend or parent; which is endeared to us, and more delightful, from some awkward position of the limbs, which had defied the contrivances of art to render it picturesque, but which was the characteristic habit of the original.

Principle the Second.—That which is naturally agreeable and consonant to human nature, so that the exceptions may be attributed to disease or defect; that, the pleasure from which is contained in the immediate impression; cannot, indeed, with strict propriety, be called beautiful, exclusive of its relations, but one among the component parts of beauty, in whatever instance it is susceptible of existing as a part of a whole. This, of course, excludes the mere objects of the taste, smell, and feeling, though the sensation from these, especially from the latter when organized into touch, may secretly, and without our consciousness, enrich and vivify the perceptions and images of the eye and ear; which alone are true organs of sense, their sensations in a healthy or uninjured state being too faint to be noticed by the mind. We may, indeed, in common conversation, call purple

a beautiful color, or the tone of a single note on an excellent piano-forte a beautiful tone; but if we were questioned, we should agree that a rich or delightful color; a rich, or sweet, or clear tone; would have been more appropriate—and this with less hesitation in the latter instance than in the former, because the single tone is more manifestly of the nature of a *sensation*, while color is the medium which seems to blend sensation and perception, so as to hide, as it were, the former in the latter; the direct opposite of which takes place in the lower senses of feeling, smell, and taste. (In strictness, there is even in these an ascending scale. The smell is less sensual and more sentient than mere feeling, the taste than the smell, and the eye than the ear: but between the ear and the taste exists the chasm or break, which divides the beautiful and the elements of beauty from the merely agreeable.) When I reflect on the manner in which smoothness, richness of sound, &c., enter into the formation of the beautiful, I am induced to suspect that they act negatively rather than positively. Something there must be to realize the form, something in and by which the *forma informans* reveals itself: and these, less than any that could be substituted, and in the least possible degree, distract the attention, in the least possible degree obscure the idea, of which they (composed into outline and surface) are the symbol. An illustrative hint may be taken from a pure crystal, as compared with an opaque, semi-opaque or clouded mass, on the one hand, and with a perfectly transparent body, such as the air, on the other. The crystal is lost in the light, which yet it contains, embodies, and gives a shape to; but which passes shapeless through the air, and, in the ruder body, is either quenched or dissipated.

Principle the Third. The safest definition, then, of Beauty, as well as the oldest, is that of Pythagoras: THE REDUCTION OF MANY TO ONE—or, as finely expressed by the sublime disciple of Ammonius, τὸ ἄμερες ὄν, ἐν πολλοῖς

φανταζόμενον, of which the following may be offered as both paraphrase and corollary. *The sense of beauty subsists in simultaneous intuition of the relation of parts, each to each, and of all to a whole: exciting an immediate and absolute complacency, without intervenence, therefore, of any interest, sensual or intellectual.* The BEAUTIFUL is thus at once distinguished both from the AGREEABLE, which is beneath it, and from the GOOD, which is above it: for both these have an interest necessarily attached to them: both act on the WILL, and excite a desire for the actual existence of the image or idea contemplated: while the sense of beauty rests gratified in the mere contemplation or intuition, regardless whether it be a fictitious Apollo, or a real Antinous.

The Mystics meant the same, when they define beauty as the subjection of matter to spirit so as to be transformed into a symbol, in and through which the spirit reveals itself; and declare *that* the *most* beautiful, where the most obstacles to a full manifestation have been most perfectly overcome. I would that the readers, for whom alone I write (*intelligibilia enim, non intellectum adfero*) had Raphael's Galatea, or his School of Athens, before them! or that the Essay might be read by some imaginative student, warm from admiration of the King's College Chapel at Cambridge, or of the exterior and interior of York Cathedral! I deem the sneers of a host of petty critics, unalphabeted in the life and truth of things, and as devoid of sound learning as of intuitive taste, well and wisely hazarded for the prospect of communicating the pleasure, which to such minds the following passage of Plotinus will not fail to give—Plotinus, a name venerable even to religion with the great Cosmus, Lorenzo de Medici, Ficinus, Politian, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, but now known only as a name to the majority even of our most learned Scholars!—Plotinus, difficult indeed, but under a rough and austere rind concealing fruit worthy of Paradise; and if obscure, "*at tenet*

umbra Deum!" Ὅταν οὖν καὶ ἡ αἴσθησις τὸ ἐν σώμασιν εἶδος ἴδῃ συνδησάμενον καὶ κρατῆσαν τῆς φύσεως τῆς ἐναντίας, καὶ μορφὴν ἐπ' ἄλλαις μορφαῖς ἐκπρεπῶς ἐποχουμένην, συνελοῦσα ἀθρόον αὐτὸ τὸ πολλαχῇ ἀνήνεγκέ τε καὶ ἔδωκε τῷ ἔνδον σύμφωνον καὶ συναρμόττον καὶ φίλον. A divine passage, faintly represented in the following lines, written many years ago by the writer, though without reference to, or recollection of, the above.

"O lady! we *receive* but what we *give*,
And in *our* life alone does nature live!
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allow'd
To the poor, loveless, ever-anxious crowd:
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud,
Enveloping the earth!
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and powerful voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!
O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me,
What this strong music in the soul may be;
What and wherein it doth subsist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful, and beauty-making power!
Joy, O beloved! joy, that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure and in their purest hour,
Life of our life, the parent and the birth,
Which, wedding nature to us, gives in dower
A new heaven and new earth,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
This is the strong voice, this the luminous cloud!
Our inmost selves rejoice:
And thence flows all that glads or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colors a suffusion from that light,
And its celestial tint of yellow-green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;

Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimm'd, but always seen;
Yon crescent moon, that seems as if it grew
In its own starless, cloudless lake of blue—
I see them all, so excellently fair!
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are."

S. T. C. MS. Poem.

SCHOLIUM. We have sufficiently distinguished the beautiful from the agreeable, by the sure criterion, that, when we find an object agreeable, the *sensation* of pleasure always precedes the judgement, and is its determining cause. We *find* it agreeable. But when we declare an object beautiful, the contemplation or intuition of its beauty precedes the *feeling* of complacency, in order of nature at least: nay, in great depression of spirits may even exist without sensibly producing it.—

"A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear!
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassion'd grief,
That finds no natural outlet, no relief
In word, or sigh, or tear!
O dearest lady! in this heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yon sweet throstle woo'd!
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing at the western sky."

Now the least reflection convinces us that our sensations, whether of pleasure or of pain, are the incommunicable parts of our nature; such as can be reduced to no universal rule; and in which therefore we have no right to expect that others should agree with us, or to blame them for disagreement. That the Greenlander prefers train oil to olive oil, and even to wine, we explain at once by our knowledge of the climate and productions to which he has been habituated. Were the man as enlightened as Plato, his palate would still find that most agreeable to which it had been most accustomed. But when the Iroquois Sachem, after having been led to the most perfect specimens of

architecture in Paris, said that he saw nothing so beautiful as the cook's shops, we attribute this without hesitation to savagery of intellect, and infer with certainty that the sense of the beautiful was either altogether dormant in his mind, or at best very imperfect. The Beautiful, therefore, not originating in the sensations, must belong to the intellect: and therefore we *declare* an object beautiful, and feel an inward right to *expect* that others should coincide with us. But we feel no right to *demand* it: and this leads us to that, which hitherto we have barely touched upon, and which we shall now attempt to illustrate more fully, namely, to the distinction of the Beautiful from the Good.

Let us suppose Milton in company with some stern and prejudiced Puritan, contemplating the front of York Cathedral, and at length expressing his admiration of its beauty. We will suppose it too at that time of his life, when his religious opinions, feelings, and prejudices most nearly coincided with those of the rigid Anti-prelatists.—P. Beauty; I am sure, it is not the beauty of holiness. M. True; but yet it is beautiful.—P. It delights not me. What is it good for? Is it of any use but to be stared at? —M. Perhaps not! but still it is beautiful.—P. But call to mind the pride and wanton vanity of those cruel shavelings, that wasted the labor and substance of so many thousand poor creatures in the erection of this haughty pile. —M. I do. But still it is very beautiful.—P. Think how many score of places of worship, incomparably better suited both for prayer and preaching, and how many faithful ministers might have been maintained, to the blessing of tens of thousands, to them and their children's children, with the treasures lavished on this worthless mass of stone and cement.—M. Too true! but nevertheless it is *very* beautiful.—P. And it is not merely useless; but it feeds the pride of the prelates, and keeps alive the popish and carnal spirit among the people.—M. Even so! and I pre-

sume not to question the wisdom, nor detract from the pious zeal, of the first Reformers of Scotland, who for these reasons destroyed so many fabrics, scarce inferior in beauty to this now before our eyes. But I did not call it *good*, nor have I told thee, brother! that if this were levelled with the ground, and existed only in the works of the modeller or engraver, that I should desire to reconstruct it. The GOOD consists in the congruity of a thing with the laws of the reason and the nature of the will, and in its fitness to determine the latter to actualize the former: and it is always discursive. The Beautiful arises from the perceived harmony of an object, whether sight or sound, with the inborn and constitutive rules of the judgement and imagination: and it is always intuitive. As light to the eye, even such is beauty to the mind, which cannot but have complacency in whatever is perceived as pre-configured to its living faculties. Hence the Greeks called a beautiful object καλόν quasi καλοῦν, i. e. *calling on* the soul, which receives instantly, and welcomes it as something connatural. Πάλιν οὖν ἀναλαβόντες, λέγωμεν τί δῆτα ἐστὶ τὸ ἐν τοῖς σώμασι καλόν. Πρῶτον ἔστι μὲν γάρ τι καὶ βολῇ τῇ πρώτῃ αἰσθητὸν γινόμενον, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ὥσπερ συνεῖσα λέγει, καὶ ἐπιγνοῦσα ἀποδέχεται, καὶ οἷον συναρμόττεται. Πρὸς δὲ τὸ αἰσχρὸν προσβαλοῦσα ἀνίλλεται, καὶ ἀρνεῖται καὶ ἀνανεύει ἐπ' αὐτοῦ οὐ συμφωνοῦσα, καὶ ἀλλοτριουμένη.—

PLOTIN: Ennead. I. Lib. 6.

APPENDIX

"He, (Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk) knowing that learning hath no enemy but ignorance, did suspect always the want of it in those men who derided the habit of it in others, like the fox in the fable, who being, by mischance or degeneracy, without a tail, persuaded others to cut theirs off as a burden. But he liked well the philosopher's division of men into three ranks; some who knew good and were willing to teach others.—These he said, were like gods among men; others who though they knew not much, yet were willing to learn and thankful for instruction.—These, he said, were like men among beasts; and some who knew not truth or good, and yet despised and maligned such as would teach them.—These he esteemed as beasts among men."—*Lloyd's State Worthies*, p. 33.

THUS, then, let us at once sum up and exemplify the whole. Its ambrosial odour renders the rose more agreeable to us, but it is not by this addition, that nature wrests the palm of beauty from the flower-pieces of Van Huysun. The patience, strength, and laboriousness of the Ox and the Ass, invaluable as we rightly deem them, can yet by no influence of association, bribe us to compare them in charm of form, and disposition of colors, with the fierce and untamable Zebra. The rough Sheep-dog is almost indispensable to the civilization of the human race. He appears to possess not Valuableness only, but even Worth! His various moral qualities, which seem above the effects of mere Instinct devoid of Will, compel our respect and regard, and excite our gratitude *to* him, as well as *for* him. Yet neither his paramount utility, no, nor even his incorruptible fidelity and disinterested affection, enable us to equal him, in outward beauty, with the cruel and cowardly panther, or leopard, or tiger, the hate and horror of the flock and of the shepherd.

But may not the sense of Beauty originate in our perception of the fitness of the means to the end in and for the

animal itself? Or may it not depend on a law of Proportion? No! The shell of the Oyster, rough and unshapely, is its habitation and strong hold, its defence and organ of locomotion: the pearl, the beautiful ornament of the beautiful, is its disease. How charming the Moss Rose with its luxuriancy of petals! That moss, that luxuriancy, are the effects of degeneracy, and unfit the flower for the multiplication of its kind. Disproportion indeed may in certain cases preclude the sense of Beauty, and will do so wherever it destroys or greatly disturbs the wholeness and simultaneousness of the impression. But still proportion is not the positive cause, or the universal and necessary condition of beauty, were it only that proportion implies the perception of the coincidence of quantities with a pre-established rule of measurement, and is therefore always accompanied with an act of discursive thought. We declare at first sight the Swan beautiful, as it floats on with its long arching neck and protruding breast, which uniting to their reflected image in the watery mirror, present to our delighted eye the stringless bow of dazzling silver, which the Poets and Painters assign to the God of Love. We ask not what proportion the neck bears to the body; —through all the changes of graceful motion it brings itself into unity, as an harmonious part of an harmonious whole. The very word "part" imperfectly conveys what we see and feel; for the moment we look at it in division, the charm ceases. In this spirit the Lover describing the incidents of a walk on the river-banks by moonlight is made by the poet to exclaim:

"The pairing swans have heard my tread,
And rustle from their reedy bed.
O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To rest by day and wake all night."

The long neck of the ostrich is in exact and evident proportion to the height of the animal, and is of manifest utility and necessity to the bird, as it stoops down to graze and still walks on. But not being harmonized with the body by plumage or color, it seems to run along the grass like a serpent before the headless tall body that still stalks after it, inspiring at once the sense of the Deformed and the Fantastic.

I here close my metaphysical Preliminaries, in which I have confined myself to the Beauty of the Senses, and by the Good have chiefly referred to the relatively good. Of the supersensual Beauty, the Beauty of Virtue and Holiness, and of its relation to the ABSOLUTELY GOOD, distinguishable, not separable (even such relation as that of color to the Light of Heaven, and as the Light itself bears to the Knowledge, which it awakens), I discourse not now, waiting for a loftier mood, a nobler subject, a more appropriate audience, warned from within and from without, that it is profanation to speak of these mysteries "*τοῖς μηδέποτε φαντασθεῖσιν, ὡς καλὸν τὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης πρόσωπον, καὶ ὡς οὔτε ἕσπερος οὔτε ἑῷος οὕτω καλά. Τὸν γὰρ ὁρῶντα πρὸς τὸ ὁρώμενον συγγενὲς καὶ ὅμοιον ποιησάμενον δεῖ ἐπιβάλλειν τῇ θέᾳ· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πώποτε εἶδεν ὀφθαλμὸς ἥλιον, ἡλιοειδὴς μὴ γεγενημένος, οὐδὲ τὸ καλὸν ἂν ἴδοι ψυχὴ μὴ γενομένη.*"

FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON TASTE. 1810

THE same [illegible] that decide the question, whether taste has any fixed principles, may probably lead to a determination of what those principles are. First, then, what is taste in its metaphorical sense, or, which will be the easiest mode of arriving at the same solution, what is there in the primary sense of the word, which may give to its metaphorical meaning an import different from that of sight or hearing, on the one hand, and of touch or smell on the other? And this question seems the more natural, because in correct language we confine beauty, the main subject of taste, to objects of sight and combinations of sounds, and never, except sportively or by abuse of words, speak of a beautiful flavor or a beautiful scent.

Now the analysis of our senses in the commonest books of [illegible] has drawn our attention to the distinction between the perfectly organic, and the mixed senses;—the first presenting objects, as distinct from the perception,—the last as blending the perception with the sense of the object. Our eyes and ears—(I am not now considering what is or is not the case really, but only that of which we are regularly conscious as appearances)—our eyes most often appear to us perfect organs of the sentient principle, and wholly in action, and our hearing so much more so than the three other senses, and in all the ordinary exertions of that sense, perhaps, equally so with the sight, that all languages place them in one class, and express their different modifications by nearly the same metaphors. The three remain-

ing senses appear in part passive, and combine with the perception of the outward object a distinct sense of our own life. Taste, therefore, as opposed to vision and sound, will teach us to expect in its metaphorical use a certain reference of any given object to our own being, and not merely a distinct notion of the object as in itself, or in its independent properties. From the sense of touch, on the other hand, it is distinguishable by adding to this reference to our vital being some degree of enjoyment, or—the contrary—some perceptible impulse from pleasure or pain to complacency or dislike. The sense of smell, indeed, might perhaps have furnished a metaphor of the same import with that of taste; but the latter was naturally chosen by the majority of civilized nations on account of the greater frequency, importance, and dignity of its employment or exertion in human nature.

By taste, therefore, as applied to the fine arts, we must be supposed to mean an intellectual perception of any object blended with a distinct reference to our own sensibility of pain or pleasure, or *vice versa*, a sense of enjoyment or dislike co-instantaneously combined with, and appearing to proceed from, some intellectual perception of the object;—intellectual perception, I say; for otherwise it would be a definition of taste in its primary rather than in its metaphorical sense. Briefly, taste is a metaphor taken from one of our mixed senses, and applied to objects of the more purely organic senses, and of our moral sense, when we would imply the co-existence of immediate personal dislike or complacency. In this definition of taste, therefore, is involved the definition of fine arts, namely, as being such, the chief and discriminative purpose of which it is to gratify the taste,—that is, not merely to connect, but to combine and unite, a sense of immediate pleasure in ourselves with the perception of external arrangement.

The great question, therefore, whether taste in any one

of the fine arts has any fixed principle or ideal, will find its solution in the ascertainment of two facts :—first, whether in every determination of the taste concerning any work of the fine arts, the individual does not, with or even against the approbation of his general judgement, involuntarily claim that all other minds ought to think and feel the same ; whether the common expressions, "I dare say I may be wrong, but that is my particular taste," are uttered as an offering of courtesy, as a sacrifice to the undoubted fact of our individual fallibility, or are spoken with perfect sincerity, not only of the reason, but of the whole feeling, with the same entireness of mind and heart, with which we concede a right to every person to differ from another in his preference of bodily tastes and flavors. If we should find ourselves compelled to deny this, and to admit that, notwithstanding the consciousness of our liability to error, and in spite of all those many individual experiences which may have strengthened the consciousness, each man does at the moment so far legislate for all men, as to believe of necessity that he is either right or wrong, and that if it be right for him, it is universally right,—we must then proceed to ascertain :—secondly, whether the source of these phenomena is at all to be found in those parts of our nature, in which each intellect is representative of all,—and whether wholly or partially. No person of common reflection demands even in feeling, that what tastes pleasant to him ought to produce the same effect on all living beings ; but every man does and must expect and demand the universal acquiescence of all intelligent beings in every conviction of his understanding.

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FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON BEAUTY. 1818

THE only necessary, but this the absolute necessary, prerequisite to a full insight into the grounds of the beauty in the objects of sight, is—the directing of the attention to the action of those thoughts in our own mind which are not consciously distinguished. Every man may understand this, if he will but recall the state of his feelings in endeavouring to recollect a name, which he is quite sure that he remembers, though he cannot force it back into consciousness. This region of unconscious thoughts, oftentimes the more working the more indistinct they are, may, in reference to this subject, be conceived as forming an ascending scale from the most universal associations of motion with the functions and passions of life,—as when, on passing out of a crowded city into the fields on a day in June, we describe the grass and king-cups as nodding their heads and dancing in the breeze,—up to the half perceived, yet not fixable, resemblance of a form to some particular object of a diverse class, which resemblance we need only increase but a little, to destroy, or at least injure, its beauty-enhancing effect, and to make it a fantastic intrusion of the accidental and the arbitrary, and consequently a disturbance of the beautiful. This might be abundantly exemplified and illustrated from the paintings of Salvator Rosa.

I am now using the term beauty in its most comprehensive sense, as including expression and artistic interest,— that is, I consider not only the living balance, but likewise all the accompaniments that even by disturbing are neces-

sary to the renewal and continuance of the balance. And in this sense I proceed to show, that the beautiful in the object may be referred to two elements,—lines and colors; the first belonging to the shapely (*forma, formalis, formosus*), and in this, to the law, and the reason; and the second, to the lively, the free, the spontaneous, and the self-justifying. As to lines, the rectilineal are in themselves the lifeless, the determined *ab extra*, but still in immediate union with the cycloidal, which are expressive of function. The curve line is a modification of the force from without by the force from within, or the spontaneous. These are not arbitrary symbols, but the language of nature, universal and intuitive, by virtue of the law by which man is impelled to explain visible motions by imaginary causative powers analogous to his own acts, as the Dryads, Hamadryads, Naiads, &c.

The better way of applying these principles will be by a brief and rapid sketch of the history of the fine arts,—in which it will be found, that the beautiful in nature has been appropriated to the works of man, just in proportion as the state of the mind in the artists themselves approached to the subjective beauty. Determine what predominance in the minds of the men is preventive of the living balance of excited faculties, and you will discover the exact counterpart in the outward products. Egypt is an illustration of this. Shapeliness is intellect without freedom; but colors are significant. The introduction of the arch is not less an epoch in the fine than in the useful arts.

Order is beautiful arrangement without any purpose *ab extra*;—therefore there is a beauty of order, or order may be contemplated exclusively as beauty.

The form given in any empirical intuition,—the stuff, that is, the quality of the stuff, determines the agreeable: but when a thing excites us to receive it in such and such a mould, so that its exact correspondence to that mould is what occupies the mind,—this is taste or the sense of beauty.

Whether dishes full of painted wood or exquisite viands were laid out on a table in the same arrangement, would be indifferent to the taste, as in ladies' patterns; but surely the one is far more agreeable than the other. Hence observe the disinterestedness of all taste; and hence also a sensual perfection with intellect is occasionally possible without moral feeling. So it may be in music and painting, but not in poetry. How far it is a real preference of the refined to the gross pleasures, is another question, upon the supposition that pleasure, in some form or other, is that alone which determines men to the objects of the former; —whether experience does not show that if the latter were equally in our power, occasioned no more trouble to enjoy, and caused no more exhaustion of the power of enjoying them by the enjoyment itself, we should in real practice prefer the grosser pleasure. It is not, therefore, any excellence in the quality of the refined pleasures themselves, but the advantages and facilities in the means of enjoying them, that give them the pre-eminence.

This is, of course, on the supposition of the absence of all moral feeling. Suppose its presence, and then there will accrue an excellence even to the quality of the pleasures themselves; not only, however, of the refined, but also of the grosser kinds,—inasmuch as a larger sweep of thoughts will be associated with each enjoyment, and with each thought will be associated a number of sensations; and so, consequently, each pleasure will become more the pleasure of the whole being. This is one of the earthly rewards of our being what we ought to be, but which would be annihilated, if we attempted to be it for the sake of this increased enjoyment. Indeed it is a contradiction to suppose it. Yet this is the common *argumentum in circulo*, in which the eudæmonists flee and pursue.

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ON POESY OR ART

MAN communicates by articulation of sounds, and paramountly by the memory in the ear; nature by the impression of bounds and surfaces on the eye, and through the eye it gives significance and appropriation, and thus the conditions of memory, or the capability of being remembered, to sounds, smells, &c. Now Art, used collectively for painting, sculpture, architecture and music, is the mediatress between, and reconciler of, nature and man. It is, therefore, the power of humanizing nature, of infusing the thoughts and passions of man into every thing which is the object of his contemplation; color, form, motion, and sound, are the elements which it combines, and it stamps them into unity in the mould of a moral idea.

The primary art is writing;—primary, if we regard the purpose abstracted from the different modes of realizing it, those steps of progression of which the instances are still visible in the lower degrees of civilization. First, there is mere gesticulation; then rosaries or *wampum*; then picture-language; then hieroglyphics, and finally alphabetic letters. These all consist of a translation of man into nature, of a substitution of the visible for the audible.

The so called music of savage tribes as little deserves the name of art for the understanding, as the ear warrants it for music. Its lowest state is a mere expression of passion by sounds which the passion itself necessitates;—the highest amounts to no more than a voluntary reproduction of these sounds in the absence of the occasioning causes, so as to give the pleasure of contrast,—for example, by the various outcries of battle in the song of security and triumph.

Poetry also is purely human; for all its materials are from the mind, and all its products are for the mind. But it is the apotheosis of the former state, in which by excitement of the associative power passion itself imitates order, and the order resulting produces a pleasureable passion, and thus it elevates the mind by making its feelings the object of its reflexion. So likewise, whilst it recalls the sights and sounds that had accompanied the occasions of the original passions, poetry impregnates them with an interest not their own by means of the passions, and yet tempers the passion by the calming power which all distinct images exert on the human soul. In this way poetry is the preparation for art, inasmuch as it avails itself of the forms of nature to recall, to express, and to modify the thoughts and feelings of the mind. Still, however, poetry can only act through the intervention of articulate speech, which is so peculiarly human, that in all languages it constitutes the ordinary phrase by which man and nature are contradistinguished. It is the original force of the word "brute," and even "mute" and "dumb" do not convey the absence of sound, but the absence of articulated sounds.

As soon as the human mind is intelligibly addressed by an outward image exclusively of articulate speech, so soon does art commence. But please to observe that I have laid particular stress on the words "human mind,"—meaning to exclude thereby all results common to man and all other sentient creatures, and consequently confining myself to the effect produced by the congruity of the animal impression with the reflective powers of the mind; so that not the thing presented, but that which is re-presented by the thing, shall be the source of the pleasure. In this sense nature itself is to a religious observer the art of God; and for the same cause art itself might be defined as of a middle quality between a thought and a thing, or, as I said before, the union and reconciliation of that which is nature with

that which is exclusively human. It is the figured language of thought, and is distinguished from nature by the unity of all the parts in one thought or idea. Hence nature itself would give us the impression of a work of art, if we could see the thought which is present at once in the whole and in every part; and a work of art will be just in proportion as it adequately conveys the thought, and rich in proportion to the variety of parts which it holds in unity.

If, therefore, the term "mute" be taken as opposed not to sound but to articulate speech, the old definition of painting will in fact be the true and best definition of the Fine Arts in general, that is, *muta poesis*, mute poesy, and so of course poesy. And, as all languages perfect themselves by a gradual process of desynonymizing words originally equivalent, I have cherished the wish to use the word "poesy" as the generic or common term, and to distinguish that species of poesy which is not *muta poesis* by its usual name "poetry"; while of all the other species which collectively form the Fine Arts, there would remain this as the common definition,—that they all, like poetry, are to express intellectual purposes, thoughts, conceptions, and sentiments which have their origin in the human mind,—not, however, as poetry does, by means of articulate speech, but as nature or the divine art does, by form, color, magnitude, proportion, or by sound, that is, silently or musically.

Well! it may be said—but who has ever thought otherwise? We all know that art is the imitatress of nature. And, doubtless, the truths which I hope to convey would be barren truisms, if all men meant the same by the words "imitate" and "nature." But it would be flattering mankind at large, to presume that such is the fact. First, to imitate. The impression on the wax is not an imitation, but a copy, of the seal; the seal itself is an imitation. But, further, in order to form a philosophic conception, we must

seek for the kind, as the heat in ice, invisible light, &c., whilst, for practical purposes, we must have reference to the degree. It is sufficient that philosophically we understand that in all imitation two elements must coexist, and not only coexist, but must be perceived as coexisting. These two constituent elements are likeness and unlikeness, or sameness and difference, and in all genuine creations of art there must be a union of these disparates. The artist may take his point of view where he pleases, provided that the desired effect be perceptibly produced,—that there be likeness in the difference, difference in the likeness, and a reconcilement of both in one. If there be likeness to nature without any check of difference, the result is disgusting, and the more complete the delusion, the more loathsome the effect. Why are such simulations of nature, as wax-work figures of men and women, so disagreeable ? Because, not finding the motion and the life which we expected, we are shocked as by a falsehood, every circumstance of detail, which before induced us to be interested, making the distance from truth more palpable. You set out with a supposed reality and are disappointed and disgusted with the deception ; whilst, in respect to a work of genuine imitation, you begin with an acknowledged total difference, and then every touch of nature gives you the pleasure of an approximation to truth. The fundamental principle of all this is undoubtedly the horror of falsehood and the love of truth inherent in the human breast. The Greek tragic dance rested on these principles, and I can deeply sympathize in imagination with the Greeks in this favorite part of their theatrical exhibitions, when I call to mind the pleasure I felt in beholding the combat of the Horatii and Curiatii most exquisitely danced in Italy to the music of Cimarosa.

Secondly, as to nature. We must imitate nature ! yes, but what in nature,—all and every thing ? No, the beautiful in nature. And what then is the beautiful? What is

beauty? It is, in the abstract, the unity of the manifold, the coalescence of the diverse; in the concrete, it is the union of the shapely (*formosum*) with the vital. In the dead organic it depends on regularity of form, the first and lowest species of which is the triangle with all its modifications, as in crystals, architecture, &c.; in the living organic it is not mere regularity of form, which would produce a sense of formality; neither is it subservient to any thing beside itself. It may be present in a disagreeable object, in which the proportion of the parts constitutes a whole; it does not arise from association, as the agreeable does, but sometimes lies in the rupture of association; it is not different to different individuals and nations, as has been said, nor is it connected with the ideas of the good, or the fit, or the useful. The sense of beauty is intuitive, and beauty itself is all that inspires pleasure without, and aloof from, and even contrarily to, interest.

If the artist copies the mere nature, the *natura naturata*, what idle rivalry! If he proceeds only from a given form, which is supposed to answer to the notion of beauty, what an emptiness, what an unreality there always is in his productions, as in Cipriani's pictures! Believe me, you must master the essence, the *natura naturans*, which presupposes a bond between nature in the higher sense and the soul of man.

The wisdom in nature is distinguished from that in man by the co-instantaneity of the plan and the execution; the thought and the product are one, or are given at once; but there is no reflex act, and hence there is no moral responsibility. In man there is reflexion, freedom, and choice; he is, therefore, the head of the visible creation. In the objects of nature are presented, as in a mirror, all the possible elements, steps, and processes of intellect antecedent to consciousness, and therefore to the full development of the [illegible] act; and man's mind is the very focus of all

the rays of intellect which are scattered throughout the images of nature. Now so to place these images, totalized, and fitted to the limits of the human mind, as to elicit from, and to superinduce upon, the forms themselves the moral reflexions to which they approximate, to make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought, and thought nature,—this is the mystery of genius in the Fine Arts. Dare I add that the genius must act on the feeling, that body is but a striving to become mind,—that it is mind in its essence!

In every work of art there is a reconcilement of the external with the internal; the conscious is so impressed on the unconscious as to appear in it; as compare mere letters inscribed on a tomb with figures themselves constituting the tomb. He who combines the two is the man of genius; and for that reason he must partake of both. Hence there is in genius itself an unconscious activity; nay, that is the genius in the man of genius. And this is the true exposition of the rule that the artist must first eloign himself from nature in order to return to her with full effect. Why this? Because if he were to begin by mere painful copying, he would produce masks only, not forms breathing life. He must out of his own mind create forms according to the severe laws of the intellect, in order to generate in himself that co-ordination of freedom and law, that involution of obedience in the prescript, and of the prescript in the impulse to obey, which assimilates him to nature, and enables him to understand her. He merely absents himself for a season from her, that his own spirit, which has the same ground with nature, may learn her unspoken language in its main radicals, before he approaches to her endless compositions of them. Yes, not to acquire cold notions—lifeless technical rules—but living and life-producing ideas, which shall contain their own evidence, the certainty that they are essentially one with the germinal

causes in nature,—his consciousness being the focus and mirror of both,—for this does the artist for a time abandon the external real in order to return to it with a complete sympathy with its internal and actual. For of all we see, hear, feel and touch the substance is and must be in ourselves; and therefore there is no alternative in reason between the dreary (and thank heaven! almost impossible) belief that every thing around us is but a phantom, or that the life which is in us is in them likewise; and that to know is to resemble, when we speak of objects out of ourselves, even as within ourselves to learn is, according to Plato, only to recollect;—the only effective answer to which, that I have been fortunate to meet with, is that which Pope has consecrated for future use in the line—

"And coxcombs vanquish Berkeley with a grin!"

The artist must imitate that which is within the thing, that which is active through form and figure, and discourses to us by symbols—the *Natur-geist*, or spirit of nature, as we unconsciously imitate those whom we love; for so only can he hope to produce any work truly natural in the object and truly human in the effect. The idea which puts the form together cannot itself be the form. It is above form, and is its essence, the universal in the individual, or the individuality itself,—the glance and the exponent of the indwelling power.

Each thing that lives has its moment of self-exposition, and so has each period of each thing, if we remove the disturbing forces of accident. To do this is the business of ideal art, whether in images of childhood, youth, or age, in man or in woman. Hence a good portrait is the abstract of the personal; it is not the likeness for actual comparison, but for recollection. This explains why the likeness of a very good portrait is not always recognized; because some persons never abstract, and amongst these are especially to

be numbered the near relations and friends of the subject, in consequence of the constant pressure and check exercised on their minds by the actual presence of the original. And each thing that only appears to live has also its possible position of relation to life, as nature herself testifies, who where she cannot be, prophesies her being in the crystallized metal, or the inhaling plant.

The charm, the indispensable requisite, of sculpture is unity of effect. But painting rests in a material remoter from nature, and its compass is therefore greater. Light and shade are external, as well as internal, being even with all its accidents, whilst sculpture is confined to the latter. And here I may observe that the subjects chosen for works of art, whether in sculpture or painting, should be such as really are capable of being expressed and conveyed within the limits of those arts. Moreover they ought to be such as will affect the spectator by their truth, their beauty, or their sublimity, and therefore they may be addressed to the judgement, the senses, or the reason. The peculiarity of the impression which they may make, may be derived either from color and form, or from proportion and fitness, or from the excitement of the moral feelings ; or all these may be combined. Such works as do combine these sources of effect must have the preference in dignity.

Imitation of the antique may be too exclusive, and may produce an injurious effect on modern sculpture ;—1st, generally, because such an imitation cannot fail to have a tendency to keep the attention fixed on externals rather than on the thought within ;—2ndly, because, accordingly, it leads the artist to rest satisfied with that which is always imperfect, namely, bodily form, and circumscribes his views of mental expression to the ideas of power and grandeur only ;—3rdly, because it induces an effort to combine together two incongruous things, that is to say, modern feelings in antique forms ;—4thly, because it speaks in a

language, as it were, learned and dead, the tones of which, being unfamiliar, leave the common spectator cold and unimpressed;—and lastly, because it necessarily causes a neglect of thoughts, emotions and images of profounder interest and more exalted dignity, as motherly, sisterly, and brotherly love, piety, devotion, the divine become human,—the Virgin, the Apostle, the Christ. The artist's principle in the statue of a great man should be the illustration of departed merit; and I cannot but think that a skilful adoption of modern habiliments would, in many instances, give a variety and force of effect which a bigoted adherence to Greek or Roman costume precludes. It is, I believe, from artists finding Greek models unfit for several important modern purposes, that we see so many allegorical figures on monuments and elsewhere. Painting was, as it were, a new art, and being unshackled by old models it chose its own subjects, and took an eagle's flight. And a new field seems opened for modern sculpture in the symbolical expression of the ends of life, as in Guy's monument, Chantrey's children in Worcester Cathedral, &c.

Architecture exhibits the greatest extent of the difference from nature which may exist in works of art. It involves all the powers of design, and is sculpture and painting inclusively. It shews the greatness of man, and should at the same time teach him humility.

Music is the most entirely human of the fine arts, and has the fewest *analoga* in nature. Its first delightfulness is simple accordance with the ear; but it is an associated thing, and recalls the deep emotions of the past with an intellectual sense of proportion. Every human feeling is greater and larger than the exciting cause,—a proof, I think, that man is designed for a higher state of existence; and this is deeply implied in music, in which there is always something more and beyond the immediate expression.

With regard to works in all the branches of the fine arts,

I may remark that the pleasure arising from novelty must of course be allowed its due place and weight. This pleasure consists in the identity of two opposite elements, that is to say—sameness and variety. If in the midst of the variety there be not some fixed object for the attention, the unceasing succession of the variety will prevent the mind from observing the difference of the individual objects; and the only thing remaining will be the succession, which will then produce precisely the same effect as sameness. This we experience when we let the trees or hedges pass before the fixed eye during a rapid movement in a carriage, or, on the other hand, when we suffer a file of soldiers or ranks of men in procession to go on before us without resting the eye on any one in particular. In order to derive pleasure from the occupation of the mind, the principle of unity must always be present, so that in the midst of the multeity the centripetal force be never suspended, nor the sense be fatigued by the predominance of the centrifugal force. This unity in multeity I have elsewhere stated as the principle of beauty. It is equally the source of pleasure in variety, and in fact a higher term including both. What is the seclusive or distinguishing term between them?

Remember that there is a difference between form as proceeding, and shape as superinduced;—the latter is either the death or the imprisonment of the thing;—the former is its self-witnessing and self-effected sphere of agency. Art would or should be the abridgment of nature. Now the fulness of nature is without character; as water is purest when without taste, smell, or color; but this is the highest, the apex only,—it is not the whole. The object of art is to give the whole *ad hominem*; hence each step of nature hath its ideal, and hence the possibility of a climax up to the perfect form of a harmonized chaos.

To the idea of life victory or strife is necessary; as virtue consists not simply in the absence of vices, but in the over-

coming of them. So it is in beauty. The sight of what is subordinated and conquered heightens the strength and the pleasure; and this should be exhibited by the artist either inclusively in his figure, or else out of it, and beside it to act by way of supplement and contrast. And with a view to this, remark the seeming identity of body and mind in infants, and thence the loveliness of the former; the commencing separation in boyhood, and the struggle of equilibrium in youth: thence onward the body is first simply indifferent; then demanding the translucency of the mind not to be worse than indifferent; and finally all that presents the body as body becoming almost of an excremental nature.

NOTES TO VOL. II

(For abbreviations, see explanation at head of Notes to Vol. I.)

CHAPTER XIV

PAGE 5 l. 6. *The sudden charm . . . which moon-light or sun-set.* Cp. C.'s marginal note in Tenneman's *Geschichte der Phil.* (date uncertain: after 1817): 'The imaginative power (a multiform power which acting with its permeative, modifying, unifying might on the Thoughts and Images specificates the Poet) the swimming crimson of Eve on Mountain, Lake, River, Vale, Village and Village Church, the flashing or sleeping Moonshine in Nature's Poesy—and which exercising the same power in moral intuitions by the representation of worth or baseness in action is the essential constitution of a good heart'; and *The Excursion*, Bk. IV, l. 1058:

> Within the soul a faculty abides
> . . . . . .
> . . . . As the ample moon
> In the deep stillness of a summer even
> Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,
> Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light
> In the green trees: and kindling on all sides
> Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
> Into a substance glorious as her own,
> Yea, with her own incorporated, by power
> Capacious and serene. Like power abides
> In man's celestial spirit: virtue thus
> Sets forth and magnifies herself.

Cp. also the concluding book of *The Prelude.*

25. *In this idea originated the plan of the 'Lyrical Ballads'.* According to Wordsworth's account (Fenwick Note to *We are Seven*) the original plan of the poets was to write a *single* poem, to defray the expenses of their tour to Linton in 1798. But the poem thus planned (the *Ancient Mariner*) 'grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our first expectation of five pounds; and we began to talk of a volume which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on natural subjects taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium.' Wordsworth, it will be seen, does not give quite the same account

of the origin of the *Ancient Mariner* as does Coleridge (see p. 6, l. 16, 'With this view I wrote the *Ancient Mariner*'), nor does he speak of the 'two sorts' of poems. One is inclined to believe that their attempted collaboration in the *Ancient Mariner*, and its failure, revealed to each the idiosyncrasies of his poetic genius, and led to the division of subject and treatment. But a letter written by Coleridge to Sir H. Davy * in 1800 seems to prove that Wordsworth's account is the correct one. Coleridge there speaks of the *L. B.* as 'an experiment to see how far those passions which alone give any value to extraordinary incidents were capable of interesting, in and for themselves, in the incidents of common life'. And what is still more significant, he adds further that *Christabel* 'was written in direct opposition to the very purpose for which the lyrical ballads were published'. It may, perhaps, not be fanciful to see in these 'two sorts' of poems an illustration of the two types of genuine imitation as defined by Coleridge on p. 56, 'the interfusion of the same throughout the radically different, or of the different throughout a base radically the same.'

PAGE 6 l. 5. *that willing suspension.* Cp. note on p. 107, l. 18 and p. 187, l. 1, *infra.*

17. '*The Dark Ladie*' *and the* '*Christabel*'. The *Ballad of the Dark Ladie* was first printed in *Poems*, 1834, without comment. The poem *Love*, which appeared in the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), had already been printed a year before in the *Morning Post* under the title of 'An Introduction to "The Dark Ladie"', and Mr. Dykes Campbell speaks of 'a much-tortured draft' of *Love* in the British Museum, which is actually entitled *The Dark Ladie* (*Poet. Works*, p. 136, and note). In 1802 Coleridge writes to Sotheby (*Letters*, p. 375): 'Tell Mrs. Sotheby that I will endeavour to send her soon the completion of "The Dark Ladie", as she was good-natured enough to be pleased with the first part.'

On the whole it seems not improbable that *Love* is the original form of *The Dark Ladie*, the *only* form in which it existed prior to Coleridge's departure for Germany, and that *The Dark Ladie* was written during or after his German sojourn. For one verse (the twelfth) bears I think unmistakable traces of the influence of Bürger's *Lenore*, with which in the original Coleridge would not have become acquainted before then. The poem was never finished. The first part of *Christabel* was composed in 1797 (i.e. before the *Ancient Mariner* or the *Lyrical Ballads* had been thought of), the second in 1800. It was intended to print *Christabel* in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1800 (second edition, vol. ii); but Coleridge could not finish it, though he himself gives other reasons for its non-appearance. A full account of the circumstances attending its

* *Fragr. Remains of Sir H. Davy*, p. 82.

composition and publication will be found in *Poet. Works*, pp. 601 ff.

21. *the number of his poems so much greater.* The first edition of the *L. B.* contained twenty-three poems, of which four only were by Coleridge.

27. *were presented by him, as an* experiment. See Advertisement to first edition: 'The majority of the following poems are to be considered as experiments. They were written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the lower and middle classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure.'

32. *To the second edition he added*, &c. The earliest version of the *Preface* (1800) differs considerably from the version of 1802 and 1805. Both versions will be found in the reprint of the *L. B.*, edited by Mr. G. Sampson (Methuen, 1903), pp. 369 ff.

PAGE 7 l. 4. *the language of* real *life.* Cp. *L. B.*, p. 369, 'a selection of the real language of men'; p. 377, 'I propose to imitate and as far as possible to adopt the very language of men'; p. 386, 'I have endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men.' This is in the first version of the *Preface.* In the second more stress is laid on the significant word 'selection': see p. 18, 'a selection of the language really spoken by men,' and following passage, 'this selection,' &c., p. 24 and p. 28. The vital importance of this qualification has perhaps not been taken into sufficient account by either of the poets.

4. *From this preface*, &c. See the criticisms in the *Edin. Review* referred to in a previous note (to vol. i, p. 151, l. 29).

27. *its* religious *fervor.* Cp. *Miscellanies*, p. 255, where Coleridge gives his opinion of the causes of this enthusiasm.

34. *With many parts of this preface . . . I never concurred.* The exact nature of Coleridge's contribution to the *Preface* must necessarily remain uncertain: but we have, fortunately, some letters of his own which throw light on the matter. To the first version of the *Preface* I do not find any allusion in his correspondence: but on the second, published in 1800, he expressed himself at some length. To Southey he wrote in July, 1882 (*Letters*, p. 386): 'I will apprise you of one thing, that although Wordsworth's preface is half a child of my own brain, and arose out of conversations so frequent that, with few exceptions, we could scarcely either of us, perhaps, positively say which first started any particular thought (I am speaking of the Preface as it stood in the second volume), yet I am far from going all lengths with Wordsworth. He has written lately a number of poems . . . the greater number of these, to my feelings, very excellent compositions, but here and there a daring humbleness of language and versification, and a strict adherence to matter of fact, even to prolixity, that startled me . . . His alterations likewise in "Ruth" perplexed me, and

I have thought and thought again, and have not had my doubts solved by Wordsworth. I rather suspect that there is a radical difference in our theoretical opinions respecting poetry. . . .' And to Sotheby he writes in the same month (*Letters*, p. 373): 'I must set you right with regard to my perfect coincidence with his (Wordsworth's) poetic creed. It is most certain that the heads of our mutual conversations, &c. and the passages, were indeed taken from note (? notes) of mine; for it was at first intended that the preface should be written by me. And it is likewise true that I warmly accord with Wordsworth in his abhorrence of those poetic licences, as they are called which are indeed mere tricks of convenience and laziness. . . . In my opinion, every phrase, every metaphor, every personification should have its justifying clause in some passion, that is, a state of excitement both in the poet's mind, and is expected, (sic) in part, of the reader; and, though I stated this to Wordsworth, and he has in some sort stated it in his preface, yet he has not done justice to it nor has he, in my opinion, sufficiently answered it. In my opinion, poetry justifies as poetry, independent of any passion, some new combinations of language and *commands* the omission of many others allowable in other compositions. Now Wordsworth, *me saltem judice*, has in his system not sufficiently admitted the former, and in his practice has too frequently sinned against the latter. Indeed we have had lately some little controversy on the subject, and we begin to suspect that there is somewhere or other a radical difference in our opinions.'

From these passages (which contain the germ of the criticism of the *Biog. Lit.*) it is evident that however far Wordsworth felt himself at one with Coleridge in the general spirit of his theory, in expounding and amplifying it he had been led into bypaths where Coleridge could not follow him. Nor is it surprising that Coleridge, with his greater psychological insight, should have been dissatisfied with Wordsworth's reasoned account of his theory. So little indeed did the *Preface* seem to him to contain an adequate account of his own views, that Coleridge contemplated a separate publication of them, to accompany a volume of selections from the Poets. See *Supplementary Note to Introduction*, vol. i, p. xc.

PAGE **8** l. 5. *Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection*, &c.: i. e. in the 1815 editions of his poems. In a note prefixed to the *Preface* (in 1849) Wordsworth explains that 'in succeeding Editions, when the collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes as having no special application to the contents'.

PAGE **10** l. 6. *by proposing for its* immediate *object pleasure*, &c. A fuller statement of this definition will be found in the *Essays on Criticism* (*Biog. Lit.* ii. 224). See also *Lectures*, pp. 47 ff., 209.

PAGE **11** l. 9. *Praecipitandus est* liber *spiritus.* Petronius Arbiter, *Satyric*, p. 63, edit. Lug. Bat. 1623 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

15. *we have still to seek for a definition of poetry.* Elsewhere Coleridge does not make this distinction of 'poem' and 'poetry' (e.g. in *Lectures*, p. 47, immediate pleasure is stated to be the purpose of *poetry*). And it is doubtful whether the distinction, as here drawn, makes for clearness, or indeed whether it can be fairly drawn at all. Coleridge gives no real justification of the bold statement that 'a poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry', and instead of reaching a clear definition of poetry he contents himself with a description of the *poet*, which in its turn resolves itself into an enumeration of the characteristics of Imagination.

16. *the 'Theoria Sacra' of Burnet. Telluris Theoria Sacra*, 1681–9, by Thomas Burnet, D.D. (1635–1715: English translation, 1684–9). A fanciful theory of the earth's structure, which aroused much controversy at the time. A passage from this work is quoted by Wordsworth in a Note to *The Excursion*, Bk. III, l. 113, as illustrative of the sentiments expressed in the text (*O. W.*, pp. 788, 926).

PAGE **12** l. 9. *The poet described in* ideal *perfection.* For this definition see *Lectures*, 1818 (p. 186), where it occurs in almost the same terms.

29. *as Sir John Davies observes* from his poem 'On the soul of Man', Sect. IV. In the first stanza quoted, 'meats' is altered to 'food': and the third runs thus in the original:

> Thus doth she, when from things particular
> She doth abstract the universal kinds,
> Which bodyless and immaterial are,
> And can be only lodged within our minds.

PAGE **13** l. 9. *Good sense is the body of poetic genius.* Cp. Letter to Lady Beaumont (June, 1814), *Memorials of Coleorton*, ii. 172: 'The sum total of all intellectual excellence is good sense and method. When these have passed into the instinctive readiness of habit, when the wheel revolves so rapidly that we cannot see it revolve at all, then we call the combination Genius. But in all modes alike, and in all professions, the two sole component parts even of *Genius*, are GOOD SENSE and METHOD.' And speaking of Shakespeare's dramas, Coleridge defines the excellence of their *method* 'as consisting in that just proportion, that union and interpenetration of the universal and particular, which must ever pervade all works of decided genius and true science. For method implies a progressive transition, and it is the meaning of the word in the original language' (*The Friend* (1818), Sect. II, Essay 4).

CHAPTER XV

The substance of this chapter may be found in the different courses of lectures on Shakespeare, and it is probably founded on the written notes to those lectures. According to a letter to Allsop in 1821, Coleridge then possessed 'the *written* materials and contents of an exhaustive study of Shakespeare's works'. He was doubtless deceiving himself.

PAGE **13** l. 23. *our* myriad-minded *Shakespeare. A. P.* 1801 (p. 21), 'O MYPIONOΥΣ—hyperbole from Naucratius' panegyric of Theodorus Chersites. Shakespeare, *item*, ὁ πολλοστὸς καὶ πολυειδὴς τῇ ποικιλοστρόφῳ σοφίᾳ, ὁ μεγαλοφρωνότατος [sic] τῆς ἀληθείας κῆρυξ—LORD BACON.'

PAGE **14** l. 4. *the perfect sweetness of the versification.* Cp. *Lectures*, p. 488.

13. *The man that hath not music*, &c. *Merchant of Venice*, Act v, Sc. I. For 'his soul' read 'himself'. Coleridge's misquotation is a common one.

21. *as I once before observed.* See *Biog. Lit.* i. 25.

24. *the sense of musical delight.* See *Lectures*, p. 218, where Coleridge defines the 'chief requisite' of a poet 'as deep feeling and exquisite sense of beauty, both as exhibited to the eye in the combinations of form, and to the ear in sweet and appropriate melody'.

31. *the choice of subjects very remote*, &c. Cp. *Biog. Lit.* i. 30 l. 14 and note, and *Lectures*, p. 401: 'There is no greater or more common vice in dramatic writers than to draw out of themselves. How I—alone and in the self-sufficiency of my study, as all men are apt to be proud in their dreams—should like to be talking *king!* Shakespeare in composing had no *I*, but the *I* representative.'

PAGE **16** l. 9. *Shakespeare has here represented*, &c. Cp. the *Morning Post* report of the fourth lecture of 1811–12 which gives this passage in almost identical language (*Lectures*, p. 57).

23. *It has been before observed.* The third characteristic of poetic genius, which is now discussed, is *imagination* in the various aspects of its activity.

33. *Which shoots its being through earth, sea, and air.* Altered from *France: An Ode*, l. 100 (*Poet. Works*, p. 126):

> Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
> And shot my being thro' earth, sea, and air.

PAGE **17** l. 23. *Of the wide world*, &c. The two lines which follow run thus:

> Can yet the lease of my true love control
> Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

Coleridge omits them, as disturbing the imaginative sequence.

PAGE **18** l. 20. *They were, tho' sweet.* In the original 'but sweet'.

26. Γονίμου μὲν ποιητοῦ, κ.τ.λ. Slightly altered, from *Aristoph. Ranae*, 96–7 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

34. *Look! how a bright star.* In the *Lectures* (1818), p. 220, the same passage is quoted in illustration of the 'tranquil and purely pleasureable operation' of the imagination, in which 'it acts chiefly by creating out of many things, as they would have appeared in the description of an ordinary mind detailed in unimpassioned succession, a oneness, even as nature, the greatest of poets, acts upon us, when we open our eyes upon an extended prospect.' The whole passage, which deals with the various activities of the imagination, should be studied.

PAGE **19** l. 3. *Depth, and Energy of Thought.* Cp. *Lectures* (1818), p. 223: 'Finally in this poem (the *Venus and Adonis*) Shakespeare gave ample proof of his possessing a most profound, energetic, and philosophic mind, without which he might have pleased, but could not have been a great poet.' Compare also Wordsworth's famous definition in the *Preface* of 1802: 'Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge: it is the impassioned expression which is the countenance of all Science.' And *Letters*, p. 372 (Coleridge to Sotheby, July, 1802): 'You will agree with me that a great poet must be, implicité if not explicité, a profound metaphysician.'

19. *But the story of Lucretia.* For a similar characterization of the *Lucrece*, see the fourth lecture of 1811–12, as reported by the *Morning Post* (*Lectures*, p. 58).

31. *no automaton of genius.* This prejudice with regard to Shakespeare is denounced in the *Lectures*, *passim*: but see especially Sect. I, 1818 (p. 223), 'Shakespeare's Judgement equal to his Genius.' How long Coleridge himself had realized the unreasonableness of the popular view cannot be safely determined; but it is hardly conceivable that Lessing was the first to open his eyes. In 1802 he writes (*A. P.*, p. 24): 'Great injury has resulted from the supposed incompatibility of one talent with another, judgment with imagination and taste, good sense with strong feeling, &c. If it be false, as assuredly it is, the opinion has deprived us of a test which every man might apply. [Hence] Locke's opinion of Blackmore, Hume's of Shakespeare and Milton.' And this is a conviction which his whole training had tended to foster. See *Biog. Lit.* i. 14–15, and *A. P.*, p. 4 (1797.)

PAGE **20** l. 8. *All things and modes of action.* For a similar comparison see *Table Talk* for May 12, 1830: 'Shakespeare is the Spinozistic deity—an omnipresent creativeness. Milton is the deity of prescience: he stands *ab extra*,' &c.; and a profound note on Milton in *A. P.*, p. 297 (? Oct. 1819).

13. *Must* we *be free or die*, &c. From Wordsworth's sonnet: 'It is not to be thought of that the Flood,' &c. (*O. W.*, p. 307).

CHAPTER XVI

PAGE **21** l. 22. *Pope's 'Translation.'* It is worthy of notice that whenever Coleridge or Wordsworth attack Pope's diction, it is the diction of his 'Translation', and not of his original writings, which they have in view. See vol. i, pp. 26 and 33.

23. *Darwin's 'Temple of Nature'.* First published in 1803. See vol. i, p. 11, l. 31 and note.

PAGE **22** l. 6. *his tract 'De la nobile volgare eloquenza'.* 'The spirit breathing in this Fragment may justify what Mr. Coleridge says: but Dante does not appear to have used the expression attributed to him in the text' (*Biog. Lit.* 1847, ii. 31 f. n.). In the same note Sara Coleridge quotes a passage from l. ii, c. 4 (which she found written by Coleridge in a copy of the first edition of *Joan of Arc*) as being the passage which Coleridge had here in mind.

10. *Animadverte,* &c. From the *Examinatio et Emendatio Mathematicae hodiernae,* Dial. II, vol. iv, p. 83, Molesworth's ed. (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

12. *Sat vero,* &c. From the chapter *De nominibus novis Paracelsi,* p. 193 (*Works,* Leyden, 1676). Sara Coleridge, who gives the reference, also points out several additions to, and omissions from, the original. See motto to Essay III of the 'Essays on Criticism' (*Biog. Lit.* ii. 228).

PAGE **23** l. 9. *Hence novelty of subject.* We may compare the passage in which Hegel upholds the Dutch genre-painters for their choice of subject—a point on which they have been attacked, among others, by Ruskin. See Hegel, *Aesthetik,* i. 212, translated in Bosanquet's *History of Aesthetic,* p. 343 f. n.

26. *In opposition to the present age.* Cp. *Biog. Lit.* i. 15, where the distinction is somewhat differently conceived.

PAGE **24** l. 6. *such as have been attempted of late in the 'Alonzo and Imogen'.* Of this metre we may quote with Sara Coleridge (*Biog. Lit.* 1847, ii. 34 f. n.) the following instance from the poem:

> A warrior so bold and a virgin so bright
> Conversed as they sat on the green:
> They gazed on each other with tender delight,
> Alonzo the brave was the name of the knight,
> The maid's was the fair Imogene.

The same metre was, as she adds, employed by Southey in his ballad, 'Mary the Maid of the Inn.' From Coleridge's language it might be gathered that this metre too was imported from Germany, but this is erroneous. See *T. T.,* Sept. 22, 1830. From *Alonzo and Imogene* (of which M. G. Lewis was the author) it is possible that Coleridge borrowed a motive for the *Ancient Mariner.* See Brandl, *Coleridge u. die englische Romantik,* 1886, p. 215.

F. N. *the Madrigals of* GIOVAMBATISTA STROZZI. See Mr. E. H. Coleridge's comment on the note 'Words and Things', *A. P.*, p. 225, which tells us that 'this note follows an essay on Giambattista Strozzi's Madrigals, together with a transcription of twenty-five specimens. The substance of the essay is embodied in the text of Chapter XVI of the *Biographia Literaria* and a long foot-note.' The note in question ('Words and Things') was written in 1810.

PAGE **26** F.N. *An artist, whose writings*, &c. See the second of Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Discourses*. Wordsworth alludes to this dictum in the Advertisement to the first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (*L. B.*, p. 367).

Harris of Salisbury. James Harris (1709–80). He wrote two treatises on art in the manner of the Platonic Dialogues, entitled respectively 'Art' and 'Music, Painting, and Poetry' (1744). For the discussion on taste here referred to, see his *Philological Inquiries*, Part II, ch. xii, especially the concluding paragraphs (p. 229, 1802), which deal with the connexion of genius and rules (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

CHAPTER XVII

PAGE **28** l. 8. *as far as he was . . . pointed out the process*, &c. I do not know of any passage in the *Prefaces* where Wordsworth discourses specifically upon these 'resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasureable confusion of thought,' &c. In the *Appendix to Preface* (first printed 1802, *L. B.*, p. 346) he describes what he conceives to be the origin of false poetic diction; and in the *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 378) he speaks of 'expressions in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad poets till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower'; and (p. 373) of poets who 'indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation'. And Coleridge wrote in 1803 (*A. P.*, p. 59): 'Great harm is done by bad poets in trivialising beautiful expressions and images, and associating disgust and indifference with the technical forms of poetry.'

PAGE **30** l. 7. *The poet informs his reader*, &c. See *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 9): 'Low and rustic life was generally chosen,' &c. In the 1837 edition 'humble' is substituted for 'low'.

18. *an* imitation *as distinguished from a mere* copy. Cp. *Lectures*, 1811–12 (p. 122): 'An imitation is not a copy, precisely as likeness is not sameness, in that sense of the word "likeness" which implies difference conjoined with sameness. Shakespeare reflected manners in his plays, not by a cold formal copy, but by

an imitation; that is to say, by an admixture of circumstances, not absolutely true in themselves, but true to the character and the time represented.' See also pp. 133, 211, and 227. And for the common principle underlying these various definitions, see *On Poesy or Art* (1818) (*Biog. Lit.* ii. 256): 'In all imitation two elements must co-exist,' &c.; and *Biog. Lit.* ii. 56, 185. The distinction had occurred to Coleridge as early as 1804. See *A. P.*, p. 87: 'Hard to express that sense of the analogy or likeness of a thing which enables a symbol to represent it so that we think of the thing itself, yet knowing that the thing is not present to us. Surely on this universal fact of words and images depends, by more or less mediations, the imitation, instead of the *copy*, which is illustrated, in very nature Shakespearianized—that Proteus essence which could assume the very form, but yet known and felt not to be the thing by that difference of the substance which made every atom of the form another thing, that likeness not identity—an exact web, every line of direction miraculously the same, but the one worsted, the other silk.' Compare with this what Coleridge says (*Aids to Reflection*, Bohn, p. 136) of symbols and symbolical expressions, 'the nature of which is always *taut*egorical, that is, expressing the same subject but with a *difference*, in contradistinction from metaphors and similitudes, that are always *alle*gorical, that is, expressing a *different* subject but with a resemblance.' See note to *Biog. Lit.* ii. 256.

PAGE **31** l. 6. '*The Mad Mother*'. In the later editions this poem was entitled simply 'Her eyes are wild' (*O. W.*, p. 144). The *Mad Mother* was first published in *L. B.*, 1798; the other poems here mentioned in *L. B.*, 1800.

30. *It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's.* This passage, which differs slightly from Coleridge's quotation, occurs on p. 34 of the 1656 edition of the *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus.*

PAGE **32** l. 4. *I am convinced*, &c. This was Coleridge's opinion as early as 1803. See *A. P.*, p. 28.

PAGE **33** l. 4. *I adopt with full faith the principle of Aristotle.* It was Coleridge's practical adherence to this principle that caused him to refrain from printing the lines 'To a Gentleman' (William Wordsworth) in their original form, a course which he thus justifies in a letter of 1815 to Wordsworth (*Letters*, pp. 644–5): 'I had never determined to print the lines addressed to you . . . Since I lit on the first rude draught and corrected it as well as I could, I wanted no additional reason for its not being published in my lifetime than its *personality* respecting myself. After the opinions I had given publicly*, in the preference of *Lycidas* (moral no less than poetical) to Cowley's *Monody*, I could not have printed

* ? in the Lectures on Milton.

it consistently. It is for the biographer, not the poet, to give the *accidents* of *individual* life.' When the poem was finally published in 1817, it appeared with numerous changes, the whole purpose of which was to diminish the strictly personal interest. The same practical application of the principle may be followed in the different versions of *Dejection*. When first written (see *Letters*, p. 379, &c.) it was actually addressed to Wordsworth ('O Wordsworth! we receive but what we give!'). In the *Morning Post* version (pub. Oct. 4, 1802), 'Edmund' has been substituted for 'Wordsworth'; and in the version of 1817, 'Edmund' has been discarded for the more generic 'Lady'. It is evident that this conviction was of early, if gradual, growth in Coleridge's mind. See *Poet. Works*, pp. 159, 176, 626, and 634. The original version of the lines 'To a Gentleman' is printed in *Memorials of Coleorton*, i. 213, &c.

the principle of Aristotle. See the *Poetics*, ch. ix, §§ 1–4 (Professor Butcher's edition, p. 32), and ch. iii of the critical chapters, 'Poetic Truth,' ib. p. 153.

F.N. This extract is taken from the second of *Satyrane's Letters* (orig. pub. in *The Friend*, in 1809).

PAGE **34** l. 14. *An old man stout of heart*, &c. *Michael, a Pastoral Poem*, ll. 42–77. Coleridge's quotation corresponds with the text of 1802. Later, some slight alterations were made.

PAGE **35** l. 14. *The* 'IDIOT BOY'. The purpose of this poem, according to the *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 374), is 'by tracing the maternal passion through many of its more subtle windings' to fulfil the object for which the poems as a whole are written, viz. 'to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature.' The psychological language shows the influence of Coleridge, and, indirectly, of Hartley. The *Idiot Boy* and *Harry Gill* were both published in *L. B.* 1798.

PAGE **36** l. 3. *The 'Thorn'*, *L. B.* 1798. See Note to *The Thorn* (*O. W.*, p. 899). Coleridge's quotations (in this critique) are taken from the 1815 edition of the poems.

14. *still more in a lyric poem.* Coleridge here fails to take into consideration (what a careful perusal of Wordsworth's introductory note to *The Thorn* must have made clear to him) Wordsworth's real object in the poem. This was to represent the facts as they actually appeared to the mariner (a man with a 'reasonable share of imagination'), and as he would have actually portrayed them. But Wordsworth's dramatic gift was not great enough to enable him to do this successfully, and the fact that the prosaic lines, to which Coleridge alludes, are felt as prosaic, is due to this inability of Wordsworth really to transport himself into the state of mind which he wishes to represent. For the consequence is that in the dull lines we see the prosaic mariner, and in the fine lines the imaginative poet, and do not accept them in their unity,

as characteristic of the particular mood and temperament from which they are supposed to emanate. Wordsworth would not therefore have mended matters by substituting a more poetical language in these passages.

the Nurse. See *Lectures*, p. 86.

26. *the last couplet of the third stanza.* See Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, &c., May 9, 1815: 'On my gently alluding to the lines "three feet long," &c., and confessing that I dared not read them aloud in company, he (W. W.) said "they ought to be liked".' The lines were in 1820 rewritten thus:—

Though but of compass small, and bare
To thirsty winds and parching air.

27. *the seven last lines of the tenth.* For these lines were substituted in 1820 the last seven of stanza xi, and thus one stanza was made out of the two. The fifth line ''Tis now some two-and-twenty years' became in 1820 ''Tis known that twenty years are passed', and the last two lines became

And friends and kindred all approved
Of him whom tenderly she loved.

The following alterations may also be noted: in stanza xii (xiii), ll. 5–6 become

'Tis said her lamentable state
Even to a careless eye was plain;

and ll. 10–

Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel Father!

become

O guilty Father—would that death
Had saved him from that breach of faith! (1827.)

In stanza xiii (xiv) the lines

Old Father Simpson did maintain
That in her womb the infant wrought

become

And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen
Held that the unborn infant wrought, &c. (1820.)

Finally, stanza xiv (xv) was in 1827 recast in less tautological language. These changes are, no doubt, made in deference to Coleridge's views. Whether they tend to corroborate those views, or really embody their spirit, is another question.

PAGE **38** l. 13. *The language too of these men.* See *L. B.*, p. 372.

PAGE **40** l. 33. *Tom Brown.* The reference is to Thomas Brown (1663–1704). His works (both prose and poetry) are for the most part valueless imitations of the ancient writers (see *Biog. Lit.* (1847) ii. 57).

Sir Roger L'Estrange (circ. 1617–1705), cavalier, journalist, and pamphleteer. His controversial writings are remarkable, even in that outspoken age, for their scurrility. See *T. T.*, July 3, 1833, and editorial note.

PAGE **41** l. 8. *a selection of the* REAL *language.* For *real* Coleridge would no doubt have substituted *natural.* Cp. *Lectures*, p. 92: 'It is a general but mistaken notion, that because some forms of writing, and some combinations of thought, are not usual, they are not natural.'

11. *Between the language of prose*, &c. *L. B.*, p. 380 (1800 ed.) and p. 17 (1802 ed.). Coleridge here quotes from the latter.

PAGE **42** l. 20. *in a state*, &c. The actual phrase is 'a state of vivid sensation' (*L. B.*, p. 369).

PAGE **43** l. 15. *as illustrated.* See prefatory note to *The Thorn* and *Lectures*, p. 89.

PAGE **44** l. 3. *this order*, &c. See *The Friend* (1818), Sect. II, Essay IV, for an elucidation of this distinction.

CHAPTER XVIII

PAGE **44** l. 16. *In distant countries have I been*, &c. The first stanza of *The Last of the Flock*, pub. *L. B.*, 1798 (*O. W.*, p. 114).

PAGE **45** l. 16. *the sublime hymn.* I cannot trace this reference in Milton's prose works. Coleridge is probably thinking partly of the prayer of Adam and Eve (*Par. Lost*, v. 152)—of the lines introducing which Professor Masson writes that they contain 'more than a hint of Milton's sympathy with the Puritans in their objections to Liturgies'—and partly of passages in the prose works, in which Milton states his reasons for that sympathy. See Milton, *Poet. Works*, ed. Masson, iii. 187; *Prose Works*, ed. C. Symmons, i. 163–72, iii. 39 (*An Answer to Animadversions*, &c., and *An Answer to Eikon Basilike.*)

PAGE **46** l. 1. *Unless therefore the difference denied be that of the mere words.* Coleridge speaks as if there were little or no question of Wordsworth having extended his denial of a difference not merely to words, but to all that we include under the term 'style'. But as a matter of fact there is not a single passage in the *Preface* which justifies such a conclusion. The assumption against which Wordsworth throughout protests is that poetry has, and must have, a different *vocabulary* from that of prose. And if this seems to us a small thing for him to insist on so strenuously, we must remember that the adoption of a specific vocabulary was the peculiar vice of the class of writers, with Pope—the Pope of the 'Translation'—at their head, at whom Wordsworth is aiming

in the *Preface*. It is true that Wordsworth has not insisted enough upon the differences which actually *do* exist; but this does not justify Coleridge's assumption. Probably Wordsworth took it for granted that nobody would credit him with denying that in other respects differences did and must exist between the style of poetry and prose—least of all, that Coleridge should do so. And there are private utterances of Coleridge on the subject, which if interpreted as illiberally as he himself has taken Wordsworth's statement in the *Preface*, would lay him open to the very criticisms to which he has subjected Wordsworth. Cp. (e. g.) *A. P.*, p. 229 (1820), 'The sole difference in style is that poetry demands a severer keeping—it admits nothing that prose may not oftener admit, but it oftener rejects'; and *T. T.*, July 12, 1827, 'Prose = words in their best order; poetry = the best words in the best order'; and ib. July 3, 1833, 'Verse, the proper words in their proper places; prose, the most proper words in their proper places.' Coleridge's principle of selection follows naturally from his definition of a poem as 'proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*' (*Biog. Lit.* ii. 10).

13. *But Mr. Wordsworth is among the last*, &c. A truism nevertheless, Wordsworth's statement is, unless viewed historically; and even in 1815 it had become more or less of a truism. Coleridge shows this himself when he comes to explain Wordsworth's true meaning (*infra*, p. 69).

F. N. *Dr. Bell's invaluable system.* 'The origin, nature, and object of the New System of Education, by Rev. Andrew Bell, D.D.' The author was a personal friend of Coleridge's. See Southey's *Life of Dr. Bell*, ii. 409; *Letters*, pp. 575, 581, 605.

PAGE **49** l. 17. *for neither the one nor the other*, &c. What Coleridge here states was, however, by no means Wordsworth's opinion. Indeed, it was because Wordsworth was conscious of the existence of such an attitude to poetry as Coleridge here denies to be possible, that he felt it necessary to write his *Preface*. See *Preface*, p. 379 (*L. B.*).

18. *The true question*, &c. As was pointed out in the note to p. 46, l. 1, Wordsworth does not in the *Preface* deny the differences for which Coleridge here contends. It should be noticed also that Coleridge does not contend, any more than did Wordsworth, for a special poetic *vocabulary*. To Wordsworth the identity of the words seemed to supply an identity of basis, and thus to fulfil the needs of a genuine work of imitation. (See *Biog. Lit.* ii. 56.)

31. *And first from the* origin *of metre.* Cp. Letter to Sotheby, July, 1802 (*Letters*, p. 374): 'Metre itself implies a passion, that is, a state of excitement both in the poet's mind, and is expected (*sic*), in part, of the reader: and, though I stated this to Wordsworth, and he has in some sort stated it in his preface, yet he has not done justice to it, nor has he, in my opinion, sufficiently answered it.'

32. *that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check.* Cp. Wordsworth's *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 383): 'The co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in an unexcited or a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling.'

PAGE **50** l. 1. *this balance of antagonists.* See *Letters*, p. 516, 'the source of our pleasures in the fine arts, in the *antithetical* balance-loving nature of man' (a subject for the proposed lectures of 1807). Cp. Schiller's *Aesthetische Briefe*, No. 14.

16. *There must be not only a partnership, but a union.* This is apparently aimed at Wordsworth; and certainly Wordsworth would *seem* to regard the co-presence of metre with the other elements of poetry as *incidental*, not *inevitable*; as a mechanical combination, not an organic union. See especially his account of the origin of Poetry, *Appendix*, 1802 (*L. B.*, p. 346): 'To this language it is probable that metre of some sort was early superadded.'* But the use of this phrase is only fresh evidence of Wordsworth's deficiency in introspective analysis; for it countenances a conception of poetry which it is the whole object of the *Preface* to subvert. The same self-deception underlies his serious attempt to deal with the question, 'Why have I written in verse?' as if his poetry was entirely the outcome of deliberate choice.

25. *It not only dictates, but,* &c. *Letters*, p. 374: 'In my opinion, poetry justifies as poetry, independent of any other passion, some new combinations of language and *commands* the omission of many others allowable in other compositions.' Cp. also Coleridge's remark to Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, &c., Nov. 15, 1810), to the effect that Wordsworth 'should have remembered that verse being the language of passion, and passion dictating energetic expressions, it became him to make his subjects and style accord. One asks why tales so simple were not in prose.'

33. *the answer of Polixenes.* The *Winter's Tale*, Act ii, Sc. 3.

PAGE **51** l. 16. *This effect it produces,* &c. Cp. *A. P.*, 1805 (p. 153): 'Poetry produces two kinds of pleasure, one for each of the two master-impulses and movements of man, the gratification of the love of variety, and the gratification of the love of uniformity—and that by a recurrence delightful as a painless and yet exciting act of memory—tiny breezelets of surprise, each one destroying the ripplets which the former had made—yet all together keeping the surface of the mind in a bright dimple-smile.' And perhaps it is to Coleridge that Wordsworth is indebted for his insight into the 'perception of similitude in dissimilitude' as one of 'the various

* In an additional sentence to the *Appendix*, which appears first in the edition of 1832, Wordsworth writes, 'Metre is but adventitious to composition.' See also the *Preface* of 1802 (*L. B.*, p. 19).

causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends.' (*L. B.*, p. 384.)

PAGE **52** l. 12. *The reference to the 'Children in the Wood'.* See *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 388).

PAGE **53** l. 11. MARIA. See Sterne's *Works* (1823), ii. 185 and iv. 5 and 117.

17. *the* 'ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS', &c. This poem and *Simon Lee* were published in *L. B.* 1798; *Alice Fell* and *Beggars* in 1807.

21. *would have been more delightful*, &c. Coleridge fails to ask himself the question, *why* would these poems delight me more in prose? Had he done so, he surely must have acknowledged that the reason why these poems are prosaic (so far as they are prosaic) is, not because the language is prosaic, but because the thoughts and images are so. This error underlies much of Coleridge's criticism.

31. *I write in metre*, &c. This explanation is entirely inconsistent with Coleridge's theory of poetic activity, reducing metre, as it does, to an accidental factor in poetry (something *superadded*), and making the connexion between metre and poetic language purely mechanical, instead of regarding both as inevitable media of expression, the choice of which is none the less spontaneous because it is combined with conscious volition. See, *inter alia*, *Biog. Lit.* ii. 50. 65, and *On Poesy or Art*, ib. ii. 258.

PAGE **54** l. 2. THE SAILOR'S MOTHER. Composed 1802, and published 1807; *O. W.*, p. 119. In 1820, ll. 5 and 6 of the first stanza quoted were altered to

> And I have travelled weary miles, to see
> If aught which he had owned might still remain for me.

L. 6 of the second stanza became in 1827:

> From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his mind;

and the last four lines of the third was altered thus:

> And pipe its song in safety;—there
> I found it when my son was dead;
> But now, God help me for my little wit!
> I bear it with me, Sir;—he took so much delight in it.

PAGE **55** l. 1. *The simplest and the most familiar things.* The lines in the footnote occur in Act iv, Sc. 1, but Coleridge has not quoted quite accurately. The first two lines run:

> O sleep of horrors! Now run down and stared at
> By forms so hideous that they mock remembrance!

and for '*spreading* terror' the original has *breathing*. In a marginal note to the corresponding passage in *Osorio* (which does not, however, contain these lines) Coleridge writes: 'Prophetic dreams

are things of nature, and explicable by that law of the mind in which, when dim ideas are connected with vivid feelings, Perception and Imagination insinuate themselves and mix with the forms of Recollection, till the Present appears to exactly correspond with the Past. Whatever is partially like, the Imagination will gradually represent as wholly like . . .' See also *A. P.*, pp. 196 and 243–5 (on nightmare).

4. *the preceding stanza.* Not (as is evident) the preceding stanza, but the last but one.

PAGE **56** l. 1. *Mr. Wordsworth truly affirms.* Cp. *Preface* to *L. B.* (p. 373): 'All good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.'

19. *in an after remark.* See ib., p. 63, ll. 5 ff.

26. *the principle, that* all *the parts*, &c. An important truth, which Wordsworth did not wholly recognize.

30. Cp. note to p. 30, l. 18.

PAGE **59** l. 9. *will Mr. Wordsworth say*, &c. Here Coleridge shows once more his misconception of Wordsworth's position. See note to p. 46, l. 1.

13. *By this the northern waggoner had set.* This stanza is the *first* of Canto II.

F. N. *as of a building to its mason.* In the same spirit Wordsworth (Letter to Mrs. Clarkson, end of 1814: printed in *Athenæum*, Feb. 27, 1904) indignantly protests against the conception, imputed to him, of the Supreme Being 'as bearing the same relation to the universe as the Watchmaker to the Watch'; and Coleridge in his *Notes on Church Divines*, i. 108, inveighs against 'the watchmaking scheme' of the Paleyan School. In the *Aids to Reflection* (p. 271, Bohn) Coleridge characterizes the Divine Omnipresence, in its 'alone safe and legitimate sense', as 'the presence of all things to God'. See also his Essay on the *Prometheus Bound* (*Miscellanies*, p. 68).

PAGE **60** l. 6. *I put my hat upon my head.* Johnson's parody of homely diction. The weakness of its implied argument is exposed in the *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 388).

13. *an ape is not a Newton*, &c. Coleridge is quoting from the *Preface* (*L. B.*, p. 388).

PAGE **61** l. 16. *the 'well-languaged Daniel'.* Cp. *T. T.*, March 15, 1834: 'Read Daniel—the admirable Daniel—in his *Civil Wars* and *Triumphs of Hymen*. The style and language are just such as any very pure and manly writer of the present day—Wordsworth for example—would use; it seems quite modern in comparison with the style of Shakespeare': and *T. T.*, Sept. 11, 1831. And to Lamb in 1808 Coleridge writes: 'Thousands of educated men would become more sensible, fitter to be members of Parliament or Ministers, by reading Daniel.' Cp. also Coleridge's adapta-

tions of Daniel, *Poet. Works*, p. 472, and note on Chalmers's *Life of Daniel*, 1820 (*Miscellanies*, p. 293): 'the style of that poem (the *Hymen's Triumph*) may, without extravagance, be declared to be imperishable English.' See *infra*, note to p. 119, l. 30. The epithet 'well-languaged' was applied to Daniel by W. Browne (*Britannia's Pastorals*, Bk. II, Song II). Drayton in his *Epistle of Poets and Poetry* gave his opinion that Daniel's manner 'better fitteth prose'. (See Art. Daniel, *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*)

29. *Lamb's Dramatic Specimens.* 'Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakespeare, with notes. By Charles Lamb, London, 1808' (i. 266–71).

PAGE **62** F. N. *a circumstance*, &c. This line was already altered in the 1802 edition of the *L. B.* to 'Upon the Pillar at the appointed place'. Of this, however, Coleridge takes no notice: he is either quoting from memory or from an earlier edition. It is noticeable that the alteration does not consist in the substitution of a word unsuitable for prose, but of a more concrete image. In 1827 Wordsworth made further alterations in deference to Coleridge's opinion.

PAGE **63** l. 5. *The answer or objection in the preface.* Wordsworth's account and justification of metre is certainly the weak spot in his system. He set himself the task of justifying the use of metre (considered as an artificial disposition of sounds) by arguments which did *not* also justify an artificial choice of words; and this task he found it impossible to accomplish. But it should be noticed that in the second version of the *Preface* (1802) the remark 'that metre paves the way', &c. is met by arguments different from, if no more effective than, those quoted here (see *L. B.*, p. 18). Coleridge is here evidently quoting from the earlier form of the *Preface*: in the edition of 1802, this passage ('The distinction of rhyme and metre') is inserted in a later paragraph) where Wordsworth discusses the language proper to the Poet when speaking 'in his own person and character' (*L. B.*, pp. 27–9).

PAGE **64** l. 8. *the name of* TASTE. In the lectures of 1811–12 (*Lectures*, p. 81) Coleridge defines Taste as 'an attainment after a poet has been disciplined by experience, and has added to genius that talent by which he knows what part of his genius he can make acceptable and intelligible to the portion of mankind for which he writes'. See also the fragmentary essay on *Taste* (*Biog. Lit.* ii. 247).

16. *By* meditation. Cp. Lecture VI of the 1811–12 courses (*Lectures*, pp. 67–8): 'This circumstance enabled Shakespeare to paint truly, and according to the colouring of nature, a vast number of personages by the simple force of meditation,' &c.; and Lecture VII (*Lectures*, p. 101): 'Having admitted that these lower persons might be suggested to Shakespeare by observation,

Mr. Coleridge reverted to his ideal characters, and said, "I ask, where Shakespeare observed this" (some heroic sentiments by Othello). "It was his inward eye of meditation on his own nature. He became Othello, and therefore spoke like him."' Also Lectures of 1818 (p. 282): 'The truth is, Shakespeare's characters are genera all intensely individualized; the results of meditation, of which observation supplied the drapery and the colours necessary to combine them with each other.'

PAGE **65** l. 3. *Could a rule be given from* without. This thought is developed more fully in the Lectures of 1818. See *Lectures*, p. 227, &c., on the distinction of mechanical regularity and organic form; and the definition of poetry (p. 232): 'One character belongs to all true poets, that they write from a principle within, nor originating in anything without.'

10. *the marble peach.* Cp. Letter to C. Mathews, June, 1814 (*Letters*, p. 623): 'What a marble peach on a mantel-piece, that you take up deluded and put down with pettish disgust, is, compared with a fruit-piece of Vanhuyser's, even such is a mere *copy* of nature compared with a true histrionic imitation.' See also *Lectures*, p. 229, and *T. T.*, July 6, 1833.

PAGE **66** l. 4. *in Dodsley's collection.* 'The first edition of "A Collection of Poems" came out in 1748, and the publisher took great pains to obtain contributions from nearly every fashionable versifier of the day. It has been frequently reprinted and added to, and forms perhaps the most popular collection of the kind ever published.' (Art. 'Dodsley' in *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*)

PAGE **67** l. 31. *are such . . . caprices condemnable only*, &c. This does not touch Wordsworth's contention, which is, that its deviation from the language of natural life *is of itself* enough to condemn such poetry.

CHAPTER XIX

PAGE **69** l. 1. *some passages in the former part.* See *Preface*, *L. B.*, p. 372.

7. *the train of argument that follows. Preface*, p. 378, &c.

PAGE **70** l. 1. *he narrowed his view for the time.* Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, &c., Nov. 15, 1810) reports that Coleridge had remarked to him that 'wishing to avoid an undue regard to the high and genteel in society, Wordsworth had unreasonably attached himself to the low'.

11. *the judicious and amiable Garve.* The quotation in the text is taken, with slight alterations, from pp. 233–4 of the *Sammlung*, ed. Leipzig, 1779; *Anmerkungen über Gellert's Moral, dessen Schriften u. Charakter* (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

PAGE **71** l. 8. *the Poems of Cotton.* Charles Cotton (1630–87). His *Scarronides, or Virgil Travestie*, a burlesque on the first and fourth books of the *Aeneid*, was first published in 1664. Cotton's *Ode to Winter* is described by Wordsworth (*Preface*, 1815, *O. W.*, p. 958) as 'an admirable composition', and the latter part of the Ode is there quoted by him, as an instance of Fancy 'employed in the treatment of Feeling'.

35. *Chaucer's 'Troilus and Creseide.'* The extract is from Book V, Stanzas 85–93. In the original the first line of the first stanza stands thus:

> And after this he to the yates went;

and the first of the last stanza thus:

> This song when he thus songen hadde sone.
>
> (ed. Skeat, i. 376.)

Wordsworth chose a longer extract from the same book, including this passage, for his 'Selections from Chaucer modernized, written 1801'.

PAGE **73** l. 16. *a former page of these sketches.* See *Biog. Lit.* i. 15.

31. *The Synagogue.* For this passage see p. 274 of the Pickering edition of Herbert's poems (1835). *The Synagogue* of Christopher Harvie was first printed with *The Temple* in 1640.

PAGE **74** l. 18. *the extracts promised.* The three poems here quoted are to be found on pp. 87, 40, and 133 respectively of the 1835 edition of Herbert's poems.

CHAPTER XX

PAGE **78** l. 7. *the* 'RECLUSE'. In his own account of the poem projected under this title (*Preface*, 1815: *O. W.*, p. 754) Wordsworth informs us 'The first and third parts of *The Recluse* will consist chiefly of meditations in the author's own person'; and that 'in the intermediate part (*The Excursion*) the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted'. The meditations, however (with the exception of Pt. I, Bk. I, published in 1889), were never written.

10. *his own words.* Altered from *The Pet Lamb*, ll. 63–4.

19. *The child is father of the man*, &c. From the lines 'My heart leaps up when I behold', &c. (*O. W.*, p. 78).

20. *the 'Lucy Gray'.* Published in *L. B.*, 1798.

25. *the 'Idle Shepherd-Boys'.* Published in *L. B.*, 1798.

PAGE **79** l. 2. *the 'Blind Highland Boy'.* Published 1807. In the standard edition (1849–50) 'sweetly' in the last stanza is altered to 'safely'. In the first stanza, 'eagle's' should be 'eagles', in

spite of Sara Coleridge's preference for the singular form. See note to 99. 1 *infra.*

PAGE **81** l. 1. *the lines on the* BOY, &c. First published in *L. B.*, 1800 with the title *There was a Boy,* &c., a title which it retained in subsequent editions. Coleridge has omitted the line 'Responsive to his call, with quivering peal', which comes between ll. 3 and 4 of this quotation, and is followed by 'And loud halloos', &c. In the version of the standard edition some changes are introduced.

F. N. '*Concourse wild.*' This alteration was made in the 1805 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (see *L. B.*, p. 193).

The word '*scene*'. Coleridge is here in error. The first meaning given by Johnson (*Dict.* 1st ed.) is 'the stage', the second 'the general appearance of any action'. The same order is preserved in subsequent editions. Both quotations from Milton are taken from Johnson, who also quotes Dryden (*Theodore and Honoria*) in illustration of meaning 2.

PAGE **82** l. 1. *that noble imitation of Drayton.* Composed 1800: published 1800.

l. 18. *Song at the feast of Brougham Castle.* Composed 1807: published 1807. In the standard edition the first verse runs—

> Alas! the impassioned minstrel did not know
> How by Heaven's grace this Clifford's heart was framed:
> How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
> Was softened into feeling, soothed and tamed.

CHAPTER XXI

With this chapter may be compared the remarks on modern Reviews in chapters ii and iii.

PAGE **86** l. 4. *the commencement of the 'Edinburgh Review'.* The first number of the *Edinburgh Review* was issued Oct., 1802.

21. *no re-commitment,* &c. Cp. letter to Jeffrey, May 23, 1808 (*Letters*, p. 527): 'Without knowing me you have been, perhaps rather unwarrantably, severe on my morals and understanding, inasmuch as you have, I understand—for I have not seen the Reviews—frequently introduced my name when I had not brought any publication within your Court. With one slight exception, a shilling pamphlet that never obtained the least notice, I have not published anything with my name, or known to be mine, for thirteen years. Surely I might quote against you the complaint of Job as to those who brought against him "the iniquities of his youth".'

29. *No private grudge,* &c. The date of this epigram is unknown. It was perhaps suggested by the thoughts which are expressed in this chapter.

PAGE **87** l. 25. *the illustrious Lessing.* See Preface to *Wie die*

Alten den Tod gebildet and to the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847). For specimens of Lessing's controversial style see his *Anti-Goeze* and *Vade-Mecum fuir den Herrn Samuel Gotthold Lange.*

30. *I submit myself*, &c. Cp. Letter to Sotheby (Sept. 1802), *Letters*, p. 402: 'Be minute, and assign your reasons often, and your first impressions always, and then, blame or praise, I care not which, I shall be satisfied.'

33. *Let a communication.* To Murray in the summer of 1816 Coleridge proposed the founding of a review of old books, British and foreign, on the lines here suggested. *Memoirs of Murray*, i. 304; *Life*, p. 223 and f. n. To the end of his life Coleridge nourished this project of a model review. See *T. T.*, June 30, 1830: 'Notwithstanding what you say, I am persuaded that a review would amply succeed even now, which should be started upon a published code of principles, critical, moral, political, and religious; which should announce what sort of books it would review, namely, works of *literature* as contradistinguished from all that offspring of the press, which in the present age supplies food for the craving caused by the extended ability of reading without any correspondent education of the mind, and which formerly was done by conversation, and which should really give a fair account of what the author *intended* to do, and in his own words, if possible, and in addition, afford one or two fair specimens of the execution—itself never descending for one moment to any personality . . . You see the great reviewers are now ashamed of reviewing works in the old style and have taken up essay writing instead. Hence arose such publications as the *Literary Gazette*, which are set up for the purpose—not a useless one—of advertising new books of all sorts for the circulating libraries. A mean between the two extremes still remains to be taken.'

PAGE **89** l. 12. *merit legal rather than literary chastisement.* Coleridge actually contemplated legal proceedings against *Blackwood's Magazine* for the review of the *Biog. Lit.* (See letter to Crabb Robinson, *Life*, p. 219.)

15. *its unfaithfulness to its own . . . plan.* Cp. the Preface to the first number of the *Edinburgh*, where the promoters of the magazine announce that it is their intention 'to confine their notice in a great degree to works that either have attained, or deserve a certain degree of celebrity'.

20. *the suspicion*, &c. In his 'Letter to Peter Morris, M.D.' (*Blackwood*, Sep. 1820) Coleridge writes in plain language: 'The object of their (the *Edinburgh* Reviewers') articles is to prevent or retard the sale of a work, and this they seem to pursue with most inveteracy where, from the known circumstances of the author, the injury will fall heaviest.' The letter was not, however, meant by Coleridge for publication (see *Miscellanies*, p. 241).

26. *the article on Dr. Rennell's sermon.* 'Discourses on various subjects, by Thomas Rennell, D.D., Master of the Temple. London: Rivington; 1801.'

PAGE **90** l. 29. *O then what soul was his. The Excursion*, Book I, l. 198. The passage begins:

> Such was the Boy—but for the growing youth
> What soul was his, &c.

See *Edin. Rev.*, vol. xxiv, p. 12. The passage is there characterized as 'a raving fit'. The review of *The Excursion*, from the pen of Jeffrey, appeared in the *Edinburgh* for Nov. 1814. Its perusal stirred Coleridge to deepest indignation. 'If ever guilt lay on a writer's head,' he wrote to Lady Beaumont, 'and if malignity, slander, hypocrisy, and self-contradictory baseness can constitute guilt, I dare openly, and openly (please God!) I will, impeach the writer of that article of it!' (*Letters*, p. 642.)

PAGE **91** l. 31. *a few broad assertions.* Cp. letter to Allsop, 1818 (*Letters*, p. 697), 'the broad predetermined abuse of the *Edinburgh*.'

PAGE **92** l. 1. *What then if this very critic. Edin. Rev.*, vol. xxiv, p. 28: 'Beside these more extended passages of wit or beauty which we have quoted there are scattered up and down the book, and in the midst of its most repulsive portions, a very great number of single lines and images that sparkle like gems in the desert, and startle us with an intimation of the great poetic powers that lie buried in the rubbish that has been heaped around them.'

8. *With a* 'THIS WON'T DO!' The critique opens with the words, 'This will never do.'

23. *The happiest, gayest attitude of things.* Akenside's *Pleasures of Imagination*, Bk. I, l. 20 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

30. *Michael Angelo's* MOSES. Characterized by Coleridge (*Miscellanies*, p. 90) as 'the only work of true modern sculpture.'

PAGE **93** l. 3. *the noble passage. Holy Dying*, ch. i. sect. 3, § 2 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

30. *In the 'Excursion' the poet has introduced.* See Book I, ll. 108 foll.:

> Among the hills of Athol he was born, &c.

PAGE **94** l. 4. *a vagrant merchant*, &c. Ib. l. 324.

10. *the critic who*, &c. See *Edin. Rev.*, vol. xxiv, p. 30: 'A man who went about selling flannel and pocket-handkerchiefs in this lofty diction would soon frighten away all his customers.'

17. *Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits*, &c. *Excursion*, Bk. I, ll. 342-3.

CHAPTER XXII

PAGE **96** l. 5. '*Fidelity*'. Composed 1805, published 1807. In 1827 the second line of the second stanza became: 'When this ill-fated traveller died.'

PAGE **97** l. 18. *the* INCONSTANCY. The transitions which Coleridge condemns are, however, consistent with Wordsworth's belief, that the style should rise as the poet himself rises in the conception of the subject.

27. *Cowley's Essay on Cromwell.* 'Vision, concerning his late pretended Highness Cromwell the wicked: containing a Discourse in Vindication of him by a pretended Angel and the confutation thereof by the Author Abraham Cowley' (1661).

29. *Consolation of Boetius. Boetii Consolationis Philosophiae* Lib. 5. Boetius flourished circa 500 A. D. He was famous for his general learning and translations of Greek philosophy. The *Consolation* was written during his imprisonment at Tisinum.

The Argenis of Barclay. A didactic romance in imitation of the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter, by John Barclay (1582–1621).

PAGE **98** l. 6. *Metastasio.* Pietro Metastasio, the popular Italian poet, flor. 1698–1782. His dramas were written for the operatic stage, and suffered as dramas in consequence.

PAGE **99** l. 1. *the exquisite stanzas*, &c. *Supra*, p. 79.

5. *And one, the rarest, was a shell*, &c. Coleridge quotes, it will be remembered, from the edition of 1815. In that of 1807, the vessel which carried the boy was a *Household Tub*; and when, at Coleridge's suggestion (see *A. P.* 1808, p. 208), Wordsworth altered this to a turtle-shell, he expanded the three stanzas telling of the Blind Boy's choice into seven (stanzas 21–3 and 26–9 of standard version). In 1820 he altered the twenty-third stanza thus:

> The rarest was a turtle-shell
> Which he, poor Child, had studied well:
> A shell of ample size, and light
> As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
> That sportive dolphins drew,

and interposed two fresh stanzas between the two quoted in the text. Lamb objected strongly to the transformation of the tub (*Letters*, ed. Ainger, i. 340). See also Professor Raleigh's *Wordsworth*, p. 100.

16. ''*Tis gone—forgotten*', &c. From *The Emigrant Mother*, composed 1802, published 1807. In the edition of 1820 Wordsworth rewrote the first two lines, thus:

> 'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget:
> There was a smile or two—yet—yet
> I can remember them, I see, &c.

In l. 7 he substituted 'bright' for 'sweet'; and the last two lines became :—

> For they bewilder me : even now
> His smiles are lost—I know not how !

27. *Thou hast a nest,* &c. From the lines *To a Skylark.* Composed 1805, published 1807. (Poems of the Fancy.) The last four lines were in 1820 rewritten thus :

> Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,
> Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind ;
> But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
> As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
> I with my fate contented will plod on,
> And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

PAGE **100** l. 3. '*Close by a pond*', &c. From *Resolution and Independence* (composed 1802, published 1807). This stanza was omitted in 1820. The last three lines of the second extract are quoted by Wordsworth (*Preface*, 1815 ; *O. W.*, p. 956) in illustration of the modifying powers of the imagination.

15. *the three following stanzas.* Nos. 17–19 of the standard version. In these Wordsworth made no changes.

PAGE **101** l. 4. *In the* '*Excursion*', &c. This remark would seem to show that Coleridge preferred Wordsworth's later to his earlier style. In *The Excursion* there is a good deal of somewhat pompous poetical diction.

10. *a* matter-of-factness *in certain poems* Cp. letter to Southey above quoted, July, 1802 (*Letters*, p. 386) : 'a strict adherence to matter of fact, even to prolixity.' Yet this, it should be remembered, was the very defect which Wordsworth sought to avoid in his treatment of common life. See e.g. the Fenwick Note to *Lucy Gray* (*L. B.*, p. 229), where he contrasts his own method with 'Crabbe's matter-of-fact style of treating subjects of the same kind '.

20. *To this* accidentality *I object.* See *Biog. Lit.* ii. 33, l. 6 and note.

25. *Davenant's prefatory letter to Hobbs.* From the 'Preface before *Gondibert*, To his much honoured friend, Mr. Hobbes, dated Louvre in Paris, Jan. 2, 1650' (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847). Cp. Lessing, *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, 'Stücke 21 und 34, where the same point of view is enforced.

PAGE **102** l. 11. *the lines in the* EXCURSION. See *The Excursion*, iii. 50, &c. The descriptive detail, to which in itself Coleridge rightly objects, has an object apart from that of mere description, as is shown by the Wanderer's speech which follows.

19. *Such descriptions too often occasion.* This passage recalls Lessing's contentions in the *Laocoon*, especially ch. xvi.

33. *The fig-tree ; not that kind*, &c. *Par. Lost*, ix. 1101.

PAGE **103** l. 17. *the head of Memnon.* The statue of Memnon was said to emit a sound like the snapping of a musical string when struck by the first rays of the sun.

26. THE CHOICE OF HIS CHARACTERS. See e.g. Jeffrey's remarks on the choice of the Pedlar in the review of *The Excursion* referred to on p. 94. With Coleridge's strictures on Wordsworth's characters we may place side by side his concession in the letter 'On Thinking or Reflection' (*Blackwood*, Oct., 1821; *Miscellanies*, p. 255): 'Here and there he (Wordsworth) . . . may be thought to betray a preference of mean or trivial instances for grand morals, a capricious predilection for incidents that contrast with the depth and novelty of the truths they are to exemplify. But still to the principle, to the habit of tracing the presence of the high in the humble, the mysterious Dii Cabiri, in the form of the dwarf Miner, with hammer and spade, and week-day apron, we must attribute Wordsworth's *peculiar* power, his *leavening* influence on the opinions, feelings, and pursuits of his admirers—most on the young of most promise and highest acquirements; and that, while others are read with delight, his works are a *religion*.'

PAGE **104** l. 28. *the main fundamental distinction.* Cp. the Preliminary Essay 'On the Principles of Genial Criticism', and notes.

PAGE **105** l. 17. *and rejoice*, &c. *Excursion*, i. 75-6.

21. *O many are the poets that are sown. Excursion*, i. 77-91, with the omission of five lines.

35. *On the contrary*, &c. This opinion of the rarity of poetic genius Coleridge repeated to Allsop. Later, however, he added the name of Elliott (the smith) to that of Burns (Allsop, *Letters*, &c., i. 194).

PAGE **106** l. 17. *I think of Chatterton.* Altered from *Resolution and Independence*, stanza vii.

PAGE **107** l. 1. *The precepts of Horace.* Horace nowhere, I believe, in the *Ars Poetica* directly enjoins the avoidance of irrelevant particularization. The nearest approach to such counsel is perhaps contained in lines 148-52, where, after advising the author to confine himself to stock characters, he adds that the wise writer

> Semper ad eventum festinat et in medias res
> Non secus ac notas auditorem rapit, et quae
> Desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquit.

16. *Cumberland's Calvary.* A weak imitation of *Paradise Lost*, by Richard Cumberland, published 1792.

18. *That* illusion, *contra-distinguished from* delusion. Cp. *Biog. Lit.* ii. 6, l. 5, 'that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith.' Compare also Coleridge's remarks on stage-illusion (*Lectures*, pp. 205, 274), where he contrasts

his own conception of the purpose of the drama with that of the French and with Dr. Johnson's. See also letter to D. Stuart, May, 1816 (*Letters*, p. 663), and *Biog. Lit.* i. 187, ii. 189.

PAGE **108** l. 18. *Among the hills of Athol he was born. Excursion*, Bk. I. 108 and ff. This passage was afterwards altered. All but the first three lines of the first extract, and those telling of the step-father, were omitted.

PAGE **109** l. 17. *few only, and those . . . particularly circumstanced.* Wordsworth himself, according to Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, &c., May 8, 1812), 'seemed to allow that his admirers should be taught to undergo a sort of education to his works.'

20. *pages* 27, 28, *and* 62 *of the Poems, Vol. I.* Pages 27-8 in the edition of 1815 contain stanzas 4-13 of the *Anecdote for Fathers*. Of these stanzas two were afterwards condensed into one, and a new one was added. Page 62 of vol. i is a blank. Sara Coleridge (*Biog. Lit.* 1847, ii. 153) suggests that her father may have had vol. ii, p. 62, in mind, which contains the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, from the line—

O'er whom such thankful tears were shed

to—

When falcons were abroad for prey.

'I have heard,' she adds, 'my father object to the paragraph

Alas! when evil men are strong,

I believe on account of its too much retarding the impassioned flow of the poem and thus injuring its general effect, though the passage is beautiful in itself and in harmony with the rest.'

PAGE **110** l. 4. *They flash upon that inward eye.* From *I wandered lonely as a cloud* (composed 1804, published 1807).

14. *The second instance.* From *Gipsies*, composed and published 1807.

33. *the diction and imagery of which.* Cp. Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, &c., Nov. 15, 1810: 'Coleridge censured the disproportion in the machinery of the poem on the gipsies. Had the whole world been standing idle, more powerful arguments to expose the evil could not have been brought forward.' Wordsworth in 1820 altered, but hardly modified, the imagery of the last three lines as follows:

Oh better wrong and strife,
(By nature transient) than this torpid life;
Life which the very stars reprove
As on their silent tasks they move!
Yet, witness all that stirs on heaven and earth,
In scorn I speak not:—they are what their birth
And breeding suffers them to be:
Wild outcasts of society.

PAGE **111** l. 16. *the Ode. Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.* Composed 1802–6, published 1807.

19. *Thou best philosopher*, &c. From stanza viii of the *Ode.*

PAGE **112** l. 35. *in no system*, &c. The essence of finite things is, according to Spinoza, infinite, but their existence finite. God as 'Causa Sui' is that 'whose essence involves existence, or that whose nature cannot be conceived but as existing'. (See Martineau's *Spinoza*, p. 203, 'On Finite Modes.')

PAGE **113** l. 24. *the four lines immediately following.* These lines appear in the editions of 1807 and 1815, but were afterwards omitted in deference to Coleridge's criticism.

31. *We are Seven.* Composed 1798, published 1800.

PAGE **114** l. 2. *the frightful notion of lying* awake. Coleridge forgets that, however frightful this notion was to himself, it was not necessarily so to others, who might conceive it less realistically. Wordsworth and his sister, at least, delighted in the thought; and the passage is thus justified as an essentially lyrical utterance. See Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journals*, Apr. 29, 1802: 'We went to S John's Grove, sate a while at first; afterwards William lay, and I lay, in the trench under the fence—he with his eyes shut, and listening to the waterfall and the birds . . . we both lay still, and unseen by one another. He thought that it would be so sweet thus to lie in the grave, to hear the peaceful sounds of the earth, and just to know that our dear friends were near.'

PAGE **115** l. 9. *Of how high value I deem this*, &c. See *Biog. Lit.* ii. 21–2.

30. *its* untranslatableness *in words of the same meaning.* This is the 'critical aphorism' which Coleridge evolved from his early 'reading and meditation'. See *Biog. Lit.* i. 14.

PAGE **116** l. 21. *Sidonius Apollinarius* (*circ.* 431–482 A.D.), Bishop of Clermont. Such of his writings as have been transmitted to modern times consist of poems and letters.

27. *by actual though limited experience.* See his account of Boyer's method, *Biog. Lit.* i. 5.

32. *On some future occasion.* This promise was never fully carried out. See, however, 'On Style' (1818), *Miscellanies*, p. 183; and *A. P.* 1819 (pp. 266–9, esp. p. 268).

PAGE **117** l. 27. *has been treated of*, i.e. in connexion with Bowles's influence. See *Biog. Lit.* i. 7.

PAGE **118** l. 13. *Makes audible*, &c., from the lines *To a Gentleman* (William Wordsworth), ll. 58–9.

19. *See page 25, vol. 2nd.* Coleridge refers to stanzas 3–6 of 'Star Gazers' (composed 1806, published 1807).

21. *O Reader! had you in your mind.* This and the following extract are taken from *Simon Lee* (composed and published 1798). The italicized *me*, which appears in the first and second editions of the *Biog. Lit.*, is no doubt a printer's error.

30. *the six beautiful quatrains.* From *The Fountain* (composed 1799, published 1800). Verse 1 of stanza 2 is now 'The Blackbird amid leafy trees.'

PAGE **119** l. 21. *the sonnet on Buonaparte.* No. iv of *Sonnets Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty* (composed 1802; published in *The Morning Post*, 1802).

23. *the poem on the withered Celandine. The small Celandine* (composed 1804, published 1807, among *Poems referring to the Period of Old Age*).

30. *Mr. Wordsworth strikingly resembles Samuel Daniel.* The resemblance to which Coleridge here draws attention is due partly to natural affinities, and partly to the direct influence of the elder poet on the younger. Daniel is conspicuous among the great Elizabethans for temperateness both of style and thought, and freedom from bombast, pedantry, and affectation: qualities which could not fail to appeal to Wordsworth. And Wordsworth not only studied him assiduously (a compliment he paid to few poets), but not unfrequently borrowed lines or passages directly from his writings. It may even be that Daniel's example encouraged him in an undue respect for reasonable sentiment and perfect simplicity of statement. See *The Excursion*, iv. 295–331 (a passage from Daniel which harmonizes strikingly with the typically Wordsworthian context); and Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*, as compared with Daniel's *Funeral Poem on the Earl of Devonshire.*

PAGE **120** l. 12. *A poem is not necessarily obscure.* Cp. Coleridge's refutation of a similar charge brought against his own poetry (*Preface* to second edition of *Poems*, 1797, *Poet. Works*, p. 540), ending 'Intelligibilia non intellectum adfero'.

15. *Fit audience find, though few. Par. Lost*, vii. 31.

26. *the flux and reflux of their inmost nature.* For this phrase cp. *Preface* to *L. B.* (1798: *L. B.*, p. 374): 'It (the purpose of these poems) is to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature'; and *Biog. Lit.* ii. 183, l. 32.

28. *modes of inmost being, to which*, &c. Cp. Coleridge's marginal note in Fichte's *Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung*, 'Lovers in their finite state incapable of fathoming the intensity of their feelings, *help* the thought *out* by extension, commute as it were—and thus think the passion as wide in *Time* as it is deep in essence. Hence *auf ewig dein.*' For Wordsworth's own account of his purpose in adopting the idea of pre-existence in the Ode, see Fenwick Note to the poem.

PAGE **121** l. 4. Πολλά, &c. Pindar, *Olymp.* ii. 149–59.

35. *the whole description of skating.* From the poem entitled *Influence of Natural Objects*, &c. (composed 1799, published in *The Friend*, 1809).

PAGE **122** l. 10. *the poem on the green linnet* (composed 1803, published 1807).

29. *the description of the blue-cap*, &c., from *The Kitten and Falling Leaves* (composed 1804, published 1807).

30. *the poem to the cuckoo* (composed 1802, published 1807).

34. *Three years she grew*, &c. (composed 1799, published 1800).

PAGE **123** l. 12. *vol. I. page* 134 *to* 136. The reference is to the poem, *'Tis said that some have died for Love* (composed 1806, published 1807).

13. *the 'Affliction of Margaret'* (composed 1801 (?), published 1807).

PAGE **124** l. 13. *In the play of* Fancy, &c. As Sara Coleridge (*Biog. Lit.* 1847, ii. 175 n.) was perhaps the first to point out, many of the poems classed by Wordsworth under the heading 'Poems of the Fancy', are by no means distinguished chiefly by this characteristic. Even in such a poem as *The Kitten and Falling Leaves*, which Wordsworth regarded as a peculiarly good illustration of the display of Fancy (see Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, June 3, 1812), this quality is overbalanced by others of greater depth and value.

24. *add the gleam*, &c., from *Stanzas suggested by a picture of Peele Castle.* Coleridge is unfortunate in quoting as a description of the essence of imaginative power a passage in which Wordsworth wished to characterize the errors, or at least the limitations, of the imagination in youth. He has thereby originated and helped to perpetuate a misunderstanding of Wordsworth's conception of the faculty; for Wordsworth has been held, on the strength of this passage, to conceive of the charm of art as something adventitious, which the artist or poet puts into nature and does not find there. But this is exactly the opposite of Wordsworth's real meaning. It was in order to guard against further misconception that Wordsworth, in 1827, altered the lines to

> add a gleam
> Of lustre, never known to sea or land,
> But borrowed from the youthful poet's dream.

Subsequently, however, the old reading was restored. Nobody knew better than Coleridge that the essence of Wordsworth's art lay not in adding a wonder to common things, but in extracting the wonder from them; and we must conclude, therefore, that he forgets the context of the passage, and, further, takes the word 'add' very

loosely, meaning that to those who cannot see it for themselves, the light *seems* to be added.

33. *the poem on the Yew Trees* (composed 1803, published 1815). For 'pinal' in l. 7 all editions read 'pining'. See Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, &c., May 9, 1815, '"Yew Trees" and a "Description of Night" particularly recommended by W. W. as instances of Imagination'.

PAGE **125** l. 19. *Resignation and Independence* should be *Resolution and Independence.*

26. *Or the 8th, 9th,* &c. The following are the sonnets referred to:—(1) *Where lies the Land?* (published 1807). (2) *Even as a Dragon's Eye* (published 1815). (3) *O Mountain Stream!* (published 1807, and included among the Duddon Sonnets in 1820). (4) *Earth has not anything to show more fair* (composed 1802, published 1807). (5) *Methought I saw the footsteps of a throne* (published 1807). (6) *It is a beauteous Evening—calm and free!* (composed 1802, published 1807). (7) *Two Voices are there* (composed 1807 (?); published 1807).

28. *the last ode*, i. e. the *Intimations*, &c., stanzas 5 and 9.

PAGE **127** l. 16. *the imaginative power displayed therein.* See Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, &c., June 15, 1815: 'W. spoke with interest of the *White Doe* as an imaginative poem—the ascription of more than human feelings to that animal in connection with the tragic story, which is purified and elevated by it.' The *White Doe* was composed 1807–8, published 1815.

18. *White Doe*, p. 5. See *O. W.*, pp. 396–7, ll. 31–66. It is, perhaps, worthy of note that the *White Doe* is, in the music of its verse, especially in this passage, the most Coleridgean of Wordsworth's poems.

PAGE **128** l. 31. *Bartram's Travels.* 'Travels thro' North and South Carolina and the Cherokee country,' &c., by W. Bartram, 1792, p. 36 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847). See *T. T.*, March 12, 1827.

PAGE **129** l. 4. *the first genuine philosophic poem.* Cp. Letter of Jan., 1804, to R. Sharp (*Letters*, p. 450), 'I prophesy immortality to his *Recluse* as the first and finest Philosophic Poem'; and to Wordsworth, May, 1815 (*Letters*, p. 648), 'In the very pride of confident hope I looked forward to *The Recluse* as the *first* and *only* true philosophical poem in existence,' and following passage.

12. *in designating these critics.* See *Essay Supplementary to the Preface*, 1815 (*O. W.*, p. 945).

17. *Let not Mr. Wordsworth be charged.* The following paragraph (dealing with Wordsworth's detractors), and the footnote to it, were withdrawn by Sara Coleridge from the second edition of the *Biog. Lit.*, 'as anomalies in my Father's writings, unworthy of them and of him' (see *Biog. Lit.* 1847, Introd., p. clviii). For the same reason H. N. Coleridge suppressed the footnote to i. 36.

20. *I myself heard the commander-in-chief.* See Letter to D. Stuart, July 8, 1825 (*Letters*, p. 743), 'I give you my honour that Jeffrey himself told me that *he* was an enthusiastic admirer of Wordsworth's poetry, but it was necessary that a Review should have a character'; and Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, &c., Nov. 14, 1810, 'He (C.) related to us that Jeffrey had lately called on him—and assured him that he was a great admirer of W.'s poetry, that his *L. B.* were always on his table, &c. That he (W.) had only been attacked in the Review because the Errors of Men of Genius ought to be exposed.'

32. *I once heard a clergyman.* See Allsop, *Letters, &c., of S. T. C.* ii. 99.

PAGE **130** l. 27. *I was fully convinced that such a criticism.* Cp. Letter to Allsop, Dec. 18, 1818 (*Letters*, p. 697): 'If in one instance of my literary life, I have appeared to deviate from this rule,[1] it was not till the fame of the writer (which I had been for fourteen years successively toiling like a second Ali to build up) had been established: and, secondly and chiefly, with the purpose, and I may safely add, with the *effect* of rescuing the necessary task from malignant defamers, and in order to set forth the excellences and the trifling proportion which the defects bore to the excellences.' See also D. Stuart, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, p. 244 (Oct. 1815): 'I am convinced that the detection of the faults in his (W.'s) poetry is indispensable to a rational appreciation of the merits.'

PAGE **131** l. 23. *For more than eighteen months.* This statement conflicts with the facts recorded in the *Life*, pp. 214, 227, 228. It applies only to the first part of the critique—that dealing with Wordsworth's theory—and the chapter on the conduct of critical journals. The appreciation of Wordsworth's poetry was written subsequently.

26. *the tones which are alone natural.* Cp. *Biog. Lit.* i. 151, 'to verse rather than to prose, if to either, belongs the voice of mourning,' &c.

30. '*When Hope grew round me*', &c. *Dejection: An Ode*, ll. 80–1.

SATYRANE'S LETTERS.

The following description of his German experiences Coleridge has extracted, and to some extent refashioned, from letters written home during his stay in Germany (1798–9). They were first published under the same title in *The Friend* (Nos. 14, 16, and 18), in November–December, 1809. For the title cp. the poem *A Tomb-*

[1] 'Never to admit the faults of a work of genius to those who denied or were incapable of feeling and understanding the beauties.'

less Epitaph, first published without title in *The Friend*, No. 14, Nov. 23, 1809 :

> Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane,
> (So call him, for so mingling blame with praise,
> And smiles with anxious looks, his earliest friends,
> Marking his birth name, wont to character
> His wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal),
> 'Tis true that passionate for ancient truths, &c.

(*Poet. Works*, p. 180 and n.) ; and Spenser, *Faery Queen*, Bk. I, Canto vi.

PAGE **133** l. 33. *It was at that time in my life.* Cp. Letter to George Coleridge, April, 1798 (*Letters*, p. 240), 'Equally with you I deprecate the moral and intellectual habits of those men both in England and France, who have modestly assumed to themselves the exclusive title of Philosophers and Friends of Freedom. I think them at least *as* distant from greatness as goodness' : and *Letters*, p. 307.

PAGE **134** l. 12. *—— a tune Harsh and of dissonant mood*, &c. Milton, *Samson Agon.* i. 661-2.

PAGE **143** l. 33. *Over what place, thought I.* Cp. *Letters*, p. 259.

PAGE **145** l. 6. *point as with silent finger to the sky and stars.* Cp. *Excursion*, bk. vi, ll. 17-19 :

> Spacious plains,
> Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-towers,
> And spires whose 'silent finger points to heaven'.

See *O. W.*, p. 922.

PAGE **149** l. 21. *the interesting dialogue.* See note to vol. i, p. 40, l. 10.

PAGE **150** l. 34. *Their visnomies seem'd like a goodly banner*, &c. Altered, or misquoted, from Spenser, *Amoretti* v.

PAGE **156** l. 4. *Milton's sonnet.* Sonnet viii (ed. Masson): 'When the assault was intended to the City.'

32. *when I knew nothing of Lessing but his name.* See, however, Letter to Benjamin Flower, April 1, 1796 (*Biog. Supplement, Biog. Lit.* 1847, ii. 359) : 'The most formidable Infidel is Lessing, the author of *Emilia Galotti*: I ought to have written *was*, for he is dead. His book is not yet translated, and is entitled, in German, "Fragments of an Anonymous Author . . ." I had some thoughts of translating it, with an Answer, but gave it up,' &c.

PAGE **157** l. 15. *reminded me of Shakespeare.* See Slender's speech, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act i. Sc. 1 and 2.

PAGE **158** l. 4. *such is the* kind *of drama*, &c. Cp. Wordsworth's complaint (*Preface*, 1800; *L. B.*, p. 376) that 'the invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German tragedies, and deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse'.

23. *Kotzebue and his imitators.* Kotzebue, the parent of modern melodrama, born 1761, assassinated 1819. See *Letters*, p. 237.

PAGE **159** l. 4. *Say not, that I am recommending abstractions.* For this passage see *Biog. Lit.* ii. 33 f. n.

28. *a pathos not a whit more respectable*, &c. Cp. Letter to R. Southey, Feb. 1813 (*Letters*, p. 608): 'As to the outcry that the *Remorse* is not pathetic (meaning such pathos as convulses in *Isabella* or *The Gamester*) the answer is easy. True! the poet never meant that it should be. It is as pathetic as the *Hamlet* or as the *Julius Caesar*. He woo'd the feelings of the audience, as my wretched epilogue said:—

> With no too *real* woes that make you groan
> (At home-bred, kindred grief, perchance your own)
> Yet with no image compensate the mind,
> Nor leave one joy for memory behind.'

PAGE **161** l. 5. *which* can *be enjoyed but once.* Cp. Coleridge's youthful test of poetic excellence (*Biog. Lit.* i. 14): 'Not the poem which we have *read*, but that to which we *return*, with the greatest pleasure, possesses the genuine power, and claims the name of *essential poetry*.'

PAGE **169** l. 34. *the surrender . . . under General Humbert.* In 1798 Humbert conducted a second French expedition to Ireland. He was surrounded at Conangen on Sept. 1, and forced to surrender.

PAGE **170** l. 4. *Nelson's victory.* Aboukir Bay, Aug. 1, 1798.

16. *Glover's blank verse.* R. Glover (1712–85), author of *Leonidas*, an epic poem in nine books, first published May, 1737, and translated into French (1738) and German (1766). The work was much extolled at the time, but is now forgotten. In 1737 he published the *Athenaid*, an epic in thirty books.

20. *the sweep of whole paragraphs.* Coleridge elsewhere remarks that the metrists of Pope's school seem to have suffered from *short memories*, which rendered them unable to appreciate the effect of whole paragraphs.

29. *he had read Milton in . . . when he was fourteen.* This contradicts Klopstock's subsequent assertion (p. 175 *infra*) that 'he had finished his poem before he read Milton'. As a matter of fact, Klopstock read the *Paradise Lost* (in Bodmer's translation) while still a schoolboy at Schulpforta, and eulogized Milton in his *Abschiedsrede*.

PAGE **171** l. 4. *the English prose translation.* 'The Messiah; Attempted from the German,' by Mary and John Collyer, appeared in 1763, a third edition in 1769.

29. *The author of* The Messiah *should have worn*, &c. Cp. Lecky, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vi. 147-8: 'It is interesting to notice that among the young students of Oxford who were foremost in taking this step (the discarding of hair-powder) were Southey and Savage Landor' (ref. Dowden, *The French Rev. and Eng. Lit.*, p. 15).

PAGE **172** F. N. *the use of the prefixed participles.* See an amusing note in *A. P.*, p. 187 (1807): 'O for the power to persuade all the writers of Great Britain to adopt the *ver*, *zer*, and *al* of the German. Why not *verboil*, *zerboil*? *verrend*, *zerrend*?' &c.

PAGE **176** l. 14. *Rousseau's Ode to Fortune.* 'A la Fortune,' Liv. ii, Od. vi: *Œuvres*, ed. 1820, p. 121 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

19. *his Hermann. Hermann's Schlacht, ein Bardiet für die Schaubühne*, Hamburg u. Bremen, 1769.

22. *Voss.* Johann Heinrich Voss (1751–1826), the representative poet of the Göttinger Bund, best known for his translation of the *Odyssey* (1781) and the *Iliad* (1793), and for his Idylls. The rendering of the *Iliad* is inferior to that of the *Odyssey*, owing to Voss's too great zeal for philological accuracy in the former.

PAGE **177** l. 3. *Bürger.* Gottfried August Bürger, 1748–94, the creator of the German Romantic ballad. His poems are often marred by his desire to be 'popular' in the worst sense of the word, for which he drew on himself the just censure of Schiller. In the *Essay Supplementary to the Preface* (1815) Wordsworth speaks of Klopstock's commendation of Bürger, and gives his own reasons for modifying it.

16. *the Oberon had just been translated.* Wieland's *Oberon* appeared in 1780, Sotheby's translation in 1798. Coleridge became acquainted with the original when he was studying German in 1797, and himself attempted a translation of it (Cottle, *Rem.*, p. 160).

34. *the passage where Retzia*, &c. *Oberon*, canto viii, stanza 69-80.

PAGE **179** l. 24. *Nicolai and Engel.* C. F. Nicolai (1733–1811), the friend of Lessing, and subsequently the champion of rationalism in literature. He attacked Kant's *Kritik*, on its first appearance, in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, and also in his romance, *The Life and Opinions of Sempronius Gundibert.* Nicolai himself was mercilessly satirized in *Walpurgisnacht.* J. J. Engel (1741–1802), one of the most attractive of the popular philosophers of the German 'enlightenment'. His engaging style won him a larger audience than the matter of his philosophy merited. Of Kant he rarely spoke except to attack his doctrines.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PAGE **180**. *Erasmus ad Dorpium.* For 'offendiculi ansam praecidere' the original of this quotation has 'praecludere calumniam' (*Biog. Lit.* 1847, ii. 255). The letter to Dorpius is affixed to the 1676 edition (Bâle) of Erasmus' *Encomium Moriae.*

15. *In the rifacciamento of* The Friend. See Essay xvi of Lect. I (1818), 'On the Principles of Political Knowledge.'

22. *a critique on the Tragedy of Bertram.* Five Letters on Maturin's *Bertram* were contributed by Coleridge to *The Courier* (Aug. 29, and Sept. 7, 9, 10, 11, 1816). The present chapter is a reprint of these. Of the first letter, a large portion has been omitted.

PAGE **181** l. 6. *Mr. Whitbread.* See vol. i, p. 152, and note ad loc. Byron called this attack on Drury Lane 'not very grateful or graceful on the part of the worthy biographer' (Moore's *Life*, 1847, p. 367). Byron further stated (ib. p. 287) that Maturin was recommended to him by Scott, to whom he applied 'in despair, that he would point out to us any old or young writer of promise', and that 'he tried Coleridge too, but he had nothing feasible in hand at the time'. To Brabant Coleridge writes (Jan. 1816) of another play, *not* the tragedy promised for Drury Lane, to which he is now putting the last hand to, with a view to its being acted (*Westm. Rev.*, July, 1870, 'Unpublished Letters of S. T. Coleridge').

PAGE **182** l. 16. *It was Lessing who first introduced.* See the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, Stuck 46.

18. *I should not perhaps go too far.* This passage (in which, by the way, Coleridge is hardly fair to his own countrymen) contains an admission which it is difficult to reconcile with the following indignant outburst (Letter to Mudford, 1818, *Cant. Mag.*, Sept. 1834, p. 126): 'Mr. Wordsworth, for whose fame I had felt and fought with an ardour that amounts to self-oblivion . . . has affirmed *in print* that a German critic first taught us to think correctly concerning Shakespeare.' If it be Wordsworth's statement in the *Essay Supplementary to the Preface* to which Coleridge alludes, his language is scarcely justified; for Wordsworth says no more than that 'in some respects they (the Germans) have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet; for among us it is a current, I might almost say an established opinion, that Shakespeare is justly praised when he is pronounced to be a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties'. This is surely less of a concession to Germany than Coleridge's tribute in the *Biog. Lit.* It may be added that Coleridge's remark in the text need not necessarily be construed as an admission of his own debt to Lessing. For Coleridge's view of the 'Unities', see *Lectures*, p. 389.

PAGE **183** l. 3. *Schiller's Robbers. The Robbers* was published in 1780; *Don Carlos*, the last of Schiller's earlier dramas, in 1787. *Wallenstein*, the first of his later period, covered the years 1791–8, during which time he had much intercourse with Goethe, and, through his works, with Kant. Cp. *T. T.*, Feb. 16, 1833, for a similar criticism of the change in Schiller's style, which is there largely attributed to Goethe and other theorists. Schiller's *Braut von Messina*, which marks the culmination of his classical tendency, was published in 1803. The introduction of a Chorus was defended in a preface to the first edition.

22. *Young's Night Thoughts*, published 1742, translated into German 1761–9; Hervey's *Meditation among the Tombs*, published 1746, translated soon afterwards; *Clarissa Harlowe*, first two volumes published 1748, translated 1790–3. To Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, &c., July 28, 1811) Coleridge had represented Klopstock as 'composed of everything bad in Young, Hervey and Richardson'.

PAGE **184** l. 6. *the* Castle of Otranto. This novel, the parent of the 'novel of terror', was written by Horace Walpole, and published in 1765. It was shortly afterwards translated into German.

28. *that which would remain becomes a Kotzebue.* Cp. *Lectures*, 1813–14, p. 464, 'He (Shakespeare) never clothed Vice in the garb of Virtue, like Beaumont and Fletcher,—the Kotzebues of his day.'

PAGE **185** l. 11. *Atheista Fulminato*, a monkish play, founded on the old legend of Don Juan. The first really dramatic treatment of this legend (whose hero actually lived in the fourteenth century) was the *Don Gil* of Gabriel Tellez (1634). The subject was handled by De Villiers (*Le Festin de pierre*, 1669) and by Molière (*Don Juan*, 1665) in France; by Shadwell (*The Libertine*, 1676) in England; by Goldoni (1726) in Italy; and by Grabbe (1829) in Germany, where it was also chosen as the theme of operas by Gluck and Mozart.

PAGE **186** l. 4. *Self-contradiction is the only wrong.* From Coleridge's translation of *Wallenstein*, Pt. I, Act iv, sc. iii, ll. 191 ff.

16. *the biography of Carrier.* Jean-Baptiste Carrier, 1756–94, one of the worst spirits of the Reign of Terror. See the chapter headed 'Destruction' in Carlyle's *French Revolution.*

PAGE **187** l. 1. *that sort of negative faith.* Cp. *supra*, p. 107, l. 18, and note. Coleridge's view may be compared with Schiller's conception of aesthetic semblance (*Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung*, &c., No. 26), which is itself founded on Kant. See Kant, *Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, v. 337; Bosanquet, *Hist. of Aesthetic*, p. 292.

8. *The ideal consists.* With this definition should be compared (as an illustration of Coleridge's critical consistency, and of the early growth of his views) *Satyrane's Letters*, p. 159, ll. 4 ff.

25. *Cipriani* (1723–90), Italian painter and engraver. He resided for a great part of his life in England.

PAGE **188** l. 33. *the magic transformation of Tasso's heroine. Gerusalemme Liberata*, cant. xiii, st. 38 seq. (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

PAGE **189** l. 14. *this is the open attraction.* Cp. *Lectures*, pp. 27, 147, and *passim.*

34. *the cool intrepidity.* The scene here described is taken from Shadwell's *Libertine*, Act ii; and the two following from Act v (concluding scene) and Act iv, Scene iv, respectively.

PAGE **192** l. 35. *Eighteen years ago.* Cp. *Satyrane's Letters*, p. 164, l. 22, &c.

PAGE **196** l. 21. *This has her body, that her mind.* Altered from last lines of a song in Congreve's *Poems on Several Occasions*: *Works*, ii. 168 (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

PAGE **198**. F. N. *The big round tears.* From *As You Like It*, Act ii, Sc. 1.

PAGE **205** l. 1. *Tempora mutantur.* In the earliest-known version of this proverbial line (Harrison's *Description of Britain*, 1577) 'et nos' stands for 'nos et'. Coleridge was, however, not the first to transpose the words. See the history of the line in Professor Churton Collins's edition of *The Plays and Poems of R. Greene*, Oxford, 1905, ii. 382.

21. *No more I know, I wish I did.* Wordsworth's *Thorn* Stanza 14.

PAGE **206** l. 13. *Dryden's forest-fiend.* See his *Theodore and Honoria* (from Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Fifth Day Novel 8).

14. *the wizzard-stream.* Milton's *Lycidas*, l. 55:

Nor yet where Deva spreads her wisard stream.

CHAPTER XXIV

PAGE **207** l. 18. *The sense of Before and After.* Cp. *T. T.*, Jan. 1, 1830, 'Even in dreams nothing is fancied without an antecedent *quasi* cause. It could not be otherwise.'

PAGE **209** l. 1. *Casimir* was one of the modern Latin poets, of whose works Coleridge proposed, while still at college, to publish imitations. (See the advertisement of the work in the *Cambridge Intelligencer* for June 14 and July 26, 1794, quoted *Letters*, p. 67 f.n.) One imitation of Casimir (*Ad Lyram*, Bk. II, Ode 3) was published in *The Watchman*, March 9, 1796. In the introduction to the poem Coleridge remarks: 'If we except Lucretius and Statius, I know not of any Latin Poet, ancient or modern, who has equalled Casimir in boldness of conception, opulence of fancy, or beauty of

versification.' (First reprinted *Poet. Works*, 1893, p. 28, and Editorial Note, p. 508.)

F. N. See Johnson's Life of Cowley.

PAGE **210** l. 3. *the first sentence of an autobiography.* The first edition reads 'which' for 'of', an obvious misprint.

12. *for write it I assuredly shall.* This purpose of leaving behind him a personal autobiography Coleridge never carried out. See Gillman's *Life*, p. 145: 'He had even half promised himself to write his own biography, but the want of success in his literary labours, and the state of his health, caused him to think seriously that his life was diminishing too fast, to permit him to finish those great works of which he had planned the execution.'

19. *Who lives, that's not,* &c., from *Timon of Athens*, Act ii, Sc. i. Read 'their graves' for 'the graves' (ref. *Biog. Lit.* 1847).

28. *it became almost as well known.* Sixteen years elapsed between the completion of the two parts of *Christabel* and their publication. During this time, it was much circulated among friends and acquaintances of the poet. Scott heard it recited in 1801, and its influence is seen in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*; and Byron seems to have imitated its music in a passage of *The Siege of Corinth.* And it was Byron who in 1815 advised Murray to publish the poem. See *Poet. Works*, p. 603: Gillman's *Life*, p. 277: and Byron's *Works*, ed. E. H. Coleridge, iii. 443, 471.

PAGE **211** l. 16. *In the Edinburgh Review it was assailed.* It was this review which occasioned the footnote in *Biog. Lit.* i. 36. In Feb. 1817, Coleridge wrote to Murray (*Letters*, p. 609), 'The article against me in the former (the *Edinburgh Review*) was, I am assured, written by Hazlitt.' The evidence for the ascription of the review to Hazlitt is discussed by Mr. Hutchinson in *Notes and Queries*, Ninth Series, xl. 170.

PAGE **212** l. 4. *a species of Animal Magnetism.* In this subject Coleridge was deeply interested. See *Life*, p. 231; *T. T.*, April 30, 1830.

19. *a gentleman of great influence.* Apparently Lord Byron, under whose encouragement *Zapolya* was written. The play was rejected by Douglas Kinnaird (Gillman's *Life*, p. 268). Byron declared that full consideration was given to it, but that 'tho' poetical, it did not appear practicable' (Moore's *Life of Byron*, p. 367). For another explanation, see *Life*, p. 272.

21. *O we are querulous creatures! Zapolya*, Part II, Act i, Sc. i. (*Poet. Works*, p. 411). In the text 'to discontent us' stands for 'to make us wretched'.

29. *the two following passages. Zapolya*, The Prelude, Sc. i, ll. 355 ff., and Part II, Act ii, Sc. ii, ll. 70 ff. In the first passage 'in the mad whirl of crowds' should stand for 'even in those whirling

crowds'; and in the second 'often warned me' for 'oft has warned me' (*Poet. Works*, pp. 406 and 435).

PAGE **213** l. 38. *I published a work.* The first *Lay Sermon*, entitled *The Statesman's Manual*, was published in 1816. It had previously been advertised as 'A Lay Sermon on the Distresses of the Country, addressed to the Middle and Higher Orders'; and in the *Examiner* for Sept. 8, 1816, Hazlitt wrote an article purporting to be a review of the yet unpublished discourse. After its appearance, it was reviewed in the *Examiner* of Dec. 29, 1816 (again by Hazlitt), and in the *Edinburgh Review* of Dec. 1816. The review in the *Edinburgh* was ascribed by Coleridge to Hazlitt, probably with justice. (See W. Hazlitt's *Political Essays*, 1819, pp. 118 ff.; Hazlitt's letter to the Editor of the *Examiner*, Jan. 17, 1817; *Life*, p. 225 f. n.; and *Notes and Queries*, Ninth Series, xl. 170.

PAGE **214** l. 14. *I remembered Catullus's lines.* Catulli, *Carmina*, lxxiii (Coleridge has slightly altered the original).

27. *the innuendo of my 'potential infidelity'.* See the *Edinburgh Review*, Dec. 1816, p. 451: 'The senseless jargon which Mr. Coleridge has let fall on this subject is the more extraordinary as he declares in an early part of his Sermon that "Religion and Reason are their own evidence"—a position which appears to us "fraught with potential infidelity" quite as much as Unitarianism,' &c.

28. *one passage of my first Lay Sermon.* See *The Statesman's Manual*, p. 317 (Bohn's Library).

PAGE **216** l. 21. *what we can only* know *by the act of* becoming. See *The Friend* (1818), Sect. ii, Essay 77, especially the concluding paragraphs: 'But let it not be supposed that it (the principle of religion) is a sort of knowledge. No! it *is* a form of being, or indeed it is the only knowledge that truly *is*, and all other science is real only as far as it is symbolical of this.' See also *Biog. Lit.* i. 84, l. 12 note ad loc.

PAGE **217** l. 3. *whether the heavy interdict*, &c. See *Biog. Lit.* i. 99, l. 1, and note.

11. *the concluding page of Spinoza's Ethics.* Coleridge has curtailed the latter part of the quotation, which in full runs thus: 'Atque adeo ex eo, quod mens hoc amore divino seu beatitudine gaudet, potestatem habet libidines coercendi, et quia humana potentia ad coercendos affectus in solo intellectu consistit. Ergo nemo beatitudine gaudet,' &c. (Spinoza, *Ethic.* Prop. xlii).

19. *With regard to the Unitarians.* See note to *Biog. Lit.* i. 136, l. 31. Mrs. Barbauld repeated this 'shameless assertion' to Coleridge in conversation, and was met with much the same reply; on which she declared that she could not understand the distinction which Coleridge drew (Gillman's *Life*, p. 164). See also *T. T.*, April 4, 1832.

PAGE **218** l. 22. *that Religion passes*, &c. It is interesting to compare with this closing passage the following from the Cambridge Platonist, John Smith (see *Camb. Platonists*, ed. E. T. Campagnac, p. 93): 'When Reason once is raised by the mighty force of the Divine Spirit into a converse with God, it is turned into Sense: that which before was only Faith well built upon sure principles (for that our science may be) now becomes *Vision*.'

THE ESSAYS ON THE PRINCIPLES OF GENIAL CRITICISM

These essays first appeared in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* in August and September, 1814. 'A strange place for such a publication,' wrote Coleridge to Stuart in September, 'but my motive was *originally*[1] to serve poor Allston, who is now exhibiting his pictures in Bristol.' And to another friend he wrote[2]: 'I will take care, if God grant me life, that my unlucky disposition shall be no injury to Allston. ... I could not bear the thought of putting in an ordinary puff on such a man, or even an anonymous one. I thought that a bold avowal of my sentiments on the fine arts, as divided into poetry, first of language; second of the *ear*, and third of the *eye*[1], and the last subdivided into the Plastic (statuary) and the Graphic (painting), connected and as it were isthmused with common life by the link of architecture, exemplifying my principles by continual reference to Allston's pictures.'

'This would, from the mere curiosity of malignity and envy, answer our friend's pecuniary interests best.'[2]

In the first essay Coleridge states that his application of the principles will be confined 'to Painting and Statuary, and of these, chiefly to the former'; and he draws his readers' attention to 'the admirable pictures now exhibiting by Allston'.[3] But both this and the following essays are confined almost entirely to the statement of principles, or, as Coleridge calls them, the 'metaphysical Preliminaries': and the only further allusion to Allston[4] is in reference to a picture which he had left behind him in London. Thus it is hardly likely that the essays contributed greatly to the benevolent object for which the writer had designed them. Coleridge, in fact, deceived himself, not with regard to his original motive in writing the essays, but in thinking that having once begun to write on so congenial a theme, he could be guided by any other motive than his zeal for the subject. And if Allston possibly suffered, the essays certainly gained by this self-abandonment. Coleridge himself spoke

[1] The italics are mine.
[2] See J. B. Flagg's *Life of Washington Allston*, p. 128.
[3] See Essay I, p. 223.
[4] For Allston see note to p. 223, l. 4.

of them to Stuart as 'the best things he had ever written'[1]: and proposed to extend them to sixteen or twenty, for insertion in the *Courier*—a project unfortunately never realized. This high opinion of their value he retained to the end of his life. In Jan. 1834, he remarked in conversation,[2] 'I exceedingly regret the loss of those essays on beauty, which I wrote for a Bristol newspaper. I would give much to recover them.' But it was not till after his death that Cottle hunted them up, and, in 1837, republished them as an appendix to his *Early Recollections*. Cottle's passion for garbling his material seems to have pursued him even here, for the title is incorrectly given.

The essays were subsequently republished by T. Ashe (*Coleridge Miscellanies*, Bohn's Library) in 1855. This edition is apparently based on Cottle's. In the present version the original text has been followed.

The editor of *Felix Farley's Journal* introduced the essays to his readers with the following remarks: 'The termination of the calamities of war having at length furnished us with more vacant room than we have for years been accustomed to find unoccupied, it is our intention, next week, to diversify our columns by the commencement of a series of Essays upon the Fine Arts; particularly upon that of Painting; illustrated by Criticisms upon the Pictures now exhibiting by Mr. Allston, in this city, as well as other works of merit, in the possession of several gentlemen well known in our vicinity. The pleasure to be derived from their perusal will readily be anticipated when we inform our readers that they are furnished us by the pen of Mr. Coleridge.' (Reprinted in *Miscellanies*.)

PAGE **219** l. 11. *the cessation of battles and revolutions.* Coleridge is writing during the brief period of quiet which preceded Napoleon's escape from Elba.

PAGE **220** l. 28. *Boydell.* John Boydell (1719–1804), engraver and print publisher.

33. *All the fine arts are different species of poetry*, i. e. of Poesy or Creation (ποίησις). See *On Poesy or Art*, p. 255.

PAGE **221** l. 1. *a natural division.* Thus Kant (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, *Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, v. 331) divides the fine arts according to the three modes of expression 'language, gesture, and sound'.

7. *The common essence of all.* This definition of art should be re-examined in the light of Coleridge's subsequent explanations (Essay II). It may be noted that it has the defect of being at once subjective and objective, i. e. based both upon the motive of the artist and the nature of his creation.

[1] *Letters from the Lake Poets*, p. 233. [2] *T. T.*, Jan. 1, 1834.

9. *herein contra-distinguishing poetry from science.* Cp. the objection brought against Wordsworth's poetry, *Biog. Lit.* ii. 104, l. 23. See also Kant (*Werke*, ii. 207: Analysis of Beauty, § 1), 'In order to learn whether anything is beautiful or not, we do not, by aid of the understanding, refer the perception to the object with a view to knowledge, but by aid of the imagination (perhaps combined with the understanding) we refer it to the subject, and the feeling of pleasure or pain in the same.'

19. *incomparably less dependent.* Apparently Coleridge means that the effect of a piece of music is dependent upon the skill of the player. Why he calls the plastic and graphic arts more permanent than music, it is difficult to understand; unless he is referring to the permanence in space of objects of the eye, as opposed to the transitoriness in time of impressions of the ear. When he says that these arts are less permanent, and more dependent than poetry, he seems to use the words in a different sense; he is thinking of the perishableness of the material, and the dependence of pictures and sculpture, for their effect, on conditions of light and position.

31. *Which, like a second and more lovely nature.* These lines are altered from a passage, appended by Coleridge in a note to *Remorse*, Act ii, scene ii, and containing a portrait of Sir George Beaumont—

> Who like a second and more lovely Nature,
> By the sweet mystery of lines and colours,
> Changed, &c.

PAGE **222** l. 18. *Alison*, &c. Alison's *Inquiry into the principles of Taste* was first published in 1790. It was reviewed in the *Edinburgh Review* by Jeffrey, who employed the occasion to ventilate his own views on the subject, and accepted in the main Alison's theory, that beauty is founded on association. Other writers who adopted the same view were Payne Knight (*Analytic Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*) and Dugald Stewart (*Essay on Beauty*). But Coleridge ignores the earlier English aestheticians, such as Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, Burke, and Hogarth, none of whom adopted the theory of association.

PAGE **223** l. 4. Coleridge first made the acquaintance of Washington Allston, the American painter, at Rome in 1805, and renewed it subsequently in London and Bristol. Of his talents and character he held the highest opinion; while Allston was conscious of owing a profound debt, both moral and intellectual, to Coleridge. See *Memorials of Coleorton*; *Life of W. Allston*, by J. B. Flagg, p. 366. I do not know to which of Allston's pictures Coleridge here alludes. His most ambitious work 'The Dead Man Revived', was painted and exhibited in London (*Life*, by Flagg, p. 102).

PAGE **224** l. 2. *the purpose of* immediate *pleasure, through the medium of beauty.* Cp. Kant, *Werke*, v. 315, 'If art has the feeling of pleasure for its immediate end, it is then termed aesthetic art.' It is strange that Coleridge should have allowed this self-contradictory definition to stand. As the subsequent reasoning shows, by 'immediate' Coleridge here means 'disinterested'. The whole passage should be compared with Kant's distinction (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, *Werke*, v. 208 ff.), of the various kinds of gratification (*Wohlgefallen*) derived from the beautiful, the sensuously agreeable, and the morally good. Only of the first, says Kant, can absolute disinterestedness be predicated; for this alone involves no interest in the existence of the object which causes our gratification.

It is difficult to see in what sense of the word interest Kant's distinction can be maintained. It is true that we are satisfied with the object *as represented*: still in that representation itself, *as a real object*, we have a very decided interest. But a discussion of the subject would be hardly in place in a note. All that can here be said is that if in the case of the agreeable or the good we postulate the existence of a sensuous or moral interest, based on physical or spiritual need, so equally in the case of the beautiful we must posit an imaginative or aesthetic interest, to which also a spiritual need corresponds. But in no case need this interest interfere with the immediateness of our enjoyment. It may further be questioned whether Coleridge does not confuse the motive of the artist with the actual effect of composition and of the completed work of art.

With the text we may contrast the following marginal comment by Coleridge on a statement by George Dyer in a footnote to his own poems (1800; p. 325, Brit. Mus. copy) that 'the principle and immediate aim of poetry is to please:—But why does it please? Because it pleases. O mystery! If not, some other cause out of itself must be found there (?) Utility it certainly is not—nor mere goodness. Therefore there must be some other power and that is Beauty, i. e. that which *ought* to please.'

'My benevolent friend seems not to have made an obvious distinction between end and means. The Poet must always aim at pleasure as his specific means, but surely Milton did, and all ought to aim at something nobler as their end—viz. to cultivate and predispose the heart of the Reader,' &c. Here we have, not beauty as the medium of the communication of pleasure, but pleasure as the medium of the communication of beauty (in the widest sense). Perhaps in neither statement is Coleridge so near the truth as when he wrote in 1796 'the communicativeness of our nature *leads* us to describe our sorrows; and by a benevolent law of our nature from intellectual activity a pleasure *results*,' &c. (Preface to *Poems*. The italics are mine.)

17. *the Apollo Belvedere is not beautiful because it pleases*, &c. Here again Coleridge confuses his argument by not distinguishing between the subjective or psychological definition of the agreeable or beautiful (as a conscious experience) and the objective (as a quality in the object). In the case of the venison the definition is subjective, of the Apollo Belvedere it is objective. But he has shown no grounds for treating the quality of beauty as objective, i. e. in any sense in which 'agreeableness' is not so. To the assertion 'the Apollo pleases us because it is beautiful' an objector might reasonably reply 'yes; and the venison pleases us because it is tasty'. Coleridge is no doubt led by his antagonism to the 'association' explanation of beauty into an erroneous line of argument. What he is really attacking is the attribution of beauty to an object on the ground of its sensuous pleasurableness. But nobody would call a piece of venison *aesthetically* agreeable for this or for any other reason. Cp. *T. T.*, Jan. 1, 1834.

21. *Complacency*. Coleridge is perhaps seeking an equivalent for Kant's distinction of *Vergnügen* (sensuous pleasure) from *Gefallen* (moral or aesthetic). *Werke*, v. 214.

30. *Many years ago, the writer*. This incident took place during Coleridge's Scotch tour with the Wordsworths in 1803, and is recorded by Dorothy Wordsworth in her *Recollections of a Tour made in the Scotch Highlands* (*Journals*, i. 195). According to this, the authentic version, Coleridge was delighted with the epithet 'majestic' applied to the falls of Clyde by a stranger with whom he had fallen into conversation. But his delight was changed to dismay, when his companion added: 'Yes, sublime and beautiful.' See also *Lectures*, p. 41, and *T. T.*, June 24, 1827.

PAGE **225** l. 16. *only to a* conditional *necessity*. Cp. Kant, *Werke*, v. 243, § 19 ('The subjective necessity which we attribute to the judgment of Taste is conditioned'), and the following paragraph. 'Ought, in the aesthetic judgment,' says Kant, 'is only pronounced conditionally'; and this for the reason, that the test of the correctness of our judgment is a feeling, not a law or principle. But why does Coleridge include the moralist with the philosophical critic? See p. 242, l. 9.

PAGE **226** l. 5. *damnat Musas*, &c. See motto to *The Friend* (1818), Third Landing Place. Its source I have not been able to trace.

6. *this taste-meter*, &c. Cp. *Preface* to *L. B.* (p. 22), where Wordsworth speaks of the critics 'who will converse with us as gravely about a taste for poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for Rope dancing or Frontiniac or sherry.'

The 'taste-meter' must, I think, be Jeffrey, who followed Alison in founding Beauty on association. See Allsop (*Letters, &c., of*

S. T. C., p. 137), 'Some men—Jeffrey is one—refer taste to the palate.' But I cannot find any passages in Jeffrey's essays which correspond to Coleridge's assertions in the text. He may be speaking from a vague recollection of the 'Essay on Beauty' (Jeffrey's *Essays*, Longman, 1853, p. 18).

23. *to attach a distinct and separate sense.* Coleridge's own conception of the Sublime may be studied in the marginal notes on his copy of Herder's *Kalligone*, for which see *Notes and Queries*, Oct. 28, 1905, where they are printed and discussed.

It would be difficult to say how long the significance of this and the other terms here mentioned had been an object of Coleridge's speculations; but we know that as early as 1803 he had discussed them with Wordsworth (see D. Wordsworth, *Journals*, 1874, p. 37). The conclusions he came to were never fully stated, but some record of them has been preserved in Allsop's *Letters, &c., of S. T. C.* (1836, i. 197-9), and may be reprinted here:

'When the whole and the parts are seen at once, as mutually producing and explaining each other as unity in multeity, there results shapeliness, *forma formosa.* Where the perfection of form is combined with pleasurableness in the sensations excited by the matters or substances so formed, there results the beautiful. . . . When there is a deficiency of unity in the line forming the whole (as angularity, for instance), and of number in the plurality of the parts, there arises the formal.

'When the parts are numerous and impressive, and are predominate, so as to prevent or greatly lessen the attention to the whole, there results the grand.

'Where the impression of the whole, i. e. the sense of unity, predominates so as to abstract the mind from the parts—the majestic.

'Where the parts by their harmony produce an effect of a whole, but where there is no seen form of a whole producing or explaining the parts of it, where the parts only are seen and distinguished, but the whole is felt—the picturesque.

'Where neither whole nor parts, but unity as boundless or endless allness—the sublime.

'So I should say that the Saviour praying on the mountain, the desert on one hand, the sea on the other, the city at an immense distance below, was sublime. But I should say of the Saviour looking towards the city, his countenance full of pity, that he was majestic, and of the situation, that it was grand.'

And as an instance of the highest sublime, Coleridge gives Milton's description of the host of the Messiah ('far off his coming shone'). 'There,' he adds, 'is total completeness.' Wordsworth quotes the same passage as illustrating the imagination (*O. W.*, p. 957).

PAGE **227** l. 8. *Blackmore.* Sir Richard Blackmore (died 1729), a physician and voluminous writer in prose and poetry. His dullness made him the butt of Dryden and the wits of his day, though Johnson in his *Life* finds merit in some of his writings.

9. *the Castle Spectre.* A sensational drama by 'Monk' Lewis (1798).

12. *a sense, and a regulative principle.* The conception of a universal sense or faculty for the beautiful (Kant's *Gemeinsinn*) was propounded by Hutcheson (*Inquiry into our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, 1725). The term 'regulative principle' is borrowed from Kant, who distinguishes constitutive principles, the formal elements supplied by the mind in the first constitution of experience, and regulative principles, which merely guide the mind in its further investigations of the experience so constituted (see *Krit. d. Urt.*, Einleitung, iv, v).

29. *Taste is the intermediate faculty.* In *Biog. Lit.* i. 86, this office of mediation is assigned to the Imagination. The close connexion of the two faculties was perhaps suggested by Kant's definition of taste, as the perception of the mere *fitness* of any sense-complex to be made an object of knowledge (see e. g. *Krit. d. Urt.*, Einleitung, § viii).

ESSAY III.

The two opening paragraphs of this Essay, as far as p. 230, l. 10, are repeated in slightly different language in *Biog. Lit.* i. 107-9.

PAGE **228**. The quotation from Burton is taken with alterations from the *Envoi* (*Ad Librum Suum*).

PAGE **230** l. 16. *multeity.* Cp. note to *Theory of Life* (*Miscellanies*, p. 387): 'Much against my will I repeat this scholastic term, *multeity*, but I have sought in vain for an unequivocal word of a less repulsive character that would convey the notion in a positive and not comparative sense in kind, as opposed to the *unum et simplex*, not in degree, as contrasted with the *few*.'

27. *a large volume on the* LOGOS. The first public allusion to the *magnum opus*. The work was, according to a letter to a friend (quoted *Life*, p. 207), actually printing at Bristol at the time when these Essays were being written. See note to *Biog. Lit.* i. 92, l. 2.

PAGE **231** l. 26. *Things base and vile.* Altered from *Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. l. 232-3.

34. *Cimarosa.* The celebrated Italian composer (1749-1801).

PAGE **232** l. 5. *The Beautiful . . . is that in which the many becomes one.* Coleridge is here at the point of view of Greek aesthetic, according to which Beauty is limited to formal properties or determinations without reference to significance of content.

The example of the coach-wheels shows us that it is not yet of organic unity, the unity of Life, that Coleridge is thinking—of that power 'which unites a given *all* into a whole that is presupposed in each of its parts' (Coleridge's *Theory of Life, Miscellanies*, p. 385)—but of a purely formal and external unity. Here, too, no doubt the influence of Kant shows itself. From Hutcheson's *Inquiry* (published 1725) Coleridge might have learned the conception of Beauty as uniformity in variety; but he does not seem to have been acquainted with this work. A passage in *T. T.* (Dec. 27, 1831: 'The old definition of Beauty in the Roman School was, "il più nell' uno"—multitude in unity; and there is no doubt that such is the principle of beauty') seems to show that Coleridge never advanced far beyond this standpoint.

20. *So far is the Beautiful.* We may compare the passage in which Hutcheson refutes the associationist Theory of Beauty (*Inquiry*, 1725, p. 68): 'Serpents of all kinds, and some insects really beautiful enough, are viewed with aversion by many people, who have got some accidental ideas associated with them.' See also pp. 6 and 10.

PAGE **233** l. 8. *the polished golden wheel.* See Marginal Notes on Herder's *Kalligone* (*Notes and Queries*, Oct 28, 1905).

29. *a mass of cloud*, &c. See Allsop, *Letters, &c. of S. T. C.* i. 197: 'Hence colour is eminently subservient to beauty, because it is susceptible of forms, i. e. outline, and yet is a sensation. But a rich mass of scarlet clouds, seen without any attention to the form of the mass or of the parts, may be a delightful but not a beautiful object or colour.' It is worthy of notice that Plotinus (*Ennead* i. 6. 1) claims beauty for simple colours.

PAGE **234** l. 7. *the shapely joined*, &c. Cp. the passage from Allsop quoted above in note to p. 226, l. 23. The want of a single unifying principle is still more marked in that definition, where Coleridge speaks as if the perception of shapeliness and the sensation of pleasure were quite distinct—the perception being derived from the form of the object, and the sensation from its material.

PAGE **235** l. 7. *the free life*, &c. Coleridge seems here on the verge of a wider conception of the beautiful. His own definition hardly justifies him in speaking of 'obvious regularity of form' in an object as capable of *detracting* from its beauty; yet he evidently feels that it does so detract. He still separates form from content.

PAGE **236** l. 6. *taste, in its metaphorical use.* Cp. p. 249, l. 23 n.

20. *Principle the First.* In his rigid exclusion of accidental interests from the genuine enjoyment of beauty, Coleridge rendered a great service to the psychology of the subject. By Kant the theory of association is not directly refuted: but, implicitly of course,

he overthrows it by contending for the *universal communicability* of aesthetic experience, and also for its *immediateness*.

27. *though it may greatly increase*, &c. Cp. 'Lines written in an album at Elbingerode in 1799':

> I moved on
> With low and languid thought, for I had found
> That grandest scenes have but imperfect charms,
> Where the eye vainly wanders, nor beholds
> One spot with which his heart *associates*
> Holy remembrances of child or friend
> Or gentle maid, our first and early love.

[The italics are mine.]

PAGE **237** l. 21. *Principle the Second.* The argument of this paragraph is directed against the physiological definition of Beauty, which identifies it with the 'Agreeable' as here defined by Coleridge. An able exposition of this conception is contained in Burke's Essay *On the Sublime and Beautiful* (1756), at that time the most important work on aesthetic yet published in England. In later years Coleridge spoke very disparagingly of Burke's work (see *T. T.*, July 12, 1827).

PAGE **238** l. 1. *the tone of a single note.* Cp. Kant's discussion of the beauty of unmixed tones and colours, *Werke*, v. 229.

24. *the idea, of which they . . . are the symbol*, i. e. the idea of abstract unity, symbolized in the concrete unity of the object. At least, this is all that Coleridge, consistently with his definition, can mean.

PAGE **239** l. 9. *both act on the* WILL. This may be true: but in the case of sensuous pleasure, at least, the action upon the will is something quite apart from our actual enjoyment, and it should not be included as a component part in the definition of the *agreeable*. If the sense of beauty rests gratified in the mere contemplation, so also does the sense of the agreeable rest gratified in the mere sensation. The distinction of aesthetic pleasure (as not involving desire for the object) from sensuous pleasure is again and again insisted on by Schiller in his aesthetic writings. Perhaps the same thought was in Goethe's mind when he wrote (*Trost in Thränen*)

> Die Sterne, die begehrt man nicht,
> Man freut sich ihrer Pracht.

14. *The Mystics meant the same.* According, however, to Plotinus, Beauty is more than the expression of a merely formal or geometrical principle. It is essentially symbolic, the expression of a vital content. See Plotinus, *Ennead*, Bk. VI, *passim*; Bosanquet, *History of Aesthetic*, p. 117 seq.

24. *York Cathedral.* If Cottle's memory is to be trusted, Coleridge's interest in architecture was of late growth. He records

that Coleridge visited York without entering the interior of the Minster, and that he brought with him from Rome no memory of its architectural beauties (Cottle, *Rem.* p. 314 f. n.). On his last visit to Cambridge Coleridge was 'more than ever impressed by the marvellous sublimity and transcendent beauty of King's College Chapel' (*T. T.*, July 29, 1833).

PAGE **240** l. 1. ὅταν οὖν. The quotation is from *Ennead* i. 6. 3. After ἐναντίας the original has ἀμόρφου οὔσης, and, after ἀνήνεγκε, καὶ εἰσήναγεν εἰς τὸ εἶσω ἀμερὲς ἤδη.

8. *O lady! we* receive *but what we* give. From Coleridge's poem *Dejection: An Ode* (1802). See Introduction, pp. xxxv ff. An interesting parallel to these lines is to be found in Crabbe's 'Lover's Journey' (*Tales in Verse*, No. X; published 1812).

> It is the soul that sees: the outward eyes
> Present the object, but the Mind descries:
> And thence delight, disgust, and cool indifference rise.
> When minds are joyful, then we look around,
> And what is seen is all on fairy ground.
> Again they sicken, and on every view
> Cast their own dull and melancholy hue;
> Or, if absorbed by their peculiar cares,
> The vacant mind on viewless matter glares,
> Our feelings still upon our views attend,
> And their own natures to the objects lend.

35. *All colors a suffusion from that light.* The remaining lines of this quotation are out of place as they stand, the first one ludicrously so. Both in the MS. poem (as communicated to Sotheby, *Letters*, p. 381) and in the printed versions, they follow the second quotation. Coleridge has no doubt transposed them because they illustrate his point: but it is difficult to understand how he allowed the first line to creep in. In the printed poem 'peculiar' stands in this line for 'celestial'.

PAGE **241** l. 6. *I see, not feel, how beautiful they are.* When Coleridge wrote these lines he probably attached a different meaning to the words 'see' and 'feel'. See Introduction, p. xxxvii.

12. *the contemplation . . . precedes the feeling.* So also judges Kant, *Werke*, v. p. 221 (Examination of the question: 'whether in the judgment of Taste the feeling of pleasure precedes our judging of the object, or follows it'). Both Kant and Coleridge seem at fault in reducing the emotional element in the enjoyment of Beauty to a mere *feeling of pleasure*; for the substitution of the word 'complacency' by Coleridge does not help us much.

34. *the Iroquois Sachem.* The illustration is taken from Kant, ib. p. 208.

PAGE **242** l. 9. *we feel no right to* demand *it.* Cp. Kant, ib. p. 217, § 7. Kant says that in questions of taste, 'We do not merely count upon the coincidence of others in our judgment, but *demand* (*fordern*) it of them.' But, as he states elsewhere (p. 243, § 19), this demand is conditional.

PAGE **243** l. 7. *The* GOOD *consists.* Cp. Kant, ib. p. 211, § 4.

10. *it is always discursive.* Coleridge means that it is consciously referred to a conception previously existing in the mind. See *Kritik*, ib. and p. 218: 'The good is only represented through the medium of a conception (*Begriff*) as the object of universal approval, which is the case neither with the pleasant nor with the beautiful.'

11. *The Beautiful arises.* This final definition of beauty is entirely in the sense of the *Kritik.* (See *Kritik*, Einleitung, vii, pp. 197–8: § xxxv, pp. 221, 294, &c.) Like Kant, Coleridge confines himself here to a subjective definition.

14. *it is always intuitive.* Or, as Kant would say, *ohne Begriff.*

18. καλόν *quasi* καλοῦν. Coleridge's etymology is ingenious, but without foundation.

APPENDIX

PAGE **244** l. 4. *Van Huysun.* Justus, Dutch painter (1659–1716). See *T. T.*, July 6, 1833.

17. *the cruel and cowardly panther.* These illustrations show how far Coleridge is from connecting Beauty with expression.

20. *our perception of the fitness of the means.* Coleridge is here combating the view which connects beauty with utility, and which is itself an offshoot of the theory of association. Here, too, he follows Kant. See the *Kr. der Urt.*, §§ 10, 11 (pp. 224 foll.); and cp. Hume, *Essays*, ii. 227 (Green and Grose), 'Ideas of utility, though they do not entirely determine what is handsome or deformed, are evidently the source of a considerable part of our approbation or dislike.'

PAGE **245** l. 2. *The shell*, &c. Coleridge's examples are singularly unfortunate. It is evident that the law of association can only operate where the facts are well known and have been constantly reflected upon. But how many of us even know that the pearl of the oyster, or the moss of the Moss Rose, is a disease?

15. *is always accompanied*, &c. This is doubtful. We may be pleased by proportion in an object and yet not conscious, till we come to analyse it, what the cause of our pleasure was.

29. From Coleridge's poem *Lewti* (1798).

PAGE **246** l. 16. *waiting for a loftier mood.* A similar reason (not wholly complimentary to his readers) is given by Coleridge for breaking off in the discussion of memory in *Biog. Lit.* i. vii. p. 80. The same quotation from Plotinus, in a more corrected form, occurs there also. It is taken from *Ennead*, i. vi. 489, where Plotinus makes a similar transition to the supersensual beauty.

FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON TASTE

This essay was first printed in *Literary Remains*, vol. i, 1836. Its standpoint, like that of the previous essays, is Kantean. It is worthy of notice that in his 'Essay on the Standard of Taste' (1770) Hume had already contended for a universal principle of aesthetic judgement.

PAGE **247** l. 14. *the analysis of our senses.* With this paragraph should be compared Kant's distinction (*Werke*, v. 210) of the two senses of the word *Empfindung* (sensation), e.g. 'The green hue of the grass makes part of objective sensation, as the perception of an object of the senses: but its agreeableness makes part of a subjective sensation, which does not include any presentation of an object.

PAGE **249** l. 4. *does not . . . involuntarily claim.* Cp. p. 246, l. 8 and note.

23. *those parts of our nature*, &c. Cp. the *Kr. der Urt.*, §§ 18–22, on the 'Modality of aesthetic enjoyment', and §§ 56, 7, on the 'Antinomy of Taste'. The principle on which the judgement of taste is founded Kant names a 'Gemeinsinn' (common or universal sense), by which name, however, he does not imply that it is founded in the sensuous side of our nature. The sense-element is merely the feeling of pleasure *attendant on* the activity of the 'Gemeinsinn'.

In the *Essay Supplementary to the Preface* (1815) Wordsworth deplores the employment of the word 'Taste' to denote aesthetic appreciation. 'Proportion and congruity,' he remarks, 'are subjects upon which taste may be trusted: it is competent to this office: for in its intercourse with these the mind is passive, and is affected painfully or pleasurably as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought, and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the pathetic and sublime: are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could never, without a sinking in the spirit of Nations, have been designated by the metaphor—*Taste.* And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operative power in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse elevated or profound passion cannot exist.'

FRAGMENT OF AN ESSAY ON BEAUTY

Also from vol. i. of the *Remains.*

PAGE **250** l. 6. *endeavouring to recollect a name.* For this illustration cp. *Biog. Lit.* i. 85 and note; *On Thinking and Reflection* (*Miscellanies*, p. 252).

13. *as when, on passing out of a crowded city.* Cp. *A. P.* 1802 (p. 25): 'The first sight of green fields and the numberless nodding gold-cups and the winding river with alders on its banks, affected me, coming up of a city confinement with the sweetness and power of a sudden strain of music.'

This passage raises interesting questions in view of the distinction of fancy and imagination. As an illustration of 'the universal association of motion with the functions and passions of life,' Coleridge, as we see, adduces the Dryads and Hamadryads of Greek mythology. Now this mode of interpreting Nature he has elsewhere characterized (*Letters*, p. 405) as the work of *fancy*. Yet, as we see from the analysis of genius in *Biog. Lit.* ii. 17, and from the examples there given, *imagination* also works on the suggestion of these universal, necessary associations, 'the language of nature'; whereas of fancy it is characteristic to seize upon incidental and arbitrary resemblances. (See e. g. *T. T.* 1833: 'Fancy brings together images which have no connection *natural or moral*; are yoked by the poet by means of some accidental coincidence.') The solution of the difficulty is perhaps this—that both fancy and imagination may work upon the same universal and natural associations, but that they differ in the use which is made of them. It is not enough to catch the suggestions of human emotion in natural objects: the poet must really, by virtue of his imaginative power, invest the objects with this emotion, and so persuade us of the sympathy of nature with man. This the Greeks, with their Naiads and Hamadryads, had failed to do: nor is it effected by such images as that of the kingcups, 'nodding their heads and dancing in the breeze.' For in these we remain aware that the resemblance is, after all, external. And nothing, perhaps, better illustrates the limited conception of Beauty which even this Essay displays than that the significance of forms should be here confined to an expressiveness based upon external associations, the perception of which makes no demand upon the imagination.

PAGE **252** l. 5. *the disinterestedness of all taste.* Coleridge means that we have no interest in the *real* existence of the viands, as the gourmand would have. But the gourmand would be equally indifferent to the appearance of the table, as a picture or repre-

sentation. An interest is present in both cases, but there is a difference in the direction which each takes.

8. *How far it is a real preference.* This sentence and the rest of the essay are not very clear; but a doubt seems to have arisen in Coleridge's mind as to the justice of his original definition of the end of art as pleasure. The principle of his dictum concerning the pleasure which attends right conduct is equally applicable to artistic creation and enjoyment. And if pleasure be not our aim in seeking beautiful things, neither will the artist's aim, in creating them, be to minister to our pleasure.

32. For the *argumentum in circulo* cp. *Biog. Lit.* i. 216, l. 20.

ON POESY OR ART

Originally printed in vol. i. of *Literary Remains*, where it forms Lecture XIII of the course of 1818. As is pointed out by T. Ashe (*Miscellanies*, p. 87) the editor of the *Remains* has included under the heading of Lectures much material that never formed a part of them; and of the present paper it seems uncertain whether it was actually delivered as one of the lectures, or written at another time. In any case 1818 is the earliest date to which the inward evidence would allow us to assign it. It is certainly more mature than the fragmentary 'Essay on Beauty', which belongs to that year, and shows the influence of Schelling, who here too has assisted Coleridge to emancipate himself from Kantean limitations. The close resemblance of many parts of the Essay to Schelling's Oration *On the relation of the Formative Arts to Nature* has been fully pointed out by Sara Coleridge, in the Appendix to her edition of *Notes and Lectures* (1819), and illustrated by a translation of the most striking parallel passages. It is well to compare Sara Coleridge's comment that 'for the most part the thoughts of Schelling are mixed up with those of the borrower', with the statement in the Introduction to the *Remains* that 'in many of the books and papers which have been used in the compilation of these volumes, passages from other writers noted down by Mr. Coleridge as in some way remarkable, were mixed up with his own comments on such subjects in a manner very embarrassing to the eye of a third person undertaking to select the original matter after the lapse of several years'. It is not improbable that Coleridge himself, when he came to throw his notes into a connected form, found the same difficulty in discriminating the meum and tuum. I have given what seem to me the most noteworthy references: but the reader should study the oration itself to determine whether or not he can subscribe to the opinion of Sara Coleridge, that 'if it be Schelling's—and that the leading thought of it is his, I freely admit—it is Coleridge's also'.

The sixth 'Haupt-Abschnitt' of the *Transcendentaler Idealismus* (*Werke*, iii. 612–29) may also be compared.

PAGE **254** l. 4. *passion itself imitates order.* Compare with this Wordsworth's account of metre, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800: *L. B.* p. 383) and Coleridge's own account in *Biog. Lit.* ii. 49 ff.

33. *art might be defined.* Cp. Schelling's *Oration* (*Werke*, ed. 1860, ii. 292): 'Plastic Art therefore evidently stands as an active bond between the soul and Nature, and can only be grasped in the vital medium between both.'

PAGE **255** l. 12. *muta poesis.* Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 292.

28. *We all know*, &c. Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 293.

32. *First, to imitate.* In this passage we have Coleridge's fullest statement of the true nature of artistic imitation and artistic illusion as he conceived them. Cp. *Biog. Lit.* ii. 6, 30, 56, 185, &c.; *T. T.*, July 6, 1833. It may be pointed out that the conception of art, as a copy of nature, is Platonic; and that the conception of it as an imitation is stated by Plotinus (*Ennead* v. 8, 1) where he says, *οὐχ ἁπλῶς τὸ ὁρώμενον μιμοῦνται αἱ τέχναι, ἀλλ' ἀνατρέχουσιν ἐπὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐξ ὧν ἡ φύσις.*

PAGE **256** l. 15. *Why are such simulations*, &c. To a similar question Schelling (ib. p. 302) answers, 'Because the Thought (*Begriff*) is that which alone is living in the objects.'

33. *We must imitate Nature*, &c. Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 294, and Plotinus, quoted in note to p. 255, l. 32 *supra*.

PAGE **257** l. 2. *the union of the shapely with the vital.* Cp. with Coleridge's former definition of Beauty ('On the Principles of genial Criticism', p. 234) as 'the shapely joined with the agreeable'. The change is significant. But even this definition is unsatisfactory, inasmuch as it merely posits the union of two distinct elements, without really *uniting* them. Yet is not the essential interdependence of form and life the leading thought of the whole essay?

19. *If he proceeds only from a given form.* We see that Coleridge has quite abandoned his earlier standpoint.

27. *the thought and the product are one.* Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 299: 'The science by which Nature works, is certainly of another kind from human science, which is combined with self-conscious reflection; in Nature the conception is not separated from the deed, nor the design from the execution.'

31. *In the objects of nature are presented.* Cp. Coleridge's *Theory of Life*, *passim*, especially pp. 423, 424 (*Miscellanies*).

PAGE **258** l. 11. *In every work of art*, &c. Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 300. Cp. also *Transc. Ideal.*, 6ter Haupt-Abschnitt.

19. *the artist must first eloign himself.* Ib. p. 301: 'He (the

artist) must absent himself from the product or created thing, but only in order to raise himself to a level with the creative power and to apprehend it spiritually.'

PAGE **259** l. 4. *For of all we see, hear, feel and touch.* Cp. first *Lay Sermon*, Appendix B: 'That which we find in ourselves is *gradu mutato* the substance and the life of all our knowledge. Without this latent presence of the "I am" all modes of existence in the external world would flit before us as coloured shadows.' See also *Biog. Lit.* i. 179.

11. *to learn is, according to Plato, only to recollect.* Cp. *Biog. Lit.* ii. 120. For Plato's doctrine of ἀνάμνησις see *Meno*, 81 foll.; *Phaedo*, 73–6.

15. *And coxcombs vanquish Berkeley*, &c. See *Biog. Lit.* i. 93 f. n. and note.

PAGE **260** l. 5. *nature . . . prophesies her being.* For a development of this thought see *The Prometheus of Aeschylus* (*Miscellanies*, pp. 71, 72) and *Church and State* (Pickering, 1839), pp. 187 foll.

9. *painting rests in a material remoter.* Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 317.

PAGE **261** l. 2. *leave the common spectator cold.* Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 295: 'They (the works of antiquity) leave you colder than the works of nature, if you have not the spiritual insight to penetrate the husk and to feel the power that is operative in them.' Cp. also Goethe's *The Collector and his Friends*: 'The generic conception [of Greek art] leaves us cold; the ideal raises us above ourselves: but we want more; we want to return to a full enjoyment of the individual without letting go either the significant or the sublime.'

19. *Guy's monument.* Coleridge apparently refers to the statue of Guy (the founder of Guy's Hospital) by Scheemakers, in the square of the hospital, and the scenes from Scripture in *basso-relievo* on the west side.

Chantrey's children. Sir Francis Chantrey, sculptor (1782–1841). His 'Sleeping children', which stands in Lichfield (not Worcester) Cathedral, is generally regarded as his masterpiece.

PAGE **262** l. 3. *the identity of two opposite elements.* With this passage cp. *Preface* to *Lyrical Ballads* (1802) (L. B. p. 33), where Wordsworth speaks of 'the perception of similitude in dissimilitude' as the foundation of taste. Cp. also *Letters*, 1807 (p. 516): 'the source of our pleasure in art in the *antithetical* balance-loving nature of man, &c.

18. *This . . . I have elsewhere stated*, i. e. in the *Essays on the Principles of Genial Criticism.*

23. *a difference between form as proceeding*, &c. Cp. Schelling, ib. p. 303, for a fuller statement of this difference.

27. *the fulness of nature is without character.* The comparison of beauty to pure water, made by Winckelmann (*Geschichte der antik. Kunst*, iv. 2. 23; Bosanquet, *Hist. of Aesthetic*, p. 249), is quoted by Schelling (ib. p. 306), who adds, 'it is true that the highest beauty is characterless: but it is so only in the sense in which we say that the universe has no definite demarcations (*Abmessung*), neither of length, nor breadth, nor depth, because it contains all in equal infinity: or that the art of creative nature is formless, because she herself is not subjected to any particular form.'

30. *The object of art is to give the whole* ad hominem. Cp. Schelling, ib. pp. 305, 310–12. Coleridge's meaning seems to be that art reveals nature in the unity of its relation to man as its final cause.

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