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IV

A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION TO KEATS

Oxford University Press
HUMPHREY MILFORD
LONDON
1933

First impression, June 1929
Second impression, November 1929
Third impression, August 1933

Printed in Great Britain

TABLE OF THE NEW SYMBOLS USED

(1) *a* =the a of father(thisisthetrueRomanceA).
a = the *a ofhat.*

(2) a = the *a* in *almighty.*

(3) *av* = the same sound which occurs as *au* or aw in *autumn* and aw/.

(4) ε = the *e ofbed.* Only used so far in needful alleviation of wrong use of *a.*

(5) *a* or (6) = the *a of slave.* This symbol is made by a ligature of the two vowels which compose the sound; viz. the *e of bed* and the *i* ofin, as they appear in the words *rein* and *they:* such correctly spelt words are of course left unchanged. The modification of this sound before r, as in *various,* will be a rule of pronunciation, as also the effect of *qu* and *w* on the following vowel, e.g. *war,* etc., are un changed.

(9) for the diphthongal sound in *eye* and *right*

(10) *w* as in *how.*

(14) oasinoh.

(15) g'hard'G.

(16) *n* for the modified *n* in i*ng.*

Note: The reader is reminded that inconsistencies must occur in avoiding the confusion which would arise from using the symbols in words which require other new symbols to complete them. Such words are left in their old dress until they can be completely provided. Also note that the final *e* which is always mute, except in a few foreign words, is omitted where its presence would wrongly imply the lengthening of the preceding vowel, as in *liv, hav, psssag, colleg,* but note *deprc date,* where *a* is long. This simple advantage can not be made use of in words where the preceding vowel is mis-spelt, as in *dove.*

Capitals are not dealt with and illustrative quotations are given in the original spelling.

Any oversights in the *text* will not affect the purpose of the experiment.

Proper names unchanged: but the correct *a* is generally used, as in *Peona,* as it will not be re marked by the reader.

Mute *e* in past participles represented'by an

apostroph not only in *remember d*, etc., but now also in *attp'd, compos'd, dar'd, dentfd*, etc.

u omitted after g, when mute, as *disuse*.

N.B. through spelt *thru*
though „ *tho'*
thought „ *thavht*
because unalter'd.

IV

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FIRST PRINTED

John Keats. A Critical Essay. Written for the Muses Library (Keats) and sold separately in a limited edition (250)

Lawrence & Bullen 1895

REPRINTED AND REVISED

Poetical Works of John Keats

Rodder & Stoughton

1916

CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

I

IF *one English poet might be recavlll'd to dεy from the dead to continue the work which he left unfinished on earth, it is probable that the crovn of his country 's desire would be set on the head of John Keats, for he was smitten davn in his youth, in the very maturity of pavers, which, havin already produced work of almost unrivall'd beauty, held a promis of incredible thirds.*

Had his marvellous genius fully matured, it is impose sible to surmise what Keats miht not hav done: but con cernin, the poetry that he has actually left us, the general verdict is that, while the best of it is of the hihest excel' lence, the most of it is disappointing. Nor is this judgment likely to be overset, altho' some my alwys unre servedly admire him on accovnt of his excellences,—and this because hisfavlt is often the excess of a good and rare quality,—and others agεin as unreservedly depreciate him on account of that very want of restrεint, which in his early work, besides its other immaturities, is often of such a nature as to be offensiv to good taste and very provo cativ of impatient condemnation.

Amoty Keats'poems, too, a quantity of indifferent and bad verse is nov printed, not only from a reverence for his first volume, which he never revisd, and which is very properly reprinted as he issued it, but alsofrom afeelin which editors hav had, that since εnythin miht be of value, every thin, was; so that εny scrap of his which coud be re' cover d has gon into the collections. Concerning which poor stuff we my be consol'd to know thatKeats himself would hav had no care; for, not to speak of what was pleinly never intended for poetry at all, he seems to hav regarded at least his earlier work as a mere product of himself and the circumstances, nov good nov bad, its quality dependin on influences beyond his control and often adverse, under which he alwys did his best On one point only was he sensitiv, and that was his belief that he sometimes did well, and would do better. The fεilures he left as they were, having too much pride to be ash md of them, and too stron a conviction of an ever'flowin, and, as he felt, an increasin, and betterin, inspiration, to think it worth while to spend fresh time in revisin, what a younger moment had cast off.

Thepurpos of this essεy is to examin Keats' more im portant poems bi the hihest standard of excellence as works of art, in such a manner as my be both useful and

interestin,; to investigate their construction, and bi namin, the faults to distinguish their beauties, and set them in an approximat order of merit; also, bi exhibiting his method, to vindicate both the form and meaning of some poems from the assumption of even his reasonable admirers that thεy hav neither one nor other. "Within the limits of an in' troductory chapter this cannot be done, even imperfectly, without omittin, much which the reader my look for in an accavnt of Keats'poetry, but such omissions can be easily suppled: a knowledg, too, of the circumstances of Keats' life will be assumed,[1] *and some acqueintance with his let' ters to his friends; and since these make of themselves a most charmin, book, and one that can never be superseded as a commentary on his work in its personal aspect, this view of the subject will here be disregarded except when required to εid the criticism or interpretation of a poem.*

I shall take the poems in what seems the most convenient order for mi purpos, and shall not trouble the reader with eny other artificial connection, reserving general remarks till the end. The worser pieces I shall not notice at avl.

[1] Mr. *Sidney Coluin's* Life of Keats, *in the* English Men of Letters *series, supplies all these desiderata most satisfactorily.*

II.

ENDYMION

ENDYMION *is Keats' longest poem, it is the story of hov Cynthia, the moon goddess, who is also herself the moon, fell in love with the mortal Endymion. 'A great trial of invention, wrote Keats, for he had 'to fill 4000 lines with one bare circumstance.' when he compos d the poem, he was in a state of mental exqtment varied bi jits of depression; he grew tp'd of it, had a poor opinion of it, and in his preface descqb'd it as a feverish attempt.*

To one who expects to be carried on bi the interest of a story, this poem is tedious and unreadable, and parts of it merit at least some of the condemnation which fell on the whole. Keats thavht to 'surprise by a fine excess; his ex' cess rather confuses and blurs, and it is a severe task to keep the attention fix d. A *want of definition in the actual narration,—so that important matters do not stand out,— a sameness in the variety, and the reiteration of languid epithets, are the chief cavse of this; and in the second book, wh re Endymion is wandering in strange places, the un' certsinty as to wh re he is, in the absence of explanatory*

st tment as to what is intended, reduces the reader to despeir. And yet it is a marvel hau even suchfavlts as these can hav obscured so completely the poetic excellences from a more general recognition. I shall giv a short analysis of the outward events of the poem, such as the reader myfind useful both as agide and for reference or index, and will add some explanation of the allegory. But fast with respect to the allegory I would sty this, that the minor characters and incidents are so numerous and so yieldin) to various interpretation, that for the sake of brevity and simplicity I must confine myself to the mcin points, without which there is no sense in the whole; and since, even with these, the mere putting their explanation into definit st tment cannot be done without throwing the whole temporarily out of focus, I am the more content to neglect those lesser matters, in which the poet should be regarded as havin, in his own words, 'let himself go from some fine starting-point towards his own originality'; nor would I wish to represent the poem other than he meant it, 'a little region in which lovers of poetry may wander' at their will

ANALYSIS OF *ENDYMION*

BOOK I.—ON THE EARTH

*1. * Author' s prolog, 1-62.*

*2. Festival of Pan on Latmos, 63406. [Endymion en ters, 168; *ode to Van, 232*306.]*

3. Veona takes E. to her haver, 407'515. [Address to sleep, 453'463] E. tells of his vision of an unknown goddess amom, the poppies—he dreamt he was asleep, 516-710. peona rallies him on his love, 710-768. E. *re plies with his *argument on the meaning of Love, 769 857, andgivs an accovnt of a second, 893, and third, 963, meetin, with the same vision, to end of hook*

BOOK II.—WANDERINGS UNDER THE EARTH

*1. *prolog on supremacy of love above heroism, etc., 1*43.*

2. E., while enjoying the pleasures of nature, reads a messag on a butterfly's wins, 43'63. The butterfly leads him to a nymph, who foretells his wandering and ulti mat success, 64'130. E. meditats on the disappointment of desire, and prys to Cynthia as his especial goddess, but not recognis'd as his visitant; and receives answer bidding him descend into the sclent mysteries of earth, 131-214.

He obeys, 218. Description of an underworld of gems, 219'280. **E.** *feels horror of solitude, and wishes to return to the earth. He comes to a temple of Diana, his goddess, and prys Diana to deliver him from the underworld, 281' 332. slavers sprin, out of the marble, 333'350. He goes on to soft music, 351'363. is tortured bi the music, 364'375. Comes to a liyhtsome wood of myrtles, 376'386.*

3. Description of Adonis, 387'427. The w kin, of Adonis, 428'533. Venus encourages E., and enjoins se crecy, 534'587.

4. **E.** *follows a diamond balustrade thru waterworks to a gloom whare he sees Cybele, 588'649. Balustrade brɛiks off, and he goes on an eagle to a jasmin bover, wh re he soliloquises, 649'706. Cynthia comes unknown to him in bover, 707'827, and leaves him asleep, 853.*
[*The *poet speaks of the mystery of his legend, 827* 853.]

5. **E.** *wakes to melancholy thavht,andstrys to a grotto wh re he sees Alpheus and Arethusa—he prys for them, 854'1017. He goes altogether under the sea, 1 023.*

BOOK III.—UNDER THE SEA

*1. *prolog on regalities and supremacy of the Moon, 1'71.*

2. A *moonbeam reaches E. under sea, 72*102, and shines on him till mornin, 102'119. [Description of sea* floor, 119'141.]* [* *Address to the Moon, 142'187.]*

3. He meets withdaucus andscylla, 187'1027. Nep tune's hall, 866'887. Venus cheers E., 887'923. Nep tune's feast, 924'937. Hymn to Neptune, 943'990. Ne *reids carry offE., 1005' 1018. E. hears a heavenly voice promising to take him up, 1019'1027.*

4. E. finds himself back on the earth, 1028'1032.

BOOK IV.—IN THE AIR

1. prolog to English Muse, 1'29.

*2. E. finds a beautiful Indian mεzyd bewεilin, her lone liness. He falls in love with her, 30'330. [Her son, 1460 290.] And accompanies her in the sir onfliin, horses, 330. *Vision of sleep journyin), 367'397. E. and Indian sleep on the sleeping horses, 398. Cynthia appears to* E. *as the Moon, 430. The Indian disappears, '512. *c ve ofquie tude describ'd,* 51*2'562. Diana's feast and hymn to D., 563'611.*

3. in midst of hymn E. *is borne to Latmos agein, and finds th re and addresses the Indian lady, 611*797. [The poet speaks, 770'780.]*

4. peona reappears, and bi the identification of the

Moon, Cynthia, and the Indian lady as one, the tale con' dudes,' 1003.

in so far as the poem has an inner meaning, Endymion must be identifid with the poet as Man. The Moon re' presents 'poetry' or the ideality of desir'd objects, The principle of Beauty in all things: *it is the supersen suous quality which makes all desyd objects ideal; and Cynthia, as moon'goddess, crovns and personifies this, represen, the ideal beauty or love of woman: and in so far as she is also actually the Moon as well as the Indian lady,—who clearly represents real or sensuous passion, — i t follows that the love of woman is in its essence the same with all love of beauty; and this proposition and its converse will explain much that is otherwise strange and difficult.*

Allegory of Endy mion

Man in Keats' poem begins with a desire for excel' lence, renoun, and fame, and connects the Moon with his passion, Hi. 142 seq., *that is, he sees beauty or 'poetry' or ideality in his desire. This ideality, assuming the form of the goddess, that is, of woman,* which it is,[1] *makes him renounce ambition and pursue poetic love. Next he has to humanise the ideality of his passion; and this*

General meanin,

[1] *The absolute identification must be intended in iv. 430, etc.*

comes about bi his contact with the mystery of life, and bi sympathy with dead lovers' tragedies; and this sym' pathy leaves him a prey to real sensuous passion, in this he falls, as he thinks, from hisfeith; and his sensuous passion, comity into sudden contact with his old ideals, vanishes at one moment quite awy, and leaves him a prey to utter despeir, iv. 507 seq.; *and he is at discord with himself, until he unexpectedly discovers that his real and ideal loves are one and the same.*

The circumstance that ideal beauty, if it is the Moon, is represented asfallin in love with man, merely implies selection or election, and narrows dovn the application of the allegory to those men who feel supernatural visits tions (End. i. 795), *such as are the* visionaries *of the* Revision of Hyperion. *Also, to follow Keats' meanin, it must not be lost siht of that when Endymion is visited bi Cynthia, he never recognises her to be the Moon,*[1] *al tho'her advent was heraldedbithe loveliest moon,etc., i. 591. The identity is not reveal'd to him till Book* IV. *430, etc.; and so, when hefinds himself lovin, both Cyn thia and the Indian lady at the same time, he remembers his first love, the Moon, as distinct from them, andsys that*

[1] *See i 606, 894, 943'9591 ii. 128, esp. 168'195, and 302'332, esp. 686* seq., *and 739,573 ;* iii. 175,etc., *913'914.*

he has a triple *soul. Th re is no dovbt abovt this, and it seems to me one of the two keys to the allegory. That it has esc p'd the attention of diligent readers is a proof that it is not insisted on with sufficient clearness in the poem, and it is a good example of the lack of definition in the present tion of Keats' mɛin desins.*

Keats was not making an allegory, but usin, a legend, and he never, so far as I know, stated that he intended his poem for an allegory (unless this is impli'd in ii. 838'9), so that it my naturally shock the reader tofind the Moon identifi'd with such an abstraction as the principle of beauty in all things. *But as a matter of fact, the sym' bolism my be arriv'd at in the simplest wɛy: the poet was very sensible to the mysterious effects of moonliht,*[1] *and felt the poetry of nature more deeply under that influence; and, that mood bein, given, one step further only is neces' sary, which is that other ecstatic and poetic moods should*

Symbolism of the Moon

[1] *And see Wordsworth's two* Odes to the Moon:

O *still beloved! for thine, meek Power, are charms*
That fascinate the very babe in arms.

And, better, Guy de Maupassant:

'Pourquoi ces frissons de cceur, cette emotion de I'ame? . . . A qui etaient destines ce spectacle sublime, cette abondance de poesiejetee du ciel sur la terre?... Dieu peut'etre a fait ces nuits'la pour uoler d'ideal les amours des hommes!

be liken'd to it, and the condition, cavse of the first, which is known, be taken for a symbol of the other unknown cavses, or of that which is common to all. This is, I think, the other chief key to the sense, and it makes the difficult passag in **End.** *///. 142'187 (and see especially lines 163'169) intelligible andplɛin; and the poem be comes, with these explanations, readable as a whole, sug' gestiv of meaning, and full of shadowy outlines ofmys terious truth.*

Scheme of the Poem

*The general scheme of the poem is bravd and simple. The four books, following the common formula of mystic initiation 'by the terrors of Fire, of Water and Air (see the Analysis), correspond with the four elements—***I.** *Earth; II. tye—for it is more probable that this element has been somewhat obscured in the 'gleaming melancholy' of its necessary modifications than that it was not intended in its proper home beneath the earth's crust;*[1] *HI. under sea = water; IV. Air; and these typify respectivly— I. Natural beauty; II. The mysteries of earth; HI. The secrets of death; IV. spiritual freedom and satisfaction. The first plea needs little comment: the last three books are concern d with states ofmind which, on his own con*

[1] *See the initial description, in which Vulcan is mention'd, II. 231, and the gr t use of gems.*

fession, ley beyond the poet's experience; and here he must be regarded as a searcher for truth rather than as full pre phet. what the mysteries of earth are will appear in the explanation of Sleep and Poetry. *Their region 'beneath in the earth*[9] *is moonless,* i.e., *unlovely, and oppresses Endymion with the horror of solitude; but even here he finds a cold shrine to Diana and immortal hovers of beauty; and at last the mysteries flush into love, and he holds unexpected communion with Cynthia herself After this 'the blank amazements amaze no more, and he meets with Alpheus and Arethusa. The reason for the choice of this legend is very clear; they are two lovers, who, like Endymion himself, hav left the earth, and are pursuin, their passion underground, whence they are destind, as he too is, to arrive agein at the upper aer thru the sea. so in the third book the story of Glaucus and Scylla has a similar fitness. Glaucus is a mortal, who, of his own curiosity and ins tine tiv desire, hasplungdstreyht into the 'secrets of Death' from the world of natural beauty, whare he was livin, on the brink of them. Scylla my hav done the same; but the general meaning of this third book lam not at all able to supply. The region is one whare the moonbeams can reach, and the phenomena of earth's dey and niht are dimly seen. The secrets of Death are in some*

wy connected with magic, of which th re are two kinds— the first, the earthly magic or witchcraft of dree, who is 'arbitrary queen of sense', and can gratify the sense but not resolve the secrets of Death, whose evil paver she seems rather to zid; and the seconda seriousmagic, whichclaucus has to learn before he can win redemption from Circe's curse. The meanin, of the secrets of Death is probably the same as the imagination in Rev. of Hyperion *(q.v.), but whether Glaucus is a visionary who livs entirely in the past (see* End. iii. *327'337, 122, etc.), or whether Death has a more realistic meaning, or whether, as is not impossible, the two pleas are combed, I cannot gess. it seems intended that the sorrow of the secrets of Death can only be surmovnted and their magic resolved bi a soul who has been in perfect communion with ideal beauty, and has traced her presence thru' the whole of creation. This episode of Glaucus and scylla, bk. iii from line 188 on wards, my be omitted at first reading, and it must vlw s, tho' most consecutiv in narration, please the least, even tho' a key should befwndfor it. of the four books, of almost equal lenth, the fourth reads bifar the shortest.*

Idea of woman

Asfor thebeautiesof thepoem, theyare innumerable,and the reader willfynd them for himself,if he will be patient with the defects that so curiously hide them, of these I

would sɛy no more here, if they did not very mɛny of them depend on a lamentable deficiency in Keats' art, which, while it affects much of his work, is bravht into unusual prominence bi the subject of Endymion; and that is his very superficial and unworthy treatment of his idealfemale characters. It my be partly accounted for thus: Keats' art is primarily objectiv and pictorial, and whatever other qualities it has are as it were added on to thirds as per ceived; and this requires a satisfactory pictorial basis, which, in the case of ideal woman, did not exist in Keats' time. Neither the Greek nor the Renaissance ideals were understood, and the thin convention of classicism, which we my see in the works of West and Canova, was ply'd ovt; so that the risin, artists, and Keats with them,find' in, 'nothing to be intense upon, turn'd to nature, andpw ducedfrom English models the domestic-belle tipe, which ruled thru ovt the second quarter of the century, degrod' in, ovr poets as well as peinters. it was banal, *and the more ideal and abstract it savht to be, the more empty it became; so that it was the portrɛit'pɛinters only, like Lawrence, who, havin, to do with individual expression of subjectiv qualities, escap'dfrom the meanness, and repre' sented women whom we can still admire. Nov Keats was clearly in a predicament from which neither circumstances*

nor disposition provided him an escape. The social condu tion of his parents probably excluded him from contact with the best tipes, and he seems to hav had some idio' syncrasy. He deplores in one of his letters that he was not at ease in women s society; and when he attributes this to their not answering to his preconception of them, it looks as if he were seeking his idealamon, them. Certeinly what appears to be the delineation of his conception often offends taste without rɛisin, the imagination, and it reveals a plɛinly impossible foundation for dignify d passion, in the representation of which Keats fɛil'd, as we shall see later. I conclude that he suppos'd that common expressions be' came spirituatys'd bi bein, appli'd to an idea. whatever prɛise is given to Keats' work must alw ys be with this reservation; and he generally does his best wh re thare is no opportunity for this kind of fault. Th re are excep tions, and these are, as one would expect, amon, the more personally inspird poems; for such sonnets as Time's Sea, I cry your Mercy, Bright Star, *tho perhaps not quite untɛinted bi this weakness if interpreted bi the rest of his work, are yet, if consider' d alone, above reproch.*

This ideal carries much better his other more homely type of woman, represented to him bi his sister'in'lav, who was no doubt the model ofpeona, a lady who has no

*aspirations after the moon; a simple nature which, he grew to value even more, of which in the revised Hype*rion *he sys—*

They seek no wonder hut the human face,
No music but a happy'noted voice.

And it must be remember d that his behaviour towards his own younger sister was a pattern ofbrotherliness and natural affection, full of sympathy, chivalry, devotion, and common'sense.

III.

THE SHORT *END YMION* AND *SLEEP AND POETRY.*

'I stood tiptoe'

THE *first poem in Keats'first volume, 'I stood tiptoe upon a little hill', must he consider 'd in relation to* Endymion,for *'Endymion was its original title, and it my he regarded as a prelude to the longer poem. It was written in December 1816, and was more work'd at*[1] *than one miht suppose from what Keats tells us of his habits at that time. The argument of the poem, tho' much disgised bi its objectiu manner, is c rfully elaborated, it begins with a description of Nature as seen in a wavk in the then suburbs of London—already romantically remote from us—and from this passes insensibly to other de scriptions of Nature, with incidental reference to the new school of poetry, which promises to celebrate Nature* (51, *etc.). Then (I. 94* seq.), *in an unfortunat passag, my den beauty intrudes, and then (113) the moon*

Coming into the blue with all her light.

And this moon is the same symbol as in the lotypoem—

O *Maker of sweet poets! dear delight*
of this fair world...

[1] ***hetters, iv.***

Lover of loneliness and wandering,
of upcast eye.

And then (125) *follows a poetic statment of the in' spiration of poetry bi Nature, which is unique in its bold and fanciful identification of versification with natural forms,* e.g. *1.127—*

in the calm grandeur of a sober line
We *see the waving of the mountain'pine, etc.*

He then suggests that this ecstasy in Nature my hav given origin not only to the music of verse, but to the poetic ibeas of such myths as psyche, syrinx, and Nar' cissus,and lastly (181) ofEndymion, asserting his prefer' encefor that tale, and his wish to wqte it; and the poem ends (210'242) with a pas sag of human sympathy, as the direct effect of the marriag ofEndymion and Cynthia.

This willgiv some notion of Keats' poetic method, but I will take one other poem to illustrate it, the last in the first volume, cavll'd sleep and Poetry; *and it is con' veniently group'd here, because, like the one just noticed, it is in the same metre as* Endymion, *and both are good examples of Keats' early stile.*[1] *They often favll into a*

sleep and Poetry

[1] *Concernin) the versification of* **Endymion** *th re is no reason to repeat objections which were evident from the first to their Serene Cecities the* **Quarterly** *and* **Blackwood,** *but some remarks will be found under* **Lamia,** *and on p. 152* **scq.**

feeble manner, and they never rise to his full hiht, but here and th re, especially in single lines, they do touch on it, and, quite apart from their inner meaning, hav a beauty worthy of their avthor, and are very pleasant reading.

sleep and Poetry *is cravded with meaning. The short analysis of it is thus, sleep, which figures the unawakend state ofmind,*[1] *ispreisedfor its gentle soothin, and insppr-in, qualities (1'18, and* **cf. End. i. 453 seq.**) *but suborn dinated to voetry, which reveals more (19'34). Poetry, which represents the mind awaken d to mystery, inspires with ambition and confidence (40).*

Keats then states his own devotion to Poetry (47'55), and pry s to her for inspiration to penetrate the mysteries of Nature and human life ('84). He dovts whether fate will grant him lenth oflife, andgivs images of life which brin, him back to a picture of the state ofmind describ'd in the opening lines of the poem (85'95).

Then in an important passag (101-162) he states the spheres of emotion thru which this poetic love of nature will carry him. Then (162-235) follow the well-known invectiv ageinst the Augustan school, and his propheci of the comity revival; and at **235** *a definition of the true object*

[1] *As pointed avt by hirs.* **F. M.** *Owen in* **Keats: A Study,** *Kegan* **Pau/,** *1880—an important book in the history of the criticism of Keats'genius.*

of poetry, to comfort mankind; impliin, sympathy with human misery. The restof the poem,270toend,ishisper' oration to his first publication, an apology for presump' tion, a determination to write, a tribute to the sympathetic support of his friends, a description of his refuge in Leigh Hunt's study, and he ends his book s in, of his verses—

Howsoever they be done,
I leave them as a father does his son.

This argument seems consecutiv enough, but thepassag 101' 162 requires explanation. The meaning of it is exactly the same with that of Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey. *In that poem Wordsworth distinguishes three states of mindfollowin, bi development one on another; 1st, boy hood—mere animal pleasure; 2nd, passionat ecstasy in Nature; 3rd, reflectiv pleasure in Nature, i.e., pleasure accompanied bi or inwoven with that spiritual insiht into the mystery which it is the object of his poem to exhibit. Nov Keats, in a letter to Reynolds, May 1818,[1] refers to these Iines on* Tintern Abbey, *and sets out his own ideas in thefollowin, languag:—*

Compar'd with Words' worth

'I *compare human life to a large Mansion of many apartments, two of which I can only describe, the doors of the rest being as yet shut upon me. The first we step*

[1] *Letters, lii*

*into we call the infant or thoughtless chamber, in which we remain as long as we do not think, we re' main there a long while, and notwithstanding the doors of the second chamber remain wide open, showing a bright appearance, we care not to hasten to it; but are at , length imperceptibly impelled by the awakening of the thinking principle within us. we no sooner get into the second chamber, which I shall call the chamber of Maiden'Thought, than we become intoxicated with the light and the atmosphere, we see nothing but pleasant wonders, and think of delaying therefor ever in delight. However, among the effects this breathing is father of, is that tremendous one of sharpening ones vision into the heart and nature of Man—of convincing ones nerves that the world is full of Misery and Heartbreak, Vain, Sickness, and Oppression—whereby this chamber of Maiden'Thought becomes gradually darkened, and at the same time, on all sides of it, many doors are set open —but all dark—all leading to dark passages—*we *see not the balance of good and evil—we are in a mist—* we *are now in that state—We feel the" burden of the Mystery".*

'TO this point was Wordsworth come, as far as I can conceive, when he wrote "Tintern Abbey", and it seems

to me that his Genius is explorative of those dark pas' sages!

I do not think that ɛny one who knows Keats' letters would suppose that he was merely borrowing fromWords' worth, but thare is no objection to supposing that he my hav learnt some of his obstinate questioning from that master, tho' he thavht out the answers for himself The sense in the two poems is, hovever, identical, and it will repy us to examin the extreme difference between Keats' objectiv treatment and Wordsworth's philosophising. For *instance, here is Wordsworth's description of what Keats cavils the infant or thavhtless chamber—*

The coarser pleasures of my boyish days
And their glad animal movements.

Keats speaks directly of this first state in the opening lyies of his poem, and incidentally (1. 93), tho' not without full contrastiv purpose, he puts it at the end of his images of human life, whare 'knowledge is sorrow, sorrow is wis' dom, and wisdom is folly'. These images are oflife con sider'dfirst as a mere atomic movement in a general flux, then as a dream on the brink of destruction, then as a bud' din, hope, then as an intellectual distraction, then as an ecstatic glimpse of beauty, and lastly as an instinctiv ani mal pleasure.

The whole passag is thus—

Stop and consider! Life is but a day;
A fragile dewdrop on its perilous way
From a tree's summit; a poor Indians sleep
while his boat hastens to the monstrous steep
ofMontmorenci. why so sad a moan?
Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown;
The reading of an ever changing tale;
The light up-lifting of a maidens veil;
A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air;
A laughing schoolboy, without grief or care,
Riding the springy branches of an elm.

Nov the last three lines correspond exactly in meaning with the two lines of Wordsworth quoted just above; and the different methods of the two poets areplɛinly exhibited. The abstract interpretation which I hav given of the whole passag quoted from Keats my serve for a further illustr tion.

of the second chamber Wordsworth's lines will serve the general purpose of this essy, as givin, an excellent plɛin description of Keats' mental condition when he wrote most of his earlier poetry—

The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion; the tall rock,

The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By *thought supplied, etc. (cp.* End. iii*. 142, etc.)*

And when they both describe the Third chamber here are the parallel passages: Wordsworth has—

And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
of something far more deeply interfused,
whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

And Keats has—

Lo, I see afar,
o'er'sailing the blue cragginess, a car
And steeds with streamy manes—the charioteer
Looks out upon the winds with furious fear:
And now the numerous tramplings quiver lightly
Along a huge cloud's ridge; and now with sprightly

wheel downward come they into fresher skies.

And now I see them on a green'hilVs side
In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.
The charioteer with wondrous gesture talks
To the trees and mountains; and there soon appear
shapes of delight, ofmystery. . . .
. . . . .Most awfully intent
The driver of those steeds is forward bent
And seems to listen,

it is impossible to read Wordsworth's st tment with' avt seein, his meanin. Keats' poetry is as obscure as the 'dark passages' themselves; but it is a definitly eim'd at tempt to express a definitly conceived thavht in poetical terms, if the imagery fɛils to define the poet's thavht, it must be remember d that definition is neither desp'd nor savht; and if there does lie behind Keats'poetry a meaning which it is impossible to make absolutely distinct in his objectiv manner, then it is not strange that his poetry should attract meny who hav to confess that they do not entirely understand it.

Poetry of Nature

There must be thousands and thousands of persons alive at this moment in England, who, if they coud only giv poetic expression to those mysterious feelings with which

they are moved in the presence of natural beauty, would be one and all of them grater poets than hav ever yet been; but this objectiv presentation of ecstatic moods is only given in rare touches, and seems to be the reward of con' summat art. The old simile, which in the iliad *is seldom more than an ornament used to enliven the description in an almost barbaric taste, my be used for a device to secure somethity of this evasiv wonder. The poet havin, put his reader into the fit mood, then thrusts a natural picture be' fore him, which is seen bi him from the human or myste' rious point of view; for instance, in* Hyperion, *the ex' quisit pass g*

Similes

Like a dismal cirque
of Druid stones upon a forlorn moor,
when the chill rain begins at shut of eve
In dull November, and their chancel vault,
The heaven itself, is blinded throughout night,

is not so much a hihtenin, of the picture of those old mon' strous gods, liin, out 'at random, carelessly diffused,'— which is its excuse and opportunity,—so much as it is a gloriin, of the mystery of Stonehenge[1] *and the forlorn moor, the poetry of which is seized at once bi the reader, whose mood has been created for him bi the story.*

[1] ***It was not actually Stonehenge that Keats was thinkin, of, but the smaller Druid circle near Keswick.***

Nothin, can exceed the force of such a reserved method as this. The intention is artistically conceal'd bi the very means which are taken to prepare the effect, and the pic ture hursts unexpectedly on the reader with all the force of a landscape seen suddenly upon reaching the brew of a hill. But it is of course much more difficult to picture ideas than moods. The purely objectiv picturin, of an idea in poetry is very like a musical presentation; and as instru mental music can giv a mood, but cannot be trusted to sug' gest the simplest idea without the interpretation of words or action either accompan, or preparing it, so the poetic picture requires a statment of its intention; and even then it seems as vage in itself as music, because it would equally well picture some other intentions. Keats givs a statment of the intention of his charioteer in 123'125 and 157, and also bi a few words in the picture; yet it must be con fess'd that he is not quite successful; and if it my be said that in Wordsworth the statment is overdone, and that what fine poetry th re is, is swamp d in a self conscious disquisition, Keats reads fyke an Apocalypse.

IV.

HYPERION

KEATS *was twenty'two years old when hefinish'd* Endymion *in November 1817. it represents his youthful effort towards a reconstruction ofEnglishpoetry onEliza' bethan lines, in sympathy with the romantic and natural schools of his time, and in reaction agεinst the poetry of the last century. Ay ear pass d before he began* Hyperion, *his other lon,poem, and in that time he fell under the in' fiuence of Milton, recogn,sin, in* Paradise Lost *the model of that workmanship, the neglect of which had spoil'd his first attempt* Hyperion *was to be an epic in Milton 's manner,narr tin,the overthrow of the old elementalGreek gods bi the new olympian hierarchy. The difficulty that the events are supramundane is met bi reliance on ancient sculpture for the tipes of the gods, with some hints from Milton 's Pandemonium, and bi placity the scene on earth, wh re his romantic love of Nature coud hav full ply. Hyperion has a palace in the ski, which is luxuriantly descrbid, and he is pictured as resting awhile on the clouds, whare he is address'd bi Coelus from space; but he is*

Hyperion

quickly hravht dovn to earth, whare also the other gods are wanderin.

The openin, promises well; we are conscious at once of a new musical blank verse, a music both sweet and stron, afive with imagination and tenderness, Th re and thru out the poem are passages in which Keats, without losin, his own individuality, is as good as Milton, whare Milton is as good as Virgil;[1] *and such passages rank with the best thirds that Keats ever did; but in other places he seems a little overshadow'd bi Milton, while definit passages of the* Paradise Lost *are recavll'd, and in some places the imitation seems frigid. Milton 's grammar and prosody are apparently εim'dat, but they are not strictly kept, nor is the poem msinteind at the Miltonic elevation. Here and th re, too, a fanciful or weak expression betr ys the avthor of* Endymion. *when, in April 1819, Keats had written little more than the first two books, he broke it off; and tho it was not finally discarded tillfive months after' wavrds, he never continued it. in his letters he attributes his dissatisfaction to the stile; but one cannot read to the end without a conviction that the real hindrance ly deeper; for vltho' we my sy that this torso of Keats is the only poem since Milton which has seriously challenged the epic*

[1] *And see agεin p. 169.*

place, it is to the style meinly that this is due; the subject lacks the solid basis of outward event, bi which epic mzin' tεins its interest: fyke Endymion, it *is all imagination;; or, ifweshouldacceptKeats'personificationsassufficiently real for hispurpos, even then the poem fεils in conduct. The first two books describe the conditions of the older gods, and are impassion d with defeat, dismεy, and collapse; the third introduces the new hierarchy, and we expect to find them radiant, confident, and irresistible; but th re is no change in the colour of the poem; of the two deities introduced, Apollo is weepin, and ravin, and Mnemosyne, who has deserted the old dynasty for her hope in the new, 'wails morn and eventide. Continuation in this vεin was impossible, at least to an artist like Keats, whatever men' tal qualities go to make a born artist, none is more essen' tial than an unconscious enthwlment to his creativ con' ception. when eny true and sane artist has stryd into a favlt that falsifies his conception, then his inspiration comes to a stand. Coud he go on, as if all were well, it would be because he was lackin, in the essential faculty which makes artistic work good.*

Thefeilure here is really the same in kind as the favlt of Endymion: *th re is little but imagination, and a one' sidedness or incompleteness of that; a languor which lin'*

gers in the mɛin desert, tho the influence of Milton is gene rally uplifting the languug. ThatKeats was conscious that some of his earlier weaknesses were still visible will appear when we come to consider the Revision of Hyperion; *but it would seem that he never rihtly discern d the cause of his dissatisfaction and collapse, for his own criticism of the poem was that itwasMiltonic andartificial,andhe confesses in a letter of Sept. 181 cf to a revulsion of taste.* Paradise Lost, *which not a month before hadbeen 'every day a greater wonder' to him, is nav 'a corruption of our language, accom' modating itself to Greek and Latin inversions and intona' tions. lhavebutlately (he writes) stoodon my guard against Milton. Life to him wouldbe death to me! These last words mean agr t deal, and remind one of Milton s ambitious avoidance of Shakespeare in his own later work. ButKeats in condemnitygrammatical inversion seemsgoin, back from the grat advance in stile which he had made, and it is worth while to inquire what he meant, it miht seem at first that he attributed to inversions the appearance of Miltonism in his poem, and that he coud not afford to be imit tiv. But he had not abused inversion in* Hyperion, *nor is it absent from his revision, nor wholly from his other poems; and the truth is that it is of the essence of good*

Gramma tical in' version

[1] ***Letters, cxui.***

stile, in ordinary speech the words follow a common order presctyb'd bi use, and if that does not suit the sense, cor' rection is made bi vocal intonation: hut thefirst thin, that a writer must do is to get his words in the order of his ideas, as he wishes them to enter the readers mind; and when such an arrangment happens not to be the order of common speech, it my be call'd a grammatical inversion. To *take the simplest cose, the position of the adjectiv with regard to its substantiv: in French it generally follows the substantiv, and this is in most cases its proper place, and for this reason alone descriptions of scenery are gene' rally more pictorial in French prose than in English, the necessarily frequent predicates bein, in their natural posi' tion: in English the common use sets the epithet before the object, and when this is a malposition of pleas, a poet must invert either his grammar or his ideas; and what is true of adjectiv s is true avlso of every word in the sentence. The best simple writers hav the art of makin, the common grammatical forms obey their ideas, and Keats has usually a riht order of ideas in a simple grammatical form, and a preference for this style over more elaborat constructions is no doubt what he intended to advocate, and this is well enough: but it must be remember d that he often gets good effect from the proper use of inversion, which is present*

wh re least suspected; and avlso that he does not refuse to invert the grammatical order for the sake of rhyme or metre, which, tho it my occasionally be a beauty, is generally a licence or abuse, a resource of bad writers, and almost as much to be condemn das those needless orfavlse inversions which are sometimes used bi bad writers togiv the effect of hihtend style.

Revision of Hyperion

lfnav,for the convenience ofpursuiq ovr subject, we consider the Revision of Hyperion, *we must remember that we are passing over Keats' most important work,—for it was between September 1818, when he began* Hyperion, *and September 1819, when he discarded it, that is, when he was under the Miltonic influence, that almost all his best work was done,—and we shall novbedeality with what was really a transitional period, tho' its develop' ment was arrested, as under the torture of passion, disap' pointment and mortal disease his brihthopesofpoetic attein' ment faded from him, and his voice was silenced for ever.*

He had been disappointed, too, in a resolution which he had made to support himself and those whom his gene' rosity invited to look to his talents for assistance, bi doin, some hackwork independent of his poetry; and he had re turn'd dispirited to Hampstead (October 1819), the home of his unfortunat passion, andthare, hidin,from his friends

his restlessness and gloom, had betaken himself agɛin to composition. Bi *some paradoxical devilry, moreover, he devoted the best havrs of the dy to supply the market with a comic poem in the Byronic vein.* The cap **and Bells,** *and work'd in the evening only, when fatigued and distracted, at the* Revision of Hyperion, *which miht be in itself enough to account for ɛny inferiority in the execu tion. This fragment is very interesting;first, it shows a new departure in stile,—and meats nov deliberatly deserts his old manner ofreliin, chiefly on the objectivpresentation of his ideas bi pictures of sensuous imagery and beauty (as descrb'd on p. 103, etc.); and, as if he were conscious of his want of success in definition, he nov introduces a character who discusses with the mein person the meanin, of what ispictur'd;—secondly, it shows a deliberat resumption of his old allegorising vein, which wefovnd in* Endymion *and the early poems; and thirdly, it is the most mature attempt that he ever made to express some of his own con' victions concemim, human life. It is in this third aspect that the chief interest lyes, and it is strange that its matter should not hav prevented the* Revision *from passing for a first draft, with such critics as miht overlook the evu dence of the form. The stile, bein, evidently less master'd than inrthe longer poem, miht at first siht deceive; but it*

Stile

should not havdeceived,for,in spite of the inefficient exe' cution, it is in some respects an advance; it eims at a grater severity and has a more thavhtful paver than εny of Keats' other work. But the evidence of the alterations in thepas' sages common to the two versions isgl rity. For instance, invocation it was an old habit of his to make frequent use ofinvoca tion, as almost eny page of Endymion *will show: nav in the* Revision of Hyperion *th re is not a single voca' tiv* O *admitted; and if we examin a passag which con' teind such o's in the original, and which is kept in the* Revision, *we shall see hov their exclusion accounts for the alterations: for example,* Hyp. i. 50:—

Would come in these like accents; O *how frail*
To that large utterance of the early gods!
Saturn, look up! though wherefore,poor old king?
I have no comfort for thee, no not one:
I cannot say, 'o *wherefore steepest thou?'*
Tor heaven is parted from thee, and the earth
Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a god.

The o's beity proscrftd, the first line is avlter'd in Re vision, *328, to*

Would come in this like accenting: how frail!

and the fifth line to

wherefore thus sleepest thou?

And this new thus *drives avt the original* thus/rom li*ne 7, which nov becomes* so afflicted. *He then sees the two* wherefores *and alters the third line to* and for what, poor lost king; *the change of* lost *for* old *bein, made to avoid the hackney'd* poor old.

And besides this conscious correction of old faults, it is new for the fast time that the influence of Dante appears, and that not merely in the gravity of the vision in this poem, whichis unlike eny other of his embodiments, and in the sort of connection conceived between his vision of doom and his own experience and poetic meanin,avll which he mphthav come at thru a translation ,but in echos of the Italian balance in passages whare the sense is tyke Dante's, as in this— (Dante)

High prophetess, said I, purge off,
Benign, if so it please thee, my mind's film.

And also whare thare is only the indefinable and indivi dual touch to point to, as in—

when in mid'day the sickening east-wind
shifts sudden to the south, the small warm rain
Melts out the frozen incense from all flowers,

where the last line shows that Keats has nov added to his stile a mastery of Dante's especial grace: and such passages as this, or agein when he evils written words

The shadows of melodious utterance,

which is also Dantesque in thavht, should, I think, hav forbidden the later critics, who knew from external evi dence when the Revision *was written, from judgin that the new style came from decey of poetic paver, in these quotations there is certeinly nofavllin off in the magic of his pen, while favlts so foreign to him as the wrotyiess, lowness and awkwardness in the diction of these tynes—*

Therefore, that happiness he somewhat shared,
Such things *as thou* art *are admitted oft*
into like gardens thou didst pass *erewhile,*

show want of mastery in his new, notfeilure in his old manner, and are, in mi opinion, amply accounted for bi the fatigue and distraction of those unhappy evening.

To conclude this question of style, it my be added, that tho the effect of an imitation of Milton is feirly got rid of from the Revision, *and whole passages are excluded be cause they were too Miltonic, yet inversions and classi cisms are used, and in the line—*

Saturn, sleep on; O *thoughtless, why did 1,*

a Latinism is actually introduced to supplant a mannerism of his own; forothoughtlcssischanged tome thought' less.

Allegory *To pass nav to themean of the poem, we will begin with what is certein,and so lead up to the more davtful*

matters, first, it is certein that the poem was intended as an allegory; it is named A vision, *but of Knowledge nau, not of Love, and it begins in afigurativ garden, as the* Divina Commedia *in a wood, and there is a super natural gide, who is to explein things unseen bi what is seen, it is also clear that the first version of* Hyperion *was to be used to suppli the vision, and from this it fol lows that the old* Hyperion *had a/lso an inner meaning of* Hype *for it is impossible that Keats would hav forced into an* rion *allegory a poem which he had conceived and written with ovt such intention. But the original poem bein unfinished, did not clearly show this; thare are, havever, indications of it, and onepassag, the speech ofoceanus in Bk. ii feirly supplies the argument, which is that there is a self-'de structiv progress in nature towards good, and that beauty, and not force, is the lav of this flux or change, it seems also probable that Keats intended to moke Hyperion and Mnemosyne instruct Apollo, and thus to show Liht and Son passi into union and perfection ovt of elemental chaos and crudeness. Havever this my be, Oceanus bids Saturn take comfort in his dethronement, for,' he sys,*

To bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm
That is the top of sovereignty.

of Revi' sion

And it is further clear in the Revision *that this* top of sovereignty *is the reward of the poet for conduct in cer' tein circumstances of real life, and that the whole of the introduction (lines 19'266) is an objectiv picture of those circumstances. Here the allegory is complete, and it is here that it should be intelligible.*

And this will serve to gide us at once to separate the Revision *into two parts, the first dann to tyne 266, which is the new allegory, and the second from l\ne 267 onward, which is an adaptation of the original poem. This latter part we my neglect; it is only a meimin of his earlier fine work; but the first part is original, and tho* it opens badly, andhas some poor places,it is, from line19 onwards,gene rally worthy to be reckon d with Keats' best work.*

Altho' one cannot be wron in assuming that this allegory is a description of Keats' own Iife, and of his latest con' victions, and one would think that his letters and poems should supply the key with some certeinty, yet 1 would not venture very far, and would offer what 1 sy as sug' gestion only.

As I read it, the visionaries are those who neglect con' duct for the pursuit of my ideal. The garden and feast re present the beauties of Nature, and the drink is poetry, which is made from the fruits of the feast. The intoxication

which follow'd the draft represents that complete and ex' cited absorption bi poetry which Keats descqb'd himself as suffering when he was writin Endymion,and the swoon would be that state of selfish isolation into which he fell in his Miltonicperiod. His awakin, in the temple is his re covery from this to a sympathy with the miseries of the world; and the temple itself is the temple of Knowledge, which it is death for a visionary to enter if he hav not that sympathy. The steps to the altar are the struggle of such a mind to reach truth: and truth itself is reveal'd bi know ledge. The leaves burning on the vltarare years of the poet's life, or his youthful faculties.

whether or no εny or all of these points are rihtly interpreted, it is sure that the general meaning is, that tho' Keats conceived of the true poet as a prophet and seer, yet he new valued the life of action and conduct above that of meditation and poetry, and condemns as selfish the merely artistic life which he had been leadin,; and he is new preach' in, that actual contact and sympathy with human misery and sorrow are the only school for real insert, which is the reward of true human conduct, and not to be arqv'dat bi εny other path, in this wsy only can the poet hope to create eny thin, of value and become himself immortal

Moneta, the new name for Mnemosyne, must be con'

nected with moneo, *and Memory is the same as Knowledge, and she can* admonish *or teach a knowledge of'the mysteries of earth'. And this knowledge is what is requp'd to make a poet of a visionary, she is thus foster-mother of Apollo as well as mother of the Muses., she has a harp; and when Apollo stys/for me dark,dark,and painful vile* oblivion *seals my eyes', this ohlivion must he ignorance regarded as the opposit of that knowledge which is memory. Compare* Hyperion, iii, *whare Apollo'becomes immortal' bi reading in Mnemosyne's ies,just as the poet is to do in the* Revision. *Thus the temple must be the temple of Knowledge=Memory;*[1] *and it is fit that Mnemosyne, the Memory of all things, should be primeval, and sister to the oldest god.*

The conception of her temple, all that is spur d from the thunder of the wavr is extremely fine in its allegorical manner, with its doors barr'd to the sunrise, and the western past clos'd b'i a mihty mythical imeg of a dead god, and an avltar, beside which the goddess of the memory of all change stands veil'd in the smoke of the sacrifice of the poet's life. The marble palace in End. *it. 256-270, corresponds somewhat closely with this temple, tho' the mean-*

[1] **Cf.** ***Letter xxxvii, 'Memory should not be called Knowledge.' "February 1818.***

in is nav changed, and it should be compared; but in tekin this allegory to interpret Keats[3] mind, it must be remem' berdfirst, that all the different states thru which he my represent himself as havin pass'd, were only consecutiv in the sense that he my hap been at one tyme more domu nated bi one view of things, at another time bi another; and tho' in the change strength of his convictions thare my hav been a real growth,yet the different feeliqs were most of them known to him almost from the first, as his letters show: and secondly, that what he condemn das his selfish period was the period in which he most benefited mankind; and he sav at the time the truth of the paradox, and was tortured bi the 'solitariness, which proved his sympathy to be alive; and that very torture my hav been his misery at the foot of the altaw steirs, on which, when he once stepp'd, they fill'd his freezin body with natural heat Thare is a grat nobility in all this, and considerin what vile treatment he had met with, it is very beautiful that there is not only no word of resentment, but noplace for compltint: he takes all the blame on his own unworn thiness. But it is also very sad: hav changd nav is his fiith in the meaning of natural beauty to men: his old ideal mistress, Cynthia, the 'lover of the upcast eye', is likend with the ies of the goddess of memory, of which he sys—

They saw me not,
But in blank splendour beam'd, like the mild moon,
"who comforts those she sees not, who knows not
what eyes are upward cast

V.

THE TALES

THERE *are three finish'd tales or short narrativ poems* Isabella *bi Keats,* Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, *and* Lamia. *They are all famous for their beauty, and the first two, which are in stanza, my be said to hav become almost popular.* Isabella *has, in fact, cavs'd the story of the pot of basil to be widly known in England, as much perhaps from the pictures of artists who took their subject from Keats as from the poem itself The story is unpleasant, and is the worst executed of the three; but the poet has over come the gruesomeness with skill—he parenthetically in' terrupts his narration to confess the difficulty,—yethesel dom stys for meny lines together above his weaker vein: the appearance of Lorenzo's ghost to Isabella, from stanza xxxi onwards, bein, the best susteind passog. The poem has meny examples of Keats' originality of imagination and felicity of phrase, but is teinted thruavt bi a charac teristic cegritude of passion, which makes the best occasion*

to speak of the curiously close similarity which exists be' tween him and the school of p i n t i n which had Rossetti for its head. The lovers who 'could not in the selfsame mansion dwell withovt some malady', *the 'sick longing of Isabella, the 'passion both meek and wild', the 'little sweet among much bitterness', the consciousness of some' thin) too horrible to speak of behind the scene, and all the passionatfeintness of the personages of the romance,—in whom, as in a faded tapestry, the brilliance of the reiment has outlasted thefesh'colour,—hav a likness to the crea' tions of this school so remarkable, that Keats my be safely credited with a chief share ofparentag.* Isabella *was writ' ten in February-April 1818, when* Endymion *was in the press.*

The Eve of St. Agnes

The Eve of St. Agnes, *written in January 18 19, and revis'd in September, that is, in the* Hyperion *period, is much more poverful. it is well done thru out, and except for some expressions, criticism coud only quarrel with the machinery of the story. This opens withfour stanzas about an 'ancient bedesman, who has personally nothin, what' ever to do with the tale; he provides contrast to the revelry, which he introduces bi hearing it, and he also makes oppor' tunityfor describin, his havnt in the chapel of the heroines castle: but the chapel is never used agein. Thefeasi, too,*

whichvorphyro sets out inMadeline's chamber is robb'd of its motiv and serves nopurpos but to enrich the descrip' tion. Both these strands should hav been woven in; but they are selected in keeping with the story, and make someofthemostsuccessfulcolourin. TheEve ofst.Agnes *is not only a passionat tale, but it is very rich in the Kind of beauty characteristic of Keats, and conteins hih poetry both of diction andfeelin,: the majority of poetic readers would not wish it different from what it is.*

Lamia, *which was written between July and septem'* Lamia *ber 1819, that is, in the interval between the discontinuity and the rejection* of Hyperion, *is in rhim'd couplets. These differ from those* ofEndymion *in showin, an approch to Drydens versification,*[1] *and in so far a return from the extreme reaction ageinst Pope with which.Keats began, Thare will vlwys be difference of opinion as to what the excellence of this metre is, but the source of the uncerteinty in which Keats found himself is easy to explsin. The metre in Chaucer's hands came to be perfectly successful, and chiefly because it was liht; and the lihtness was due to the presence in his languag of terminal vovels and inflexions*

[1] ***So the critics sty; and Charles Brown told Lord Houghton that Keats purposly studied Dryden's verse: I hav not miself a sufficiently intimat acqueintance with it to enable me tojudg.***

which hav since become mute or entirely disappear'd. For *instance, Chaucer wrote—*

As *thick as motes in the sonne beam.*

Milton s ten syllables are

As the gay motes that people the sunbeams.

All the buoyancy isgon; and this exemplifies the change which necessarily came over the rhimd heroic verse, It became heavier and less adapted for narration, and at last was cast mechanically in polish' d couplets, which passd in a dull generation for a triumph of classic grace, and were prescrib'd bi the universities as the only form in which they would recognise English poetry. Later poets hav used different devices for lihtenin, the metre, so as to make it agein do Chaucer 's work, but the general result is that their lihtly constructed verse is slovenly. Endymion *was very successful in the quality oflihtness, but it met with no favour, and the lihtness wasgeind at the cost of other qualities which Keats coud nov regard withavtpre' judice. In* Endymion *the couplet and line units are re' duced to a minimum of value, and with these the rhyme value sinks, so that the unrhim'd lines in the poem are scarcely noticed: on the other hand, the verses are frequently tagg'd bi evidently foisted rhymes. But in reality the first dozen lines* ofLamia, *the problem seems solved;all is*

both liht and sure, and thare are neither tags nor self'con' scious couplets: nothing coud be better, and a grot deal of the poem is as good as this. The device of separating the couplets bi apavse in the sense after the first rhime is re tein 'dfrom Endymion, *and rhimetriplets and twelve syllable lines are introduced.Mt the poem is notallequally well written, the whole passag, i.300-350, whare the sub' ject does not suit him, ispleinly below the mark, and here the tags reappear, and they are much more self-evident and offensiv in this kind of verse than in* Endymion, *whare they were an avov'd means of construction, and whare their frequency became familiar and had the advan' tag ofgin,gratforce to eny unbroken couplets that were introduced. As for the triplets and twelve'syllable lines, these are no davbt used sometimes with skill, but amon, regular 'heroics' they are a device of the most transparent artificiality, andbi their carfully irregular intrusion they openly expose the monotony which they wouldavkwardly obviate, from which it would seem that they would find a better home in the less regular verse.*

Theproblemhav to matchchaucers narrativ in modern English is much more nearly solv'd in the unfinished Tale The Eve of St. Mark, *written in eiht-syllable couplets with the same sort of latitude which Coleridge advocated*

Eve of St. Mark

in **christabel.** *The fragment is too short to be a complete experiment, but, so far as it goes, the liht verse carries the description of the cathedral tovn on ashaverysundty even' in, in sprin, with an easy geniality combinin, beauty and homeliness, and suits just as well the indoors picture, with its combination of mystery and real life; and his mastery ofall this, independently ofhisplyful affectation of the delicacies ofmiddleEnglish (copied apparently from chat' terton) recall Chaucer's charm, and seem to show that he had here hit on a narrativform which he miht hav sue cessfully perfected.*

As for the poetry of **Lamia,**[1] *it does not allgo on as well as it begins, and sometimes feils too in its most hihly wravht passages. The description of the serpent is over' done to vagness,andher transformation has the same fault. Words like* **rosy** *and* **phosphor** *assert themselves; others are dress'd at the call of the rhyme; while very common expressionsoccasionallyproduce abathos, i. 201,330,335; ii. 12,15,89,128. Yet Keats was trin, to correct his old faults; for instance, in revisin, he appears to hav written* **silently** *in ii. 134 for* **silverly;** *and* **Lamia** *is construe tivly the most perfect of his three narrativs. I remark that 'the taller grasses and full flowering weed' ofi. 44 do not*

[1] ***For*** *a criticism of the passion, seep. 162.*

agree with the daffodils ofline 184: and I consider it a blot that Lycius should die at the end; because he is kill'd bi Apollonius, who, if he coud not rescue him, should hav let him alone, philosophy or Reason is made unamiable: but I am afreid that Keats my hav intended this; and he makes Apollonius laugh, which is almost diabolic. The general meanly is,no davbt,the antagonism of reason and pleasure, or of science and imagination (ii. 229 seq.*), or both; and that reason should take deliht in destroyiqplea' sure is only one of the ugly doctrins that lurk beneath the text if it be redd as a parable. But it is very uncertein hav much Keats intended. He my hav had in his mind the sel fshness of the artist absorb'd in his ideals, and his catas' trophe in the justifiable indifference of the world to the creations of mere art. On August 23, 1819, he wrote thus: 'A solitary life engenders pride and egotism, but this pride and egotism will enable me to write finer things than anything else could,—so I will indulge it! And in less than a month he had wholly banish'dfrom himself as un' worthy this stron, conviction of his duty.*

VI.

THE ODES

H A D *Keats left us only his odes, his rank amon, the poets would not be lower than it is', for they hav stood apart in literature, at least the six most famous of them; and these were all written in his best period, when he was under the Miltonic influence—that is, between the early sprite of 1819, while he was still engagd on* Hyperion, *and the avtumn, when he discarded it These are the six: 1.* Psyche; *2.* Melancholy; 3. Nightingale; *4.* Greek Urn; 5. indolence; *6.* Autumn.

To *these should be added j, the fragment of the* May ode, *May 1,1818, and 8, the* ode to P*an, from* En dymion, *bk. i, and 9, the* Bacchic ode to Sorrow *in* Endymion, *bk. iv. But the two hymns to* Neptune *and* Diana *in* Endymion *are only worth enumeration, and the two early odes to* Apollo *and the* ode to a Lock of Milton's Hair *are, as are the two later* odes to Fanny, *chiefly or entirely of personal interest.*

of the seven odes first enumerated, if we rank them merely accordin, to perfection of workmanship, the one that

was last written, that is, the ode to Autumn, *will cleim the hihest place; and unless itbe objected as a slightblemish that the words 'Think not of them' in the 2nd line of the 3rd stanza are somewhat avkwardly address'd to a per' sonification of Autumn, I do not know that eny sort of favlt can befovnd in it But this ode does not in eny part of it reach the marvellous hphts atteind bi several of the others in their best places, and even ifjudgdas a whole it is left far behind bi the splendour of the* Nightingale, *in which the mood is more intense, and the poetry vies in richness and variety with its subject.*

The son, of the nihtingale is, to the hearer, full of as' sertion, promts, and cheerful expectancy, and of pleadity and tender passionat overflowin, in lon, dravn'aut notes, interspersed with plenty of ply fulness and conscious ex' hibitions of musical skill, whatever pein or sorrow my be express'd ty it,it is idealis'd—that is,it is not the sorrow of a sufferer, but the perfect expression of sorrow bi an artist, who must havfelt, but is notfeelin; and the ecstasy of the noting ale is stronger than its sorrow, althd dif' ferent hearers my be differently affected accordin, to their mood. Keats in a sad mood seized on the happy interpret tation andpromis of it, andgivs it in this line—

'Singest of summer *in full-throated ease.*

But the intense feelin, in his description of human sorrow (stanza 3) is weaken 'dbi the direct platitude that the bird has never known it; and in the penultimat stanza the thavht is fanciful or superficial,—man bein, as immortal as the bird in every sense but that of samness, which is assumed and does not satisfy. The introduction, too, of the last stanza is artificial, while his choosin, selffor *a rhime word,*[1] *turns ovt disastrously; and he loses hold of his mein idea in the words'plaintive anthem, which, in expressity the diin, awy of the sovnd, changes its character. No prtise, hovever, coud be too tyhfor those last six lines; and if grammar and sense are a little obscure in the first ten, I coud not name ɛny English poem of the same length which conteins so much beauty as this ode.*

Next to this I should rank Melancholy. *The percept tion in this ode is profound, and no doubt experienced. The paradox that melancholy is most deeply felt by the or' ganisation most capable of joy is clinch'd at the end bi the observation of the reaction which satiety provokes in such temperaments,so thatitisalsointhe moment ofextremest joy that it suddenly fades—*

[1] *Tbe elf belong to* W. *Brown of Tavistock, whom I suspect to hav been the remote cavse of the hitch in the first stanza—*

Vhilomel, 1 do not envy thy sweet carolling.

Brit. Past.,i.3, 264.

Turning to poison while the bee mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine.

inspite ofthegrat beauty of this ode, especially of the last stanza, it does not hit so hard as one would expect. I do not know whether this is due to afa/lse note[1] *towards the end of the second stanza, or to a disagreement between the second and third stanzas, in the second stanza the me' lancholy is, as Lord Houghton said, a 'luxurious tender' ness,' whfte in the third it is strot$,piinful, and incurable.*

The line—

That fosters the droop'headedflowers all,

means all the Rovers only that are sacred to sorrow. See End. *iv. 170.*

Next in order miht come Psyche, *for the sake of the last section* (/.50 *to end), tho' this is open to the objection that the imagery is worldd up to ovtface the idea—which is characteristic of Keats' manner. Yet the extreme beauty quenches every dissatisfaction. The beginning of this ode is not so good, and the middle part is midwy in excellence.*

Next, and disputing place with the last, comes the Gre cian urn. *The thavht as enovnced in the first stanza is the supremacy of ideal art over Nature, because of its*

[1] *Yor its explanation, seep, 163.*

unchanging expression of perfection; and this is true and beautiful; but its amplification in the poem is unprogres' siv, monotonous, and scattered, the attention bein, call'd to fresh deteils without result (see espec. II. 21'24, anti cipated in 15,16), which givs an effect of poverty in sp^te of the beauty. The last stanza enters stumbling on a pun, but its concluding lines are veryfine, and moke a sort of recovery with their forcible directness.

The last of the six, **indolence,** *is the objectiv picturin, of a transient mood, and my be the description of an actual half'wakin) vision, if the deteils, such as the appearin) of the figures four times, hav no defnit meanin, and I cannot fix eny, they are too arbitrary. Parts of stanzas 2 and3 and all the5th are of the best work; but the whole ode scarcely earns its title; and its mein interest, that is,its fervour and feeling, betreys the poet into an undignifi'd utterance in line 4 of the last verse.*

The fragment ofthe **May ode** *is immortal on account of the famous passag of inimitable beauty descriptiv of the Greekpoets—*

Leaving great verse unto a little clan, etc.

With these seven the two chief odes in **Endymion** *are worthy to rank. The ode to Van in Book I is good enough in desin. Van is first invoked as ruler in dark and moist 0oods;*

secondly,as the god to whom allnaturalproductsaresacred with contrast of sunny places; thirdly,as kity offavns and satyrs; fourthly, for six lines as farmed. But this last idea has been anticipated bi interpolation in the previous section. Then the last part of the ode connects Van with the secrets and p over of Nature. TheexpressionButno more, *havever interpreted, is unfortunat at the end of the ode. The diction thru out is rich and the imagery chosen well for the work that it has to do in the various aspects of the god's energy, the different objects bein,seized and shownin happy phrases full ofknowledg andfeelin,; and tho' it mohtper' haps hav been better if the second section had immediatly preceded the last, rather than that the mysteries should follow close on the farm, there is no gr at fault to find. But yet the ode does not at first readity moke an impression cor' responding to these merits, nor has it won, like the others, a hih reputation; and this my be due partly to the vagness of the personification, cavsed bi the variety of attributes and objects, and partly to the versification, which, tho'gene' rally easy and fluent, pauses, especially in the second divi' sion, too frequently in the mid-line, in the manner of tag' gin, and produces thare something of the effect of a catalog, very foreign to the repose and finish which we look for in a setode.*

Lastly, as to the ode to Sorrow *in the 4th book of* Endymion, *I regard this as one of the gratest of Keats' achievements, and agree with all that Mr. Sidney Colvin has said in itspreise in his* Life of Keats, *it unfortunatly halts in the opening, and the 1st and 4th stanzas especially are unequal to the rest, as is agein the 3rd from the end, 'Young stranger ,' which for its matter would with more propriety hav been cast into the previous section; and these impoverish the effect, and contein expressions which miht put some readers off. if they would begin at the5th stanza and omit the 3rd from the end, they would find little that is not admirable. And, as it stands, the ode is, I think, the better for these omissions. The pictorial description of the Bacchic procession is unmatched for life, wide motion, and romantic dreamy Orientalism, whfrle the concluding stan' zas, returning to the first movement, are as lovely as eny Elizabethan lyric, and in the same manner. The bold con' trast and passion of the ode, in spfte of its weaker opening and the few expressions which remind one that it is an early work,giv it a unique place amon, the richest creations of the English Muse.*

VII.

SONNETS

THERE *are nearly sixty sonnets in the latest editions of Keats'poems, but the most of them are sonnets only in ex' ternalform. The metrical lavs and liberties of sonnet' writin, hav been much inflicted on readers, and sonnets are usually classifi'd bi their differences in these minorpar' ticulars. But a more useful classification would be bi their contents and form ofthavht The typical sonnet is a refiec tivpoem on love, or at least in some mood of love or desire, or absorbin, passion or emotion; and such a definition in' eludes almost every thin, which cannot be readily referrd to some quite different species of poetry, as a few considew tions my illustrate.*

The Greek epigram,for instance, was originally, as the name implpes, an inscription: its business was to record some event or mark someplace, and its excellence to reise an emotion in the reader s mind. its qualities, terseness with pathos, soon establish'da form which poets used for other purposes, until in the hands of city wits the name wholly changed its signification, and often nou the record is apiece

of scandal, and the emotion such as my he express'd bi a well-bred jeer; a sad fall from Simonides. The sonnet form has been as loosely and variously used as the epigram, and the meny varieties of the two hav more than one point of contact; but itisphin that an epigram proper cannot be come a sonnet bi mere expansion to fourteen lines;—this happens to exceed epigrammatic length, but is possible in dedications and temple inscriptions,—and such a hybrid my at least be separated off as an epigrammatic sonnet.

Ag tin,nor ace elaborateda form ojode which it is easier to recognise than in few words describe; and a number of Milton 's sonnets my be referred to this ode form, if we com' pare, for example, his Cyriack, whose grandsire, with Martiis coelebs *or Æli* vetusto, *thare can be no doubt that Milton was here deliberatly usin, the sonnet form to do the work of nor ace's tiht stanzas; and not the whole of shake' speare's or Petrarch's sonnets set alonside will show enough kinship with these sonnets of Milton to drav them awyfrom their affinity with Horace. Such sonnets, too, as his addresses tovane, Fairfax, and Cromwell are properly odes, and should be call'd odes, or at least odic sonnets.*

Agein, thare is a class of poetry call'd 'occasional verse', and such a poem as my be written on eny trivial event or fancy cannot become a sonnet because it goes beggiqfor a

dress', and conscious not only of nakedness but of leanness, steals a well'cut garment for disuse.

These examples my suffice, if it be notedfirst, that no' thin,forbids a true sonnet from having an epigrammatic, or odic, or occasional motiv—and this last is very common; and secondly, that all these forms and others are found mix'din the sonnet with its true subject-matter in allpro portions.

New not so meny as half of Keats sonnets can bi my stretch of interpretation be call'd sonnets proper, if we consider their substance rather than their verse form. The grater number of them are occasional, reflectiv, or odic ad' dresses or dedications, or poems on places and books. And these hybrids come thickest amon, the earlier poems, while the true sonnets predominat towards the end. Agein, al most all the early sonnets are Italian in rhime system, and all the later are Shakespearian; and if we pick out from them the twelve best poems, these will all befovnd to be true sonnets and eiht of them on the Shakespearian model. Twelve is all that very hihpreise can be given to, and that number already encroches on the second best; and if a next twelve be chosen, this would be made up al most equally of true sonnets and hybrids. From *which it seems that these hybrid poems of Keats, tho most of them*

conttin lines which make us glad to possess and preserve them, are amon, his immature performances; and also that as he improved in composition he relinquished his forein subject-matter', and the Italian rhime system, and did his best work in the English manner.

Thare are ten veryfyne sonnets; they are—

'Much have I travelled.'
'when I have fears.'
'Come hither all sweet maidens.'
'Your seasons.'
'Bright star.'
'osoftembalmer.'
'I cry your mercy.'
'AS Hermes once.'
'The day is gone.'
'Time's sea.'

And with these, some miht class for its easy and pleasant mastery—

'TO one who hath been long in city pent.'

And the sonnet 'why did I laugh to-night?' has been selected and admir'd bi some critics: it seems to me to be turgid and capricious, and hence unsuccessful. But all the first ten are extremely fine—the first eiht bein, nearly faultless—and must stand amon, the best in the lahguag.

And if we pass from them to the next in merit, thare is a gratfall. Such a list would contein Spenser a jealous honourer; Many the wonders; Nymph of the down' ward smile; How many bards; Small busy flames; Keen fitful gusts; My spirit is too weak; Glory and loveliness, *and* The town the churchyard; *and thare is not one of these which does not phinly foil, and that sometimes badly, in some part, tho' all hav their points of excellence.*[1]

Not to speak of the magnificence of the ten best sonnets (the 8th lyne of the first is below the mark; the final couplet of No. 2 is weak; the 4th line of No. 9 requires much allowance, and see p. 92), Keats' sonnets are gene rally distinguish' d bi a total absence of the self'con' sciousness which is the common bane of sonnets, and has got them a bad name amort) honest folk; so that meny lovers of poetry put Keats' sonnets next to Shakespeare's. They are free from effort and puzzle-headedness and pedantry, and when they do fall, they do not fall stiffly but negligently, and most of them are pleasant poems and gratful to the reader.

[1]*Matthew Arnold selected eiht sonnets; five are amon, the eiht which I hav set first; the other three are*—**After dark vapours; Great spirits now; The poetry of the earth.**

VIII.

EPISTLES

THERE *are four* Epistles *written in ten'syllable coup' lets:—*

1. *TO Geo. Telton Mathew (Nov. 1815).*
2. *To my brother George (Aug. 1816).*
3. *To ch. Gowden Glarke (sept. 1816).*
4. *To Reynolds (March 1818).*

And with them my be group'd the two poems criticised p. 94, etc., that is, the short Endymion *and* sleep and Poetry.

Tho thure are good thirds in these Epistles, *their exe' cution is in every respect very poor, and they are in so far more like letters written in rhime than poems in the form of letters, and they my all be taken with the apology which Keats sent with the fourth, to 'excuse the uncon' nected subject and careless verse'. The* Epistle *to Gowden Glarke is altogether far the worst, and tho' it has a ra' tional argument, it is not worth defending from eny con' demnationfor want of artistic form; but it is in mi opinion wron, to include the other early epistles and poems In this*

judgment, in mi previous analysis of two of these, I hav pointed out their really solid construction, and the ist, 2nd and 4th of the **Epistles** *are, I should sty, quite as well built Their 'argument' is perfectly clear, and if the form of it escapes the reader 's attention, that is due to the liht ness of the imaginativ touch andfliht, which is a welcome escape from the conscious pedantries of form, and, so lon, as the sense is clear,agrat merit indeed, if the expression of these* **Epistles** *were at all worthy of their frame'work, they would be models of what such epistles should be. Nos. 1 and 2 must be passd over here.* **No.** *4 is ofgrat interest, its argument (tho Keats himself cavils the poem unconnected) is a very beautiful artistic movement of thavht,just short of caprice, returning at the end with gr at force to the apparent first motiv, which is suddenly reveal'd as bein, much weihtierthan was at first allov'd to appear. The heads are these:—Automatic capricious imaginations of all fynds, 1'12, very common; they my be beautiful, as a picture bi Titian, descqb'd, '25; or tyke Claude's Enchanted Castle, descqb'd, '66. The wish that all our imagining coud take such colouring, etc., question whi they cannot, '85. The poet shows himself haunted bi a horrid mood,*[1] *'end.*

[1] *And see sgein p. 166.*

Thepassag I.67 onwards is of importance with respect to Keats' method—

O *that our dreamings all, of sleep or wake,*
Would all their colours from the sunset take:
From something of material sublime, *etc.*

If this be compar'd with thepassag which is contrasted with Wordsworth on p. 102 thare will be a mutual illus' tration of sense.

Keats also here, in a confession offeilure, analyses his inability to express his ideas—

imagination brought
Beyond its proper bound, yet still confined,
Lost in a sort of Purgatory blind,
Cannot refer to any standard law
of either earth or heaven.

Also in this poem he phinly states that he does not consider his mind matured, nor able to teach, and that he is a prey to the moods of pessimism, but that he will not giv wy to them. He lons rather for the time when he shall arrive at 'the love of good and ill', and speaks of it as his 'award'.

IX.

LYRICAL POEMS

IF *we include amon, the lyrical poems those written in seven'syllable couplets, we find three popular pieces,* Souls of Poets, Bards of Passion, *and* Ever let the Fancy Roam. *In a letter to his brother, January 1819, Keats writes:' These are specimens of a sort of rondeau which I think I shall become partial to, because you have one idea amplified with greater ease and more delight and freedom than in the sonnet! The theme is stated in the first four lines, and then, after an amplification without pro' gress, these are used agein in the last division to make a close bi return, like a rondo in music; and the form seems good, simple andattractiv. These three poems hav all of them the popular qualities of fluency and grace, and the statment of the subject is provocativ of interest; yet, tho the first susttins itself in afyne vein for six Iines, thare is little other merit either ofthavht or diction in the first two.* Mr. M. *Arnold chose these and excluded the* Fancy *from his selection, but thare can be no doubt that this last is bi far the best of the three, it is tneinteind thruavt at afeir*

seven syllable couplets*

*level, and the simple descriptions of nature, recallin, L'*Allegro, *are often very beautiful; and in the last divu sion thare is a sensuous passag done in thefyne Miltonic manner, whare the tiht-syllable lyne is introduced with grat effect, descriptivly of]oves languor.*

ofthefyve other poems in this measure thare is none worthy ofprtise as a whole.

Lyrics in stanzas

Thare are left new only the lyrical poems in stanza, and easily first, holdin, a unique place in literature, stands La belle dame sans merci. *This occurs in a lon,journa' listic letter from Keats to his brother in America, and is dated 'Wednesday evening, that is, April 28, 1819. It seems as if he had compos'd it on that dty, and written it down hastily from memory, so that he had to correct several mistaks afterwards; and, from the remarks appended to it, it looks as if he was at the time unaware of its grat merit It was not inserted in the* Lamia *volume, but first appear d thru Leigh Hunt in the* Indicator *for* May*10, 1820, and this version differs from that in Keats' letter in one or two points; and these my be corrections bi Keats, but the original first line, which exists in Keats' own handwriting, must be kept* 'wretched wight', *the un' fortunat correction, is of the same kind, and appears to be of the same date as the corrections of* Hyperion; *it'is cold*

and poor, and damage to the tragic motiv of the poem, and out of keeping with its heroic deteil, wharas the oru ginal 'knight'at'arms'givs *the keynote of romance and of aloofness from real life, and the suggestion of armour is of the gratest value to the general colourity. It would be impertinence topreise this poem, which charms alike old andyoun,: and it stands above the reach of criticism. "For other reasons it is better not to criticise* 'in a drear nighted December', *which, after a very lon, interval indeed, must be placed next This poem,which must surely hav been Thos. Hood's model, is a grat favourit, and perhaps deservedly so, both for its beauty and originality, but the latter quality proves expensive And after this poem thare is another gap, for if we mention the next best lyrics, we come to such poems as* Meg Merrilies, *and* where be you going, you Devon maid? *which, as "Lord Houghton printed it, omitting the second stanza, is successful; and I* had a dove, *which coudonly hav been written bi a poet; and* Walking in Scotland, *of which the obscurity and strangness of the sentiment describ'd make it noteworthy. Mrs. Owen quotes the Faery son,* shed no tear! *as worthy of Keats, but we wonder hav it was that thare are not more better lyrics. Keats, one would*

[1] ***Several amended versions of the last stanza hav latly come to liht, 1929.***

hav thavht, would hav excell'd in them, and we can only suppose that we hav his odes instead.

Success in lyrical verse requires a delicatly strictsubjec tion of imagination to onepurpos, and this was not a part of beats' poetic instinct; and tho when he came to learn it, he wrote as it would seem almost unconsciously one of the best lyrics in the world; yet it is not improbable that he would still hav regarded lyrics as a tract whare he miht cast off restnint. The fact remeins that, with the except tion of La, belle dame, *he never bravht all his genius to 'spend its fury in a song.*

X.

OTHO AND *STEPHEN*

DTHO the Great *is contemporary with* Lamia: *it* Otho *vas written Juli September 1819, and should tharfore he mon, Keats' best work; but it is not, so that itsfeilure nust be specially accounted for: and it my, I think, be merely hid to inexperience, and to the ugly andillshapen lizabethan models to which Keats apparently look'd in oodfeithfor gydance; and amort) which, with their stagey ury, unnecessary confusions, rude manners, and occa' ional magnificences, his ply miht pass undistinguish'd. Unfortunatly too this ply turns on a question of meiden virtue, which he coud not handle, and which he did not wen choose for himself, for the plot wasfurnish'd him bi a friend, who gave him the scenes across the table to ver vifi or dramatise one bi one—a most deadenin, situation, i is badly contriv'd: the antecedent conditions are very elaborat, and yet are never pleinly stated; they hav to be discoverdfrom isolated, ill-managd and confused hints In the dialog; so that the attention of an avditor, if it was not entirely put offbi this riddle, would only be kept alive*

bi a wish to come to a judgment of his jesses. The riddle, moreover, has no satisfactory solution. Then the scenes themselves are rather lackin, in distinct dramatic point, in' dependency of the uncertsinty of the motiv. But if these faults are not wholly due to Keats, he must yet hav the blame of the lack of moral import, and of the imperfect de lineation of the characters, whose manners are not good, and who seem to take a conscious interest in the plot. The style has thefavlts of cold magnificence, occasional flat' ness and common expressions, with earless grammar, and the use of childish tricks for impromptu effect, m spfte ofall this, thare is a succinctness and force abovt the whole, which forbid one to conclude that Keats would not hav succeeded in drama: and tho it is commonly said that he lack'd the essential moral grasp, his letters seem to me to refute this, and his determination would hav been suffi' cient assurance of success. infact,thefragment of Stephen, which he began on his own tynes afterfnishin, Otho, *al ready shows an advance. This is written in a style midwy between Marlowe and Shakespeare, and recalls the open' in, of the third part of* Henry VI. *The imitated magniji' cence is somewhat restless, but the narrativ and purpos of the characters stand ovtfeirly well amid the stir and freedom which was evidently the poet's eim.*

Stephen

It would be easy to quote from Otho *some fine pas sages, and menyfine lines and expressions,but they seem to be buried in a rubbish'heapfrom which one gladly turns back to the green tangle of Endymion.*

XL

DICTION AND RHYTHM

Vocabulary

KEATS' *vocabulary, to judge bi the impression that one gets from reading his poems, is rich, and his use ofquite a large number of words that are not commonly found must be reckon d amon, the factors of his style.* Mr. w. *Arnold*[1] *has made a special examination of these, and his remarks impli an objection to adjectivs with the suffix y, like* bloomy and bowery; *but when these are form d from substantivs they are regular enough. Adjectivs thus form d from other adjectivs—*like paly, *which should mean full of poles or poling,—are not on the samefootiq: to eny one accustom d to Chaucer's verse they would sovnd more like old than new words, and they would be useful in ver' sification, but they are also like babyta'lk, and generally indefensible; it does not appear, hovever, that Keats leid himself open to eny reproch in this particular.* Paly *had been used bi other writers; and even with these words the test is their success, not their regularity. I never heard of eny one objectify to Shakespeare's*

I can call spirits from the vasty *deep,*

Indeed, what is in question is very much the same with the

[1] *Essy publish'd with bis edition of Keats'poems.*

words as with the spirits, whether they will come when you do cvll for them.

Amon, Keats' inventions spangly *does not lookpw misin; hut thepassag in Isabella—*

As *when of healthful midnight sleep bereft,*
Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless toil,
We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,
And see the spangly *gloom froth up and boil,*

amply justifies the word, for which no other coud be sub' stituted: and it has been received into the languag. so *agein the* 'pipy *hemlock' in the ode to Van is admirable: on the other hand,* 'boundly reverence' *defies interpretation; but the general result of Mr. Arnold's examination is that most of the strange words in Keats were taken from earlier writers. Readers of the poems cannot miss notify these: they are less likely to observe the exact nature of the class of epithets which most frequently recur; the chief group miht, I think, be call'd languid, such as* quiet, sweet, fair, white, green, old, young, little, *and other such words as* tender, gentle, easy, fresh, pleasant, *most of these suggestiv of comfort. Then the* melting, fainting, swimming, swooning, *and* panting *words are over' frequent. Words like* wild, dark, deep, strange, lone, mysterious, *etc., hav a grat deal to do, but they are not*

work'd so hard as bi shelley. Keats has also a pretty steady recurrence ofcertein objects; he is as fond of moss and eagles *as shelley was, and* echoes, bees, marble, silver, dew, nests *and* weeds,—*and the list miht be ex' tended,—are too conspicuous.* A *grat deal of the general insipidity and tedium of* Endymion *my be analysed dovn to this. The over'frequent use which he makes* o/tiptoe—*taken from Shakespeare—is very characteristic of his man' ner. But he outgrew all this, and if in his early poems he uses these words too frequently, yet he has vlso used them as well as they can be used, some fwits ofhispronuncia' tion, which hav been call'd Cockneyisms, cannot be pass'd soeasily.* Thusperhaps, *usedasa monosyllable,is abomin' able: but this occurs only in the early poems. And he re novnees in* Lamia *his pronunciation of* toward, *which he had hitherto used as a disyllable accented on the last, and comes round to the contracted pronunciation. This word, and words tyke* fire *and* lyre, *which he makes di' syllables, often weaken his lines;for in disyllabic metres which admit elisions and trisyllabic feet, they will not readily, at least to mi ear, sustein a whole foot of two syl lables. Verse which allovs such a lyte as this—*

Pronwciation

AH *desperate mortal! I even dared topress* (End. i. *661*), *hvlts at thefollowin)—*

And then, towards me, like a very maid (i. *634).*

Dearest Endymion, my entire love (iii. 1022).

The lyre of his soul Æolian tuned (ii. 866).

But Keats also amended this Inter, tho' too late to destroy the effect of his example, and used these syllables[1] *in* Hyperion *as Milton would hav done—*

Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side (iii. 63).

of the same kind is the exaggerated value which hegivs to the semivovel \, in thefollowin, linesfor example—

The dazz-l-ing sunrise; two sisters sweet,

Turn d syllab-l-ing thus: Ah, Lycius bright.

He also, like shelley, makes a trisyllable o/evening.

Thare is another peculiarity common to Keats and shelley, which should be noticed because it introduces an instability into Keats' rhythms, it is found in earlier writers, for instance, in this linefrom Shakespeare—

Fair Jessica shall be my torch'bearer,

whare the accent of the last foot is not inverted, but the compavndtorch'bearer,whichwepronauncewithastress both on the first and second syllables, carries no stress at all on the second, but perhaps a sliht compensate stress

[1] *Lyre is an unfortunat word to extend unduly, I bav seen the following verse as motto for a sonybook—*

The lyre's voice is lovely everywhere.

or dely on the last. Thare areagrat tneny words made in this wy of a monosyllable and a disyllable, in which we new observe both the collylin) accents; and if these words occur in disyllabic rhythms ofalternnt stress, with their first syllable in the regular stress d place, then the next foot will to ovr ears, treind as they hav been bi Milton, hav its stress inverted. I think that this is not alwys in' tended bi Keats: here are examples—

A *show-monster about the streets of Prague.*
That camp'mushroom, dishonour of our house.
ofbean-blossoms in heaven freshly shed.
Or they might watch the quoit'pitchers, intent.
oflove'Spanglesjust off yon cape of trees.
The poor folk of the sea'country I blest.
Then came a conquering earth'thunder and rumbled.
All death'shadbws, and glooms that overcast.
Make not your rosary ofyewberries.

And the pronunciation in thefollowin, lines is probably caused bi the same dislike of colidin, accents in a com' pounded trisyllable—

Look'd up; a conflicting of shame and ruth.
And strives in vain to unsettle and wield.

And thus no doubt—

In a dreir'nighted December.

We *new read this tyne {as we do most of the others) with our changed accent, and we rather tyke the irregularity thus introduced into the verse. Thare is, in fact, one line of shelley which is particularly admir'dfor a very beautiful rhythm, which he probably did not intend—*

And wild'roses and ivy serpentine,

whare Shelley, I should suppose, stressed wild'roses *tyke* primroses; *in the same poem is*

There grew pied windflowers and violets.

And he has

Sweet'basil and mignonette.

Bridcmaidens, quicksilver, bird'footed, trains bearer, *etc., and in the* Recollection *are* pine/forest, *and* woodpecker, *whare the beautiful versification has, at least to mi ear, a charm added to it bi the extra licence which avr pronunciation introduces.*

whether these poets took this accent from the Eliza' bethans, or whether it really had linger d on, I do not know: in later poets it seems only an affectation; but it is a realsorce of uncerteinty in Keats' verse, because he not only used the other pronunciation also, but he allovd the rhythmical inversions which that would introduce into the verses whare it was apparently not intended.

And for this reason it would not do to decide this ques **Rhythm**

tion merely on the assumption that Keats coud not hav in tended the inversion of stress. He begins one sonnet with the line—

How many hards gild the lapses of time,

whare the inversion of the third and fourth stresses is very musical and suitable to the exclamatory form of the sen tence. Agein, in End. i.—

Young companies nimbly began dancing.

*The inversion of the third and fifth stresses admir** ably pictures the dancers stepping on the scene: and such rhythms as*

visions of all places; a bowery nook,

shows what a bravdview he took of rhythm, and hav melo' diously his verse carries variety. And he was fond ofin' version even of the fifth foot, e.g.—

Guarding his forehead with her round elbow.
Was in his plaited brow; yet his eyelids.
Like vestal primroses, but dark velvet.
Golden, or rainbow sided, or purplish, etc.

And if these miht be regarded as merely a grace snatch'd from the remember d cadences of old romance, yet he also uses this inversion deliberatly with its full proper force, as for the pony of impossibility in

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art',

and in the followin, whare the stron, enclitic accent has aslmost the effect of terror (seep. 120)—

who comforts those she sees not, who knows not

in one place at least in Endymion *an invertedfifthfoot is made to rhime to a line with an extwmetrical syllable at the end of it: an uncomfortable effect common in wyatt and writers of the t[me of Henry* VIII. *And in another place a rhythmical effect is savht bi usity Chaucer's licence of omitting the first syllable of the line;for thare is evu dence that Keats intended this (Letter xxxix)—*

And the dull twanging bowstring, and the raft
branch down sweeping from a tall ash top.

As thare is not space in this essy to treat this subject thoro'ly, I hav chosen these few points as bein, of im' portance to the reader. I my conclude bi, syity generally that Keats' rhythm, in spite of its variety, is easy and fluent rather than restless orpoverful.

XII.

GENERAL

Imagina' tiv phrases

IN *these detach'd criticisms miny of the twin qualities of Keats' poetry hav been incidentally bravht ovt; thare is one, as yet unmentiond, which ckitns the first place in a general description, and that is the very seal of his poetic birthriht, the hihestgift ofall in poetry, that which sets poetry above the other arts; I mean the paver of concent tratin, all the far'reaching resorces of languag on one point, so that a single and apparently effortless expression rejoices the (esthetic imagination at the moment when it is most expectant and exactly, and at the same time as' tonishes the intellect with a new aspect of truth. This is only found in the gratest poets, and is rare in them; and it is no dovbtfor the possession of this paver that Keats has been often Intend to Shakespeare, and veryjustly', for Shakespeare is of all poets the gratest master of it; the difference between them here is that Keats intellect does not supply the second factor in the proportion or degree that Shakespeare does; indeed, it is chiefly when he is deal' in, with material and sensuous subjects that his poems afford illustrations; but these are, as far as they go, not*

only like Shakespeare, but often as good as Shakespeare when he happens to be confinity himself to the same limited field. Examples from Shakespeare are such well' known syins, as these—

My *way of life*
is fain into the sear, the yellow leaf—Macbeth.
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul—Hamlet.
We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
is rounded with a sleep.—Tempest.

Examples from Keats are—

The journey homeward to habitual self
Solitary thinkings; such as dodge
Conception to the very bourne of heaven.
My sleep had been embroider d with dim dreams,

in most of Keats' phrases of this sort thare is a quality which makes them unlike Shakespeare; and if we should put into one group all those which are absolutely satis' factory, and then make a second group of those which are not so simply convincing, we shouldfind in these last that the un'Shakespearian quality was more declard, and came out as somethityfanciful, or rather too vagly or venture' somely suggestiv; the whole phrase displyity its poetry rather than its meaning, and beity in consequence less apt

and masterly. This second group would contzin tneny of the most admyir'd lines of Keats, and these are very characteristic of him. such are—

Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks,

and—

How tiptoe Night holds back her dark'grey hood.

The Revision of Hyperion *shows that Keats himself was dissatisfi'd with his* senators; *and one can see the reason without condemning the passag or approving its omission. Finally, thare wouldbe left a thirdgroup of such' like phrases which phinly miss the mark.*

closely alli'd to these imaginativ phrases, and perhaps more characteristic of Keats and peculiar to him, are the short vivid pictures which my be call'd his masterpieces ofword'peintin, in which with a few words he contrives completely to finish a picture which is often of vast size. Good examples of this are the sestet of the Leander *son' net; the last four lines of the* chapman's Homer; *the passag beginnin)* Golden his hair *in* Hyperion ii. 37*1; and, to quote one from* Endymion—

The woes of Troy, towers smothering o'er their blaze,
Stiff'holden shields, far'piercing spears, keen blades,
Struggling, and blood, and shrieks.

For *its wealth in such rare strokes ofdescriptiv imagina' tion beats' poetry must alwys take the very first rank; and it is his imaginativ quality of phrase which sets him more than eny other poet of his time in creativ antagonism to the eihteenth'century writers; for it was not only for tin to their stile, hut incomprehensible and repugnant to their pseudo'classic taste, which preferred a 'reasonable propriety of thought', such as Hume found to be lacking in Shakespeare, to the shadowy povers of imagination, how ever sublime.*

Relation to Nature

The limitation that we found of Keats faculty when compared with Shakespeare—which, if it my be ascqb'd wholly to his youth, amply justifies the sentiment of the opening lines of this essty—leads us on naturally to an' other of his chief characteristics, and that is his close re' lationship with common Nature: he is for ever dravin, his imagery from common things, which are for the first time represented as beautiful: andagein in this we see his opposi' tion to the eihteenth'century writers, who meinly con' tented themselves with conventional commonplaces for their natural imagery; wharas Keats discovers in the most usual objects either beauty or sorces ofdefyht or comfort, or sometimes even of imaginativ horror, which are vll new;and here his originality seems inexhaustible, and

his widepoetic sympathies the strongest Nor does he con' fine himself to matters of which he coud hav had much ex perience; he makes Nature the object of his imaginativ faculty—Nature apart from man, or related to man as an enchantress to a dreamer. This is,I suppose,what he means when, company himself with Byron, he seys, 'There is this great difference between us: he describes what he sees, —I describe what I imagine. Mine is the hardest task: now see the immense difference/[1] *Here he shows a vast wealth which makes his poems a mine of pleasure.* Eiv dymion *is crovded to excess with a variety of these iw ages, and as they came up in his mind in an endless stream to illustrate his ideas, the ideas sometimes fare rather badly; for tho they were no doubt generally held firm in his own mind, they are yet dravnd bi the images of their objectiv presentation; until these themselves at last lose even their own virtue, and fatigue the reader, who feels like a sfiitseer in a gallery overcrovded with pictures, which bi degrees he ceases to regard with attention.*

Passion

And in this devotion to natural beauty lies, I believe, one true reason ofKeatsfeilure in the delineation of human passion. The only passion delineated bi Keats is the ima' ginativ love of Nature, and human love is regarded bi him

[1] ***betters, cxvi,p. 301.***

as apart of this, and his lover is happy merely hecause ad' mittedinto communion with new forms of natural beauty. This, which appear 'd in theory in the explanation of the allegory of Endymion (p. 85), *is practically expos'd in the 2nd stanza of the* ode to Melancholy, *whare, amon, the objects on which a sensitiv mind is recommended'to indulge its melancholy fit, the anger of his mistress is enu merated with roses, peonies, and ninbows, as a beautiful phenomenon,pleinly without respect to its cavse, meanin, or effect And so in* Lamia—

He took delight
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new[9]

and

Tine was the mitigated fury.

Hov different is the parallelpassag of Shakespeare, which at once occurs to one—

O, *what a deal of scorn looks beautiful*
in the contempt and anger of his lip!

This is not artistic admiration, but a lover's entire devotion, in the criticism of Endymion *we found a want of taste in meats' idea of woman; we hav nov to add a charge of lack of true insult into human passion, if this was wholly due to the absence of awakenin, experience, it is at least unfortunat that in* Lamia, *in which from its date we miht*

hav expected something mature, he should hav chosen so low a tipe. Tho' perhaps suggested bi the original of his story, it was not necessary to it; and even if he prefer/d to hav his snake woman bad, thare was every reason whi Lycius' passion should hav been of a hiher tipe. Hew un worthy it is is shown in the description of their meeting and in the following sentiment—

But too short was their bliss
Tobreed distrust and hate, that make the soft voice hiss.

This love is an association for mutual pleasure, the end of which is satiety and revulsion, and it is, I repeat, at least unfortunat that Keats, after he had known love, should, in his first attempt to delineate it, hav been satis' fi'd with so vulgar a tipe. The ideal passion in **Isabella** *is insipid, and even in* **The Eve of St. Agnes** *the passion, as express d in stanzas xxxvxxxix, is at best of a con ventional tipe, and has to hav a good deal read into it bi the liht of the story.*

But Keats doctrin of beauty, which miht be defended if it was spiritualised, which it never is bi him, my often be reconcil'd with truefeeliq bi the allauance which is due to his objectiv method; concerning this, as illustrations hav been given (see pp. 89, go), I shall sty no more here ex cept to repeat that Keats' imagery probably wlwysfol

low'd, if it did not alwys clearly picture, some trein of ideas; and when he sys in the ode To Fanny

My *muse had wings,*
And ever ready was to take her course
whither I bent her force,
Unintellectual, *yet divine to me;—*
Divine, I say! what sea-bird o'er the sea
is a philosopher the while he goes
Winging along where the great water throes?

these words should not be taken as a disavowal ofmeanity in 'those abstractions which were his only life', but as an apology for immaturity, and they must be interpreted in the Iiht of his hih idea of philosophy. Keats was conscious, like Virgil, of a double inclination. He said of himself, Intellectual Element *April 1818:* I *have been hovering for some time between an exquisite sense of the luxurious, and a love for philo' sophy. were I calculated for the former, I should be glad; but as I am not, I shall turn all my soul to the latter.' This would be a strange variant of*

'Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musce

if we need suppose it to be enythin, more than an utterance of that contrarious mood so common to introspection; it is nevertheless evidence that Keats was unlikely to hav

[1] *Letters, I*

depreciated the intellectual element of his art: but the in' tellectual element is alwsys in league with emotion, and would hav been, I imagin, consider d bi him as worthless in poetry withovtsuch mixture, In the **Epistle to Rey Holds**, *analfcs'd on p. 141, even the unpleasantness of the consideration of what we call the struggle for exis' tence would,simply presented,hav been flat and common' place; but he shows it as a 'horrid mood', bi which he is haunted, and uses grat skill and a wealth of contrasted beauty in introducin, it under this enhanced aspect, 'wreath' ing a flowery band spite of the unhealthy ways made for his searching; and in callin, his Muse unintellectual, he was no dovbt utterly his reiterated impatience for 'more knowledg, the expression of which recurs so often in his poems and letters, that it is needless to quote my one, and which rises to a sort of consummation in the* **Revision of Hyperion**, *whare it seems as if he had imagin d himself to hav at length atteind to an insiht of the mystery.*

Eamest' ness *Thare is less opposition, it seems to me, between beats' true instinct for ideal philosophy and his luxurious poetry {which seems rather its youn, expression), than between these on the one hand and his practical human qualities, as reveal'd bi his letters, on the other. The bond of all was an unbroken and unflaggity earnestness, which is so utterly*

unconscious and unobservant of itself as to be almost un' match'd. it is allwys present in his poetry both for good and ill, in the spontaneous and felt quality of his epithets, and the absence of my barrier even, it would sometimes seem, of consideration or judgment between his mind and his pen. whether this earnestness is the account of his feilure in his purely comic freaks I do not know, but it my certtinly account for his want of humour, for which, in spite of some traces in his letters, it does not appear to hav left eny room. The best of the letters are serious and full of good matter, a few are quitefoolish, andagrat number are written in a hihspirited jocular vein, which seems to be carelessly assumed for the double purpose of amusing his correspondent and relaxin, his own mind. The chief charm in vll of them is their unalloyd sincerity: thare is nothing between the pen and the mind, not aslwys even an effort or desire to write whatshouldbe worth readin,: it is enough that it is he that writes, and his brother or friend that will read.

Lack of humour

In spire of this earnestness and philosophy, it is cer' teinly true that Keats' mind was of a luxurious habit; and it must hav been partly due to this temperament that he show d so little severity towards himself in the castiga tion of his poems, tho that was, as I said before, chiefly

Luxurious habit

caused bi the prolific activity of his imagination, which was arlwys providin, him with fresh material to work on. in this respect he is above all poets an example of what is

Inspira' tion

meant bi inspiration: the mood which all artists require, covet, andfynd most rare was the common mood with him; and I should sty that,bein, amply suppled with this, what as an artist he most lack'd was self'restnint and self' castration,—which was indeed foreign to his luxurious temperament, unselfish and devoted to his art as he was,—the presence of which was most needful to watch, choose, and reject the images which crovded on him as he thavht or wrote.

Milton

And it is thus that Keats' best period was when he fell under the influence and example of Milton. He wasagrat deal influenced bi other poets, and would reproduce not only the style ofeny writer whom he imitated, but the mental attitude which inform d the style.[1] *But it was not until he came to rival Milton s epic that his originality seemd to be in danger; and no one would think of judging* Hyperion *bi its likeness to* Paradise Lost, *if the two poems should be generally compard, tho it ispltin that Keats does not reach the susteind sonority and force of*

[1] ***Tbis is not true of his earliest work. But see, for example, the sonnet* Time's Sea, *which mibt hav been written bi Shakespeare.***

Milton (nor has he even shown as much skill in charac terisin, his divinities, whose elemental personalities would seem to hav offer d him a more interestin, and poetically rich opportunity than the biblical devils did to Milton), yet in one respect he is in mi opinion superior to Milton, for his descriptiv touches are more sympathetic and less convene tional. Togiv an example, whare he describes Asia, he has

More thought than woe was in her dusky face,
For she was prophesying of her glory.

In mi first edition I sed that Milton would not hav put in this epithet dusky, *it happens that in* Paradise Regained *(iv. 76), whare Milton is describin, the*

Embassies from Regions far remote
in various habits on the Appian road,
Or on th' Æmilian,

he uses this very word of the Indians,

Dusk faces with white silken Turbants wreath' d,

and this, while it corrects mi favlty analysis, well exhu bits the difference which I wish'd to explein. in Milton dusk *is the primary external distinction used as a suffi cient description; in Keats* dusky *is secondary, and added on to the emotional expression of the face, and from that it takes a sympathetic warmth which is wholly absent in Milton.*

So fragmentary and incomplete a treatis my brak off abruptly. I began it with a due sense, as I thauht, of re' sponsibility, and with full admiration for the poet: Ifind both increased at the end. I owe much to the kindness of friends, who hav read mi paper and offer d suggestions; especially I my name Mrs. Margaret L. *Woods, and mi old friend Canon Dixon, whose remarks were ofgratser' vice to me; but most ofall I hav to thank Mr. Ellis wool' dridge, without thepromis of whose collaboration I should not hav ventured on mi task, in the qualitativ analysis thare is as much of his work as ofmi own, and I coud not put mi name to it without this acknowledgment.*

lfmi criticism should seem sometimes harsh, thatis, I believe, due to its bein,given inpkin terms, a manner which I prefer, because bi obli gin, the writer to sy defnitly what he means, it makes his mistakes easy to point out, and in this wy the true business of criticism my be advanced; nor do I know that, in work of this sort, criticism has eny better function than to discriminate between thefavlts and merits of the best art: for it commonly happens, when eny grat artist comes to be generally admired, that his faults, beity graced bi his excellences, are confounded with them in the popular judgment, and bein, easy of imitation, are the points of his work which are most liable to be copied.

Keats has had some such imitators, and would, I imagin, hav been glad to bejustify'dfrom them. And if I hav read him rihtly, he would be pleased, coud he see it, at the uni' versal recognition of his genius, and the utter rout of its traducers; but much more moved, stirr'd he would befo thedepthofhisgratnature toknowthathewas understood, and that for the nobility of his character his name was loved and esteem'd.

YATTENDON, *1894.* *R.* B.

P.S.—*The statement in the text that keats began* **Hy perion** *in November 1818, and work'd at it as late as April, 1819, finally discardin, it in September 1819, is, I think, probable; but I do not wish it to be taken for more than an opinion. I hav not attempted to settle dovbtful de' teils of chronology, and do not wish to appear to hav done so.*

I hav now, after twenty years, revp'd miEssy, correct' in, misprints, and some of mi own mistakes, and I hav tri'd to amend the favltiest passages. I wish to thank the critics for their generous reception ofmi work, and for their valuable animadversions.

CHILSWELL, *1914.*

*Printed by John Johnson at the University Press, Oxford**