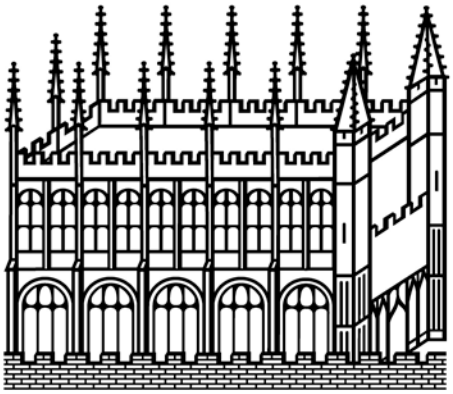


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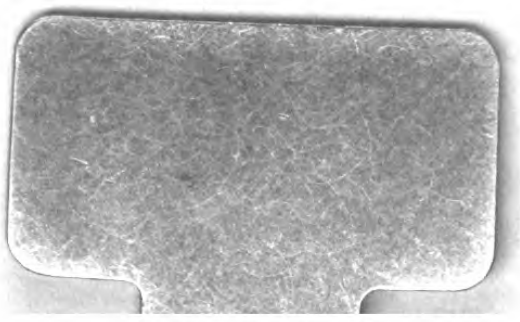
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ALFRED TENNYSON,

POET LAUREATE.

Some fifteen years ago two youths walked into the shop of Mr. Effingham Wilson, publisher, of the Royal Exchange, London, and after considerable blushing, asked him, with much deference, to publish a volume of Poems, their joint efforts. With that coy reluctance on his part, so natural to a publisher, he agreed, and the manuscript was handed to his printer. As the work advanced, one of these Siamese Twins, (son of Mr. Milman, the poet,) withdrew his verses from the venture, and consequently, Alfred Tennyson appeared in the world of poetry alone. A thin volume, to be sure—some one hundred and twenty pages, but it was the fine point of a wedge which has gradually opened the world to him. It is needless to dwell upon the want of sympathy with which the volume was received; the few notices it obtained were savage or contemptuous: it was either a blow or a sneer. The Quarterly and Blackwood had their sport with the modest volume, and absurdly deemed they had extinguished him, but the

true poet is indestructible. It is only the charlatan and the versifier who sink in the conflict of criticism. Like a brave knight, the poet comes out of every critical encounter with honour, and the attempt to crush him only spreads wider the renown of his prowess.

Alfred Tennyson, the abused of Christopher North, and of Lockhart, has become one of the recognized spirits of the age. On each side of the Atlantic he has placed his foot. Education, (that grand conductor of sound,) carries now the voice of truth and beauty to every human ear. The words of the poet, orator and philosopher, are no longer uttered in one corner to die in another; no smaller group than the assembled world now gathers round the great teacher. The language of Shakspere spreads every day; America carries freedom and civilization West; England East and South; they divide the mission, and work with the characteristic energy of the Anglo Saxon nature. It is not too much to predict that in time the Shakesperian will be the Universal tongue. It seems as though Providence prefigured this when he taught the greatest of poets to deliver his wonderful revelations in the English language.

It must be conceded to the harsh judging and wrong headed Christopher North, and to the elegant and conventional Lockhart, that the young poet in his first volume displayed several peculiarities calculated to arouse the entire bile of men who pinned their faith to Dryden, Pope, Campbell, and Rogers and others of that school; bnt a truer and more generous appreciation would have convinced them that they were only misplaced ornaments, and not the main part of the building, and that there was ample evidence of the possession of the highest poetical genius.

Even the affectations and singularities of a young poet, should have made them more cautious. Originality is sometimes heralded by affectation, and the very unlikeness of a new volume to the old standards, should have counselled forbearance. Critics should always doubt the powers and individuality of a poet, if on his first appearance there is nothing to offend. Be assured, if he is slavishly true to the established forms of poetry, that he is a disciple, and not a master; that he is an imitator, not an original.

We do not mean to exalt such musical verses as the following into the region of poetry, but even these, like the melodious humming of a few notes, ought to have convinced the listeners that the spirit of harmony was within, and only waiting its time to come forth in fuller power and more unmistakeable shape.

"Where Claribel low lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose leaves fall;
But the solemn oak tree sigheth
Thick leaved—ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel now lieth!"

. . . .

And so on for several stanzas:—the following tinkle, too, is not poetry:—

"Airy-fairy Lilian,
Flitting-fairy Lilian,
When I ask her if she love me
Claps her tiny hand above me,
Laughing all she can,
She'll not tell me if she love me,
Cruel little Lilian."

. . . .

These lines, however, have a rich lingering beauty of diction quite delicious to the ear.

" Thou art not steeped in golden languor,
No tranc'd summer calm is thine—
Ever varying Madeline
Through light and shadow thou dost range,
Sudden glances, sweet and strange,
Delicious spites and darling angers,
Dancing forms of flitting change—
Smiling, frowning evermore,
Thou art perfect in love lore,
Revealings deep and clear are thine,
Of wealthy smiles, but who may know
Whether smile or frown be fleeter?
Whether smile or frown be sweeter?
Who may know?"
" Mystery of Mysteries
Faintly smiling Adeline,
Scarce of earth—not all divine,
Nor unhappy—nor at rest,
But beyond expression fair,
With thy floating flaxen hair,
Thy rosy lips and full blue eye,
Take the heart from out my breast,
Wherefore those dim looks of thine,
Shadowy, dreaming Adeline?
. . . . . .
Doth the low tongued Orient
Wander from the side of the moon
Dripping with Sabian spice
On thy pillow, lowly bent,
With melodious airs love lent,
Breathing light against thy face,
While his locks a dripping twined
Round thy neck a subtle ring
And ye talk together still.
In the language wherewith spring
Letters cowslips on the hill?
Hence that look and smile of thine,
Spiritual Adeline!"

ORIANA.

" My heart is wasted with my woe
Oriana,
There is no rest for me below.
Oriana,
When the long dun worlds are filled with snow
And loud the hollow whirlwinds blow
Oriana,
Alone I wander to and fro,

Oriana,
Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana,
At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana.

ELEANORE.

" Thy dark eyes opened not,
Nor first revealed to English air,
For there is nothing there
Which from the outward to the inward brought,
Moulded thy lady thought.
Far off from human neighbourhood
Thou wert born on a summer morn,
A mile beneath the cedar wood.
Thy bounteous forehead was not fanned
With breezes from our oaken glades,
But thou wert nurst in some delicious land
Of lavish lights and fleeting shades:
And flattering thy childish thought,
The oriental fairy brought,
At the moment of thy birth,
From old well heads of haunted rills,
And the hearts of purple hills,
And shadowed coves on a sunny shore,
The choicest wreath of all the earth,
Jewel or shell, or starry ore,
To deck thy cradle, Eleanore?"

In these specimens the poetical reader will find more to admire than to censure; but the critics sometimes are deaf, "charm ye never so wisely," their ears are shut to music, and their eyes to beauty.

Three years afterwards, Mr. Tennyson published another volume, and gave the fullest evidence of his poetical genius. He had been wise enough to profit by the criticism of his friends and enemies, and, consequently, the new volume was received with more favour; it showed a marvellous advance on the previous book, and stamped the author as one of the rising men of our time. In this volume were the exquisite poems of "The Miller's Daughter,"

and "The Proud Lady Clara Vere de Vere." Shortly after he printed a poem called "The Lover's Tale:" this, however, he suppressed, contenting himself with giving a few copies away. As he disavows this production, we shall quote nothing from it. It is decidedly unworthy his reputation.

Here lapse ten years of Alfred Tennyson's life; silent to the public, but slowly working. In 1843 appeared his two volumes, including many of his old productions previously published, with the addition of many new ones; alterations were also made in those he retained. In this volume he first made audible "The Two Voices," undoubtedly the greatest poem he has written; we observe that it was composed as far back as 1833; contrasting the union of force and thoughtful subtlety displayed in this poem, with the last of his productions, "The Princess," the conclusion is forced upon us that the mind of Alfred Tennyson is not progressive. We shall devote some space to its examination, and select instances of the peculiar force with which the poet places before the mind of his readers thoughts of the utmost subtlety. The poem is an argument, *pro.* and *con.* between the hopeful and despondent impulses of our nature, one prompting to suicide, the other urging cheerfulness and patience:—

"A 'still small voice' spake unto me,
Thou art so full of misery,
'Were it not better *not* TO BE?'

Then to the still small voice I said;
'Let me not cast in endless shade
What is so wonderfully made.'

To which the voice did urge reply,
'To-day I saw the dragon-fly
Come from the wells where he did lie,'

An inner impulse rent the veil
Of his old husk—from head to tail
Came out clear plates of sapphire mail.

He dried his wings—like gauze they grew,
Through crofts and pastures wet with dew,
A living flash of light he flew.

I said, 'when first the world began,
Young nature through five cycles ran,
And in the sixth she moulded man.

She gave him mind—the lordliest
Proportion, and above the rest,
Dominion in the head and breast.'

Thereto the silent voice replied—
'Self-blinded are you by your pride;
Look up through night; the world is wide.

This truth within thy mind rehearse,
That in a boundless universe,
Is boundless better—boundless worse.'"

The despondent spirit then goes on to show that the existence of any particular item is immaterial in so vast an universe. The hope-blest voice demands that some peculiarity gives an individual value to every separate human being.

"To which he answered scoffingly—
'Good soul, suppose I grant it thee,
Who'll weep for thy deficiency?'
Or will one beam be less intense,
When thy peculiar difference
Is cancelled in the world of sense!"

A shower of tears is the poet's reply. Again the Mephistophilean voice urges the despondency of his heart, as a conclusive argument of the insufficiency of human life to attain felicity. The brighter voice consults patience in you,

"Shut the life from happier chance!"

"'Were it not well to bide mine hour,
Though watching from a ruined tower,
How grows the day of human power?

I said when I am gone away—
'He dared not tarry—' men will say,
Doing dishonour to my clay."

The darkness of his soul avers that it is viler to

breathe and watch, than once from dread of pain to die; adding—

"Art thou so bound
To men, that how thy name may sound
Will vex thee lying underground?

Go, vexed spirit, sleep in trust;
The right ear, that is filled with dust,
Hears little of the false and just.

'Hard task to pluck resolve!' I cried,
From emptiness and the waste wide,
Of that abyss, or scornful pride."

He urges that the future may bring a happier time.

"To sing the joyful pæan clear,
And sitting, burnish without fear
The brand, the buckler and the spear."

Appealing at the same time to the old visions of future glory, which may yet come to pass. It may yet happen

"In some good cause—not in mine own
To perish, wept for, honoured, known,
Like a great warrior overthrown!

Whose eyes are dim with glorious tears,
When soiled with noble dust, he hears
His country's war-song thrill his ear.

Then dying of a mortal stroke
What time the foeman's like is broke,
And all the war is rolled in smoke."

The desponding spirit declares all these are but the "stirrings of the blood," those impulsive delusions, without which life would expire beneath the steadfast weight of misery, and the daily, hourly invasion of wrong. He concludes this strain with a verse painfully revolting to the egotism of man.

"For every worm beneath the moon,
Draws different threads, and late and soon
Spins, toiling out his own cocoon.

"O dull, one-sided voice, (said I,)
Wilt thou make every thing a lie,
To flatter me that I may die?

I know that age to age succeeds,
Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
A dust of systems and of creeds.

I said—I toil beneath the curse,
But knowing not the universe,
I fear to slide from bad to worse.

And that in seeking to undo
One riddle, and to find the true,
I knit a hundred others new.

Consider well—the voice replied,
His face that two hours since hath died,
Wilt thou find passion, pain or pride?"

All the miseries of the human race pass over his head; he is insensible to all. Earthquakes rouse him not.

Finely, subtly, logically, the poet answers the doubter—

"If all be dark—vague voice—I said,
These things are wrapt in doubt and dread,
Nor canst thou show the dead are dead."

Oh! the volume of thought, the world of suggestion, the chaos of doubt in that one line—

"Thou canst not show the dead are dead."

Finely Hope threads the perplexing maze of poetical metaphysics, and artistically utters, as an apology for the insufficiency of language, to render the mysterious clear.

"I cannot make this matter plain,
But I would shoot, howe'er in vain,
A random arrow from the brain!

As old mythologers relate,
Some drought of Lethe might await
The slipping through from state to state.

And here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

I might forget my weaker lot;
For is not our first year forgot?
The haunts of memory echo not.

The still voice laughed—I talk, said he,
Not with thy dreams—suffice it thee
Thy pain is a reality."

The brighter spirit says in reply—

" Why set not forth, if I should do
This rashness, that which might ensue,
With this old soul in organs new?"

How marvellously poetry condenses in a single expression a course of thought, sufficient to "make us pause again"—

" Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath,
Has ever truly longed for death.

'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
Oh, life! not death for which we pant,
More life—and fuller—that I want—"

To this the spirit of gloom and despondency answers—

" in quiet scorn,
Behold, it is the Sabbath morn!"

This is the pivot of the argument:

" The sweet church bells began to peal."

" On to God's house the people prest,
Passing the place where each must rest,
Each entered like a welcome guest.

One walked between his wife and child,
With measured footfall firm and mild,
And now and then he gravely smiled.

The prudent partner of his blood
Leaned on him, faithful, gentle, good,
Wearing the rose of womanhood.

And in their double love secure,
The little maiden walked demure,
Pacing with downward eyelids pure.

These three made unity so sweet,
My frozen heart began to beat,
Remembering its ancient heat.

I blest them, and they wandered on:
I spoke, but answer came there none—
The dull and bitter voice was gone.

A second voice was at mine ear,
A little whisper, silver clear—
A murmur—'be of better cheer.'

And forth into the fields I went,
And nature's living motion lent,
The pulse of hope to discontent.

I wondered at the bounteous hours,
The slow results of winter showers,
You scarce could see the grass for flowers.

I wondered while I passed along,
The woods were filled so full with song,
There seemed no room for sense of wrong.

So variously seemed all things wrought,
I marvell'd how the mind was brought
To anchor by one gloomy thought.

And wherefore rather I made choice
To commune with that barren voice,
Than him that said 'rejoice—rejoice.'"

Thus closes one of the most magnificent emanations of poetical thought of modern times, and it is certainly an effort in which Tennyson puts forth all the force and beauty of his muse.

A captious critic of the day has declared that this is only an elaboration of Shakspere's "To be, or not to be." The best answer is, to leave the public to read the two compositions. Tennyson's is a singular instance of the skill with which an argument can be logically and poetically carried on in a few emphatic words. On natural grounds the subject is argued—revelation is left properly out of the question; for this struggle of doubt could never rise in a christian's mind. It might, and does, no doubt, occur at some season in every

imaginative nature, and we here find the matter brought to the test of sensation, and decided against gloom and despair, even without the irresistible voice of revelation.

The Ulysses is very finely done: there, however, the merit ends. Originality does not belong to it: Tennyson took the idea from a paper in Leigh Hunt's Indicator, and Lamb supplied Hunt with the subject in a conversation one night, when that fine old wit amused them with an extempore fantasia, or imaginary biography of the Grecian wanderer, after his return to Penelope, or, as he jocularly called her "the weaver," or "stocking darner."

In Ænone the poet has attempted to infuse his own life into the pallid statues of antiquity: as an evidence of his variety, he reverses the attempt in his Death of Arthur. There are fine passages in this fragment of an epic, but notwithstanding the beauty of some of the thoughts it leaves a weariness on the mind which convinces us the poet has failed in the great object of poetry. We do not consider the blank verse of Tennyson as a success; it is feeble and diluted; even the more felicitous passages are open to many objections; the sweetness of occasional lines cannot redeem the want of vigour and rythm.

In Dora the poet has carried his style to a scriptural simplicity.

From these extracts it will be made evident that the characteristics of this fine poet are delicacy, refinement, and a subtilty which etherialises all his conceptions. We do not expect that he will ever produce any great work; his mind is unequal to a long flight; he is master of one or two instruments, and his power over them is perfect; his orchestra is not, however, full enough to bring out

that mighty volume of sound which sleeps in the Epic and the Drama. His last production, "The Princess, a medly," has been a great disappointment to his friends, as it convinces them he is unequal to a sustained undertaking. We do not see why they should be surprised or grieved at the failure; this is not an age for long narrative, it is essentially the "age of emphasis," every production now must be intensed. Men will not sit to be lectured or read asleep; they want to be aroused, excited, and kept awake. They do not look for instruction, they demand power and sensation!—delight in their object, not quiescence or tranquillity. Soothing syrups are past: electrical flashes are in vogue. We have epics, dramas, narrative poems, and sermons in abundance: we require some new truths, or at all events some old facts presented in a novel and startling shape; or else we want common every day life shaped and heightened into beauty: listen to an old fact, a reality, made ideal and immortal by Tennyson: it is founded on the marriage of the Marquis of Exeter's grandfather to the daughter of a respectable farmer. Here the poet enrolls this sweet creature into one of God's nobility, a Duchess of Arcadia's Aristocracy.

"In her ear he whispers gaily,
If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watched thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well.

She replies in accents fainter
'There is none I love like thee,'
He is but a landscape painter
And a village maiden she.

He to lips that fondly falter
Presses his without reproof,
Leads her to the village altar,
And they leave her father's roof.

'I can make no marriage present,
Little can I give my wife,
Love can make our cottage pleasant,
And I love thee more than life.'

They by parks and lodges going,
See the lordly castles stand;
Summer woods about them blowing,
Made a murmur in the land.

From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,
'Let us see these handsome houses,
Where the wealthy nobles dwell.'

So she goes, by him attended,
Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid,
Lay betwixt his home and hers.

Parks, with oak and chestnut shady,
Parks and ordered gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
Built for pleasure and for state.

All he shows her makes him dearer,
Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days."

Our space will not allow us to quote the entire ballad: we must, therefore, refer our readers to the volume.

A disproportioned marriage becomes beautified and raised for ever on a pedestal, even as the sculptor's hand takes a common block of marble and turns it into a Venus de Medicis, or a Greek Slave.

Let us select another every day fact, the desertion of a trusting girl by her lover, and the revenge of her friend or sister; the magic garment is on, and it is transfigured to an admiring posterity: we shall allude again to this poem as elucidating or illustrating another phase of the poet's mind.

THE SISTERS.

"We were two daughters of one race,
She was the fairest in the face:
The wind is blowing in turret and tree—
They were together and she fell—
Therefore revenge became me well—
O the Earl was fair to see.

She died—she went to burning flame,
She mixed her ancient blood with shame:
The wind is howling in turret and tree—
Whole weeks and months, and early and late,
To win his love, I lay in wait—
O the Earl was fair to see.

I made a feast, I bade him come,
I won his love, I brought him home:
The wind is roaring in turret and tree—
And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he laid his head—
O the Earl was fair to see.

I kissed his eyelids into rest—
His ruddy cheek upon my breast:
The wind is raging in turret and tree—
I hated him with the hate of hell,
But I loved his beauty passing well—
O the Earl was fair to see.

I rose up in the silent night,
I made my dagger sharp and bright:
The wind is raging in turret and tree—
As half asleep his breath he drew,
Three times I stabbed him through and through—
O the Earl was fair to see.

I curled and combed his comely head,
He looked so grand when he was dead:
The wind is blowing in turret and tree—
I wrapt his body in the sheet,
And laid him at his mother's feet!—
O the Earl was fair to see."

MARGARET.

"O sweet pale Margaret,
O rare pale Margaret,

What lit your eyes with tearful power,
Like moonlight in a falling shower?
Who lent you love, your mortal dower?
Of pensive thought and aspect pale.
Your melancholy sweet and frail
As perfume of the cuckoo flower?"

The opening to Ænone is a fine chaunt—

"There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier far
Than all the valleys of Ionian Hills,
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters slowly down. On either hand
The lawns and meadow ledges, mid-way down,
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook, falling through the cloven ravine,
In cataract after cataract, to the sea."

In "Locksley Hall," we have the indignant rebuke which a young poet pours out to the world, occasioned by the lady of his love marrying another —a dull every-day sort of husband. The hopeless desolation of the abandoned lover is finely expressed. The sufferer, invoking his betrayer, her loveliness and her falsehood, by the memory of their former happiness, says that such a memory is a crown of sorrow—

"Drug thy memories lest thou learn it. lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, when the rain is on the roof,
Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widowed marriage pillow, to the tears that thou shalt weep.
Thou shalt hear the 'never, never,' whispered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears."

In no poem has Tennyson displayed more the peculiarity of his genius than in the lotos-eaters: the truth of the picture is heightened by the fascinations thrown round it; like a supernatural portrait, you know it to be such by the light of its halo. There is a haunting music in the lines, which seem to droop beneath the weight of their drowsy perfume.

" Where all things always seemed the same,
The mild-eyed melancholy lotos-eater came.

IV.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each; but whoso did receive of them
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far, far away, did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores! and if his fellow spoke,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave.
And deep asleep he seemed, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

V.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon, upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, 'We will return no more;'
And all at once they sang, 'Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam.'"

CHORIC SONG.

I.

" There is sweet music here, that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leav'd flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

II.

Why are we weighed upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest: why should we toil alone?
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:

Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,—
'There is no joy but calm!'
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

. . . . .

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah! why
Should life all labour be?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?"

As a specimen of a great poet, in another phase, we have that wonderful condensation of the suggestive, (already referred to.)

In this, the matter is darkly hinted, and shadowed forth, giving a force and awe to it far beyond the most literal description. The enunciation is in hieroglyphics, but full of meaning.

"We are two daughters of one race," &c.

The madness of the narrator is subtlely announced by the refrain,

"The wind is blowing on turret and tree:"

And the poet then throws a wonderful interest over the scene by the parallel line,

"Oh the Earl was fair to see."

This is done with the intention of first suggesting it as a doubt to the reader, and then taking it for granted, and insisting upon it as a truth, that the madness was produced by the struggle in the maiden's bosom between revenge and love.

The common opinion as to the story is, that a young lady to revenge the seduction and death of her sister by a young nobleman, resolves to have

vengeance: she therefore affects a great love for the seducer, inspires him with a passion, and in a moment of dalliance stabs him to the heart: she then has his dead body taken to his mother's feet.

The more poetical version appears to us to be, that she did not actually commit the self-abandonment and murder, but went mad in the contemplation of the proposed vengeance, and imagines in her delirium all that is described: it is still heightened by the possibility that her love for her sister's betrayer, interfering with her vengeance, precipitates her insanity. With these preliminary suggestions we leave the poem to the understanding of our readers.

We must not conclude our sketch without offering as a triumph of poetical skill the exquisite poem of Godiva: the opening lines, however, seem in bad taste:

"I lounged with grooms and parties on the bridge," &c.

Mr. Tennyson's last production is "The Princess, a medley," the largest and the most ambitious of his works; it is also his greatest failure. The subject is a sort of counterpart, or "female half" to the plot of Shakspere's "Love's Labour Lost;" it may also be considered as a pleasing banter on the rights of woman. It relates to a certain philosophical princess, who founded a college of women, to be brought up in high contempt of the present lords of the creation. The royal champion of the rights of woman has been betrothed to a neighbouring prince, and the poet, assuming the character of this prince, narrates the tale.

The royal mistress of a college, where no men are permitted to make their appearance, scouts the idea of being bound by any such pre-contract. The lover, however, will not resign the lady; he re-

solves to insist upon the fulfilment of the bond. He therefore sets forth with two companions, Cyril and Florian. They disguise themselves in female apparel, and gain admission to the palace college of fair damsels.

" There at a board by tome and paper sat,
With two tame leopards couched beside her throne,
All beauty, compassed in a female form,
The princess; liker to the inhabitant
Of some clear planet close upon the sun,
Than our man's earth. She rose her height and said,
'We give you welcome; not without redound
Of fame and profit unto yourselves ye come,
The first-fruits of the stranger: aftertime,
And that full voice which circled round the grave
Will rank you nobly, mingled up with me.
What! are the ladies of your land so tall?'
'We of the court,' said Cyril. 'From the court!'
She answered; 'then you know the prince?' And he
'The climax of his age; as though there were
One rose in all the world—your highness that—
He worships your ideal.' And she replied:
'We did not think in our own hall to hear
This barren verbiage, current among men—
Light coin, the tinsel clink of compliment;
We think not of him. When we set our hand
To this great work, we purposed with ourselves
Never to wed. You likewise will do well,
Ladies, in entering here, to cast and fling
The tricks which make us toys of men, that so,
Some future time, if so indeed you will,
You may with those self-styled our lords ally
Your fortunes, justlier balanced, scale with scale.'
At these high words, we, conscious of ourselves,
Perused the matting."

Singular to say, the princess has selected two widows, Lady Blanche and Lady Psyche, for the chief assistants in her new establishment; both of these have children, one an infant. The three disguised knights place them under the tuition of Lady Psyche, who proves to be the sister of Florian. This leads to a discovery:—

" My brother! oh, she said,
What do you here? and in this dress? and these,

Why, who are these? a wolf within the fold!
A plot! a plot! a plot! to ruin all!"

All three appeal to Psyche's feelings; she agrees to conceal the discovery, on condition that they will steal away as soon as possible. The princess rides out, and summons her three new pupils to attend her; after much long and learned discourse, they sit down to a pic-nic. Here Cyril, forgetting his womanly reserve, sings a merry stave, which discovers all; a general flight ensues. The Princess Ida falls into a stream, owing to her horse taking fright. The prince, of course, saves her; it, however, avails him nothing. He is brought before her, she sitting in state. She is guarded by eight mighty daughters of the plough. She then scornfully dismisses him. The prince's father arrives with an army to liberate his son; the fair virago's brother comes with another for her protection. A battle ensues, and the lover is dangerously wounded. Compassion rises in the heart of Ida, she nurses the wounded prince, and while she nurses, love finds an entrance. The college is broken up, and marriage closes the poem.

It is impossible for a true poet to write a long poem without revealing some snatches of his genius, and, although generally speaking, this poem is a mournful instance of mistaken powers, it abounds in fine passages. For example, the beauty of the following lament, made by Lady Psyche, when deprived of her child by the princess, is very striking:

"'Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child!
My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more;
For now will cruel Ida keep her back;
And either she will die for want of care,
Or sicken with ill usage, when they say
The child is hers; and they will beat my girl,
Remembering her mother. Oh, my flower!
Or they will take her, they will make her hard;

And she will pass me by in after life
With some cold reverence, worse than were she dead.
But I will go and sit beside the doors,
And make a wild petition night and day,
Until they hate to hear me, like a wind
Wailing for ever, till they open to me,
And lay my little blossom at my feet,
My babe, my sweet Aglaa, my own child;
And I will take her up and go my way,
And satisfy my soul with kissing her.' "

After the combat between Arac and the prince, when all parties had congregated on what had been the field of battle, this child is lying on the grass—

" Psyche ever stole
A little nearer, till the babe that by us,
Half lapt in glowing gauze and golden brede,
Laid like a new fallen meteor on the grass,
Uncared for, spied its mother, and began
A blind and babbling laughter, and to dance
Its body, and reach its fatling innocent arms,
And lazy, lingering fingers. She the appeal
Brook'd not, but clamoring out, 'Mine—mine—not yours;
It is not yours, but mine; give me the child,'
Ceased all in tremble; piteous was the cry."

Cyril, wounded in the fight, raises himself on his knee, and implores of the princess to restore the child to her. She relents, but does not give it to the mother, to whom she is not yet reconciled—giving it, however, to Cyril.

" 'Take it, sir,' and so
Laid the soft babe in his hard mail'd hands,
Who turned half round to Psyche, as she sprang
To embrace it, with an eye that swam in thanks,
Then felt it sound and whole from head to foot,
And hugg'd, and never hugg'd it close enough;
And in her hunger mouth'd and mumbled it,
And hid her bosom with it; after that
Put on more calm."

A sketch of one of the female students reading in the maiden's university is pretty:

" One walked—reading by herself, and one
In *this* hand held a volume as to read,

And smoothed a petted peacock down with that.
Some to a love-song varied a shallop by,
Or under arches of the marble bridge
Hung shadow'd from the heat."

A description of a laughing, petulant daughter of a baronet is well thrown off:

"At this upon the sward
She kept her tiny silken sandaled foot:
'That's your light way, but I would make it death
For any male thing but to peep at us.'
Petulant she spoke, and at herself she laughed:
A rosebud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her, she."

It is a curious study to read Shakspere's play and Tennyson's poem; let our readers try the experiment; the mixed state of feeling will amply repay them at the end.

Alfred Tennyson is the son of a clergyman of Lincolnshire. He went through the usual routine of classical education at Trinity College, Cambridge. His brothers and sisters partake of his poetical and musical nature, and are much attached to each other. Charles has published a volume of Sonnets and Poems full of sweet poetical fancies; as a graceful appendage to his greater kinsman's fame, we will give one of his sonnets:

SONNET, BY CHARLES TENNYSON.

"I trust thee from my soul, oh! Mary, dear.
But oftimes when delight has fullest power,
Hope treads too lightly for herself to hear,
And doubt is ever by until the hour;
I trust thee, Mary, but till thou art mine
Up from thy foot unto thy golden hair
O let me still misgive thee, and repine,
Uncommon doubts spring up with blessings rare!
Thine eyes of purest love give surest sign,
Drooping with fondness, and thy blushes tell
A flitting tale of steadiest faith and zeal:
Yes, I will doubt, to make success divine;
A tide of summer dreams with gentlest swell
Will bear upon me then, and I shall love most well!"

It is pleasant to know that a great poet's household is among the number of his admirers; it seems to take part of the sting of the old adage out of the saying "that no man is a prophet in his own land." Tennyson avoids general society, preferring to sit quietly with a friend, discussing the fancies that pour in his mind. He has no conversational force or brilliancy, hates arguing; is as "fond of smoking as an American or a Mussulman;" passes most of his time in the country; his favourite spot being a small farmhouse near Maidstone. He is occasionally visible to his friends in London for a month or so, but to see him in his best mood you must catch him with his cigar, or under a tree lounging on the grass on "a warm, lazy day." Born in Lincolnshire, it is curious to observe how the suggestions of that fenny scenery have pervaded his writings and influenced his choice of images.

He is reserved in his habits, has a fine intellectual face, and is very calm and self-possessed: there is an admirable picture of him by Lawrence. He is approaching his fortieth year. Lately he has been rewarded by the queen with a pension of £200 a year. We are told that she was much charmed with his ballad of Lord Burleigh; the poem being pointed out to her during her late visit to the Marquis of Exeter, at Burleigh. The pension came very opportune, he having lost most of his small patrimony in a speculation.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

T. B. MACAULAY is the son of Zachary Macaulay, the friend of Wilberforce, and, like him, a great abolitionist.

In 1818 this distinguished writer entered himself of Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took his degree in 1822. Here he gave evidence of his great intellectual powers, obtaining a scholarship, twice gaining the Chancellor's medal for English verse; and to crown his triumphs, secured the second Craven Scholarship, the highest distinction in classics which the University confers.

Having no taste for mathematics, he did not compete for honours at graduation, but nevertheless he obtained a fellowship at the October competition open to graduates of Trinity, which he resigned on his sailing for India. He devoted much of his time to the Union Club, a debating society, where he was considered an eloquent speaker.

He then studied at Lincoln's Inn, and was called to the bar in 1826. It was in this year that his celebrated Essay on Milton appeared in the Edinburgh Review, and from this time dates the friendship of Mr. Jeffrey and Macaulay. Soon after they went the circuit together, and took the opportunity of visiting Scotland.

When the whigs came into power Mr. Macaulay was appointed Commissioner of Bankrupts, and shortly after was elected for Colne in the first Reformed Parliament. He was then made Secretary to the India Board, and in 1834 was returned as member for Leeds.

He relinquished his seat the same year, on his appointment to the Supreme Council in Calcutta, under the East India Company's new charter.

On his arrival in Calcutta, in September of the same year, he assumed, at the request of Lord William Bentinck, in addition to his seat at the Council, the Presidency of the Commission of Five. Here his impartiality between the Europeans and Natives was so striking, as to expose him to the most malignant attacks of the selfish, the unprincipled, and the proud. After supporting Lord William Bentinck in all those great reforms which he made, Mr. Macaulay returned to England in 1838.

The following year he was elected member for Edinburgh, and was shortly made Secretary at War. We shall not allude to his parliamentary life with the single exception of his conduct on the copy-right bill. Mr. Sergeant Talfourd had laboured zealously on this point, and had good reason to depend upon Mr. Macaulay's support; he had appeared to coincide with him during the framing of the measure, and dining with the sergeant, a few nights before the debate in the house, had led him to count upon his support. He, however, made a strong speech against it, and unsparingly satirized the author of the measure.

He has lately been elected Lord Rector of the Glasgow University, and his address on the installation was greatly admired.

As a critic, essayist, and pictorial historian, Mr.

Macaulay may be considered as the first of our time; his style is correct and yet popular; full of glowing imagery, chastened by the truest taste.

We have often thought the Essay on Milton has been absurdly over-praised, and have occasionally said so, both in print and in conversation. We were, however, not prepared for the sweeping, and if not sincere, most affected deprecation from the author's own pen. When his contributions to the Review were collected in three volumes, Mr. Macaulay wrote a preface, in which the following paragraph appears.

"No attempt has been made to remodel any of the pieces which are contained in these volumes. Even the criticism on Milton, which was written when the author was fresh from college, and which contains scarcely a paragraph such as his matured judgment approves, still remains overloaded with gaudy and ungraceful ornament."

Surely half an hour's honest labour would have removed most of these eye sores, or counselled the rejection of the whole article.

The chiefest triumphs of Macaulay's critical art are his essays on Warren Hastings, Bacon, and Boswell's Johnson; the former is a model of biography; the man stands out from the canvas with all the necessary associations hanging to him of the great events in which he was so conspicuous an actor, and yet no prolixity or tedious enumeration of public events. It is, however, in the masterly essay on Bacon that for the first time we have an idea presented to the mind of that wonderful man, the Shakspere of science and learning —all is harmonious; it is too well known to need any extracts to justify our praise.

The next publication of Mr. Macaulay's, his "Lays of Ancient Rome," was a singular attempt to vivify decayed life, and though unsuccessful, yet it was an interesting failure; a modern may get a

better idea of old Roman manners and habits of thought from this book than from all the histories in the world. It is certainly a half resuscitation of a mummy. We shall pass over this work to come to his last and greatest labour, his History of England—as this is the most matured of his productions, we shall endeavour to illustrate his style and peculiarities of mind from this valuable treasury of fact and thought.

There are many writers who display as much understanding; more who show greater research; others have more humour, but we venture to say there is no writer of modern times who combines the necessary quantity of these various faculties in so harmonious a manner: added to this, he has considerable logical acuteness; a fine taste, and over all, his prose is the very finest of modern times we have read. No writer of the day has the same power of divesting subjects of their difficulties and obscurities, and placing the naked question before you, stripped of its adventitious garments. How frequently, on the other hand, has he thrown a robe of beauty and interest round an unpromising and prosaic matter of either history, finance, or legislation.

But the very qualities which render him an admirable critic, where the judgment is brought into superior play, such as on subjects of history, philosophy, finance, and politics, altogether incapacitate him for the highest office of the critic; we mean the setting forth the beauty and the mystery of poetry. All must be tangible, logical, or matter of fact, and he will then cement these uninviting masses into a fine eloquent system; but trust him with a Keats, a Coleridge, or a Shelley, and his deficiency of imagination, or want of power to appreciate it, is most striking. The ancient

ballads just referred to are damning facts against his having either the spirit of the poet, or the power of feeling its presence.

Yet there are passages in his writings so fine, so rhetorical, so like the prose part of Childe Harold, that we feel half to doubt the truth that stares us in the face whenever we read a critique of Mr. Macaulay's on the loftier kind of poetry. We use the word loftier advisedly, because no man is better able to appreciate Dryden or Pope, Crabbe, Scott, and Rogers, or those poets where artifice, logic, and close reasoning abound: where eloquent special pleading, and glowing declamation reign, instead of the truth and the faculty divine; these writers we feel cannot desire a more liberal or sagacious exponent: but when he approaches the tender exuberance of Keats, the daring subtilty and metaphysical brilliancy of Shelley, and the supernatural chaunts of Coleridge, then he endeavours to show to the world that they address a faculty not in the sparkling essayist and eloquent historian.

It may seem ungracious to dwell upon a deficiency of mind, but our critics must submit to be told that they should not meddle with matters above them. They treat all alike; they test the racer by the pack horse, and deny merit to an Eclipse or a Cymba, because it is not like a brewer's drayhorse. We shall now proceed to illustrate Mr. Macaulay's mind, by extracts from his last, and greatest work, requesting in return that when he sits in judgment on any poet, he will extend a like generosity to him.

Our readers must not suppose, because we commence our quotations with the first paragraph of his history, that we are going to reprint it all.

The following passage reminds us of the simplicity of Herodotus' opening sentence.

"I propose to write the history of England from the accession of king James II, down to a time which is within the memory of men still living.

"I shall recount the errors which, in a few months, alienated a legal gentry and priesthood from the House of Stuart. I shall trace the course of that revolution which terminated the long struggle between our sovereigns and their parliament, and bound up together the rights of the people and the title of the reigning dynasty. I shall relate how the new settlement was, during many troubled years, successfully defended against foreign and domestic enemies; how under that settlement the authority of law and the security of property were found to be compatible with a liberty of discussion and of individual action never before known; how from the auspicious union of order and freedom sprang a prosperity of which the annals of human affairs had furnished no example; how our country, from a state of ignominious vassalage, rapidly rose to the place of umpire among the European powers. How her opulence and her martial glory grew together; how by wise and resolute good faith, was gradually established a public credit fruitful of marvels which to the statesmen of any former age would have seemed incredible; how a gigantic commerce gave birth to a maritime power compared with which every other maritime power, ancient or modern, sinks into insignificance; how Scotland, after ages of enmity, was at length united to England, not merely by legal bonds, but by the indissoluble ties of interest and affection. How in America the British colonies rapidly became far mightier and wealthier than the realms which Cortez and Pizarro had added to the dominions of Charles V: how in Asia British adventurers founded an empire not less splendid, and more durable than that of Alexander.

How clearly a fine writer sketches roughly before he begins the plan of his work, without in any way anticipating the interest or weakening the effort.

As a contrast to the simplicity of the foregoing passage, we transcribe the death of Charles II.

"His palace had seldom presented a gayer or more scandalous appearance than on the evening of Sunday the 1st of February, 1685. Some grave persons who had gone thither, after the fashion of the times, to pay their duty to their sovereign, and who had expected on such a day his court would wear a decent aspect, were struck with astonishment and horror. The great gallery of Whitehall, an admirable relic of the magnificence of the Tudors, was crowded with revellers and gamblers. The king sat there chatting and toying with

three women, whose charms were the boast, and whose vices were the disgrace, of three nations.

"Barbara Palmer, duchess of Cleveland, was there, no longer young, but still retaining some traces of that superb and voluptuous loveliness which twenty years before overcame the hearts of all men. There too was the duchess of Portsmouth, whose soft and infantine features were lighted up with the vivacity of France. Hortensia Mancini, duchess of Mazarin, and niece of the great Cardinal, completed the group. She had been early removed from her native Italy, to the court where her uncle was supreme. His power and her attractions had drawn a crowd of illustrious suitors round her. Charles himself, during his exile, had sought her hand in vain. No gift of virtue or fortune seemed to be wanting to her. Her face was beautiful with the rich beauty of the South; her understanding was quick, her manners graceful, her rank exalted, her possessions immense, but her ungovernable passions had turned all these blessings into curses. . .

"While Charles flirted with his three sultanas, Hortensius' French page warbled some amorous verses.

"A party of twenty courtiers were seated at cards round a large table on which gold was heaped in mountains. Even the the king had complained that he did not feel quite well. He had no appetite for his supper; his rest that night was broken, but on the following morning he rose, as usual, early. . . . . .

"Scarcely had Charles risen from his bed, when his attendants perceived that his utterance was indistinct, and that his thoughts seemed to be wandering.

"Several men of rank had, as usual, assembled to see their sovereign shaved and dressed.

"He made an effort to converse with them in his usual gay style, but his ghastly look surprised and alarmed them. Soon his face grew black; his eyes turned in his head; he uttered a cry, staggered and fell into the arms of Thomas Lord Bruce, eldest son of the Earl of Ailesbury. A physician who had charge of the royal retorts and crucibles, happened to be present. He had no lancet, but he opened a vein with a penknife. The blood flowed freely, but the king was still insensible.

"He was laid on his bed, where, during a short time, the duchess of Portsmouth hung over him with the familiarity of a wife. But the alarm had been given. The Queen and the Duchess of York were hastening to the room. The favourite concubine was forced to retire to her own apartments. Those apartments had been thrice pulled down, and thrice rebuilt by her lover to gratify her caprice. The very furniture of the chimney was massive silver. Several fine paintings, which properly belonged to the queen, had been transferred to the dwelling of the mistress. The sideboards were piled with richly wrought plate. In the niches stood cabinets, the master pieces of Japanese art. On the hangings, fresh from the looms of Paris, were depicted, in tints which no English tapestry could rival, birds of gorgeous plumage, landscapes and hunting matches. In the midst of this splendour, purchased by guilt and shame, the unhappy woman

gave herself up to an agony of grief, which, to do her justice, was not wholly selfish. . . . . .

"The patient was bled largely. Hot iron was applied to his head; a loathsome, volatile salt, extracted from human skulls, was forced into his mouth. He recovered his senses, but he was evidently in a situation of extreme danger.

"The queen was for a time assiduous in her attendance.

"On the morning of Thursday the London Gazette announced that his majesty was going on well, and was thought by the physicians to be out of danger . . . . . but in the evening it was known that a relapse had taken place.

"The king was in great pain, and complained that he felt as if a fire were burning within him; yet he bore up with a fortitude which did not seem to belong to his selfish and luxurious nature. The sight of his misery affected his wife so much that she fainted, and was carried senseless to her chamber. The prelates who were in waiting had from the first exhorted him to prepare for his end. They now thought it their duty to address him in a still more urgent manner. William Sancroft, an honest and pious, though narrow-minded man, used great fredom. 'It is time,' said he, 'to speak out, for sure you are about to appear before a judge who is no respecter of persons.'

"Charles, however, was unmoved. He made no objection, indeed, when the service for the visitation of the sick was read, but nothing could induce him to take the Eucharist from the hands of the bishops. A table with bread and wine was brought to his bedside, but in vain. Sometimes he said there was no hurry, and sometimes that he was too weak.

"Charles had never been a sincere member of the Established Church. When his health was good and his spirits high he was a scoffer. In his few serious moments he was a Roman Catholic."

The charm of this narrative is apparent—all things fall into their proper places, and a perfect picture is presented to the mind. The mantle of romance is thrown over the forbidding form of History. She moves and talks with a grace that was supposed wholly to belong to Fiction, and while she delights, she instructs. It is quite impossible, despite the solemnity of the occasion, not to smile at the courteous banter of the expiring king, uttered almost "in articulo mortis," apologizing for the trouble he is giving, and begging them to excuse the unconscionable time he is in dying.

It seems to be the opinion of many men that all that is requisite for an historian, is a plodding, impartial man.

The fallacy of this is apparent—for although Byron asserts that "Truth is stranger than fiction," it yet requires a rare union of faculties to write it properly. Were history written as it ought to be, it would take an author who comprised the patience and research of Bayle, the philosophical and logical powers of Bacon, the style of Burke, the political sagacity of Tallyrand, and Washington's patriotism and nobility of soul. Since these are somewhat out of human reach, we cannot be too thankful that a writer combining so many excellencies as Mr. Macaulay, sits down to the drudgery of exploring the past. History enables a man to exist from the first ages of the world; he becomes the fellow-citizen of Demosthenes; assists in the expulsion of the tyrant Tarquin; stands beside Brutus as he plunges his dagger into Cæsar's heart, and is invested with a retrospective life: in a word, history presents every man with the freedom of the world, and gives to him a national interest in every country. It is not enough that a dramatist should give the plot and the costume, he must give his characters language and life. It must not be *done* in *words*, it must be *done* in *deeds*. Mr. Macaulay has accomplished this. He has clothed the skeletons of the past with flesh, and thrown blood into their veins: they become again animated with the bygone passions of olden days, and inoculate us with their feuds.

ELIZABETH BARRETT.

Miss Barrett, was, till her marriage with Robert Browning, in 1846, so entirely hidden from the world that she might have suggested to Wordsworth the idea of

> "A violet by a mossy stone
> Half hidden from the eye,
> Fair as a star when only one
> Is shining in the sky."

And truly the poetical spirit of Miss Barrett was so exquisite as to deserve altogether the epithet of being the violet of *women.* In person she is slender and petite: her voice very soft and low; her complexion pale: her eyes and hair dark, the latter being very long and hanging down her neck. In addition to her honours as a poetess, she has lately added that of a mother! *All honour to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the greatest poetical intellect ever vouchsafed to an English woman.*

The facts of her life are so few, and she has mixed so little with society, owing to her fragile state of health, that we shall devote the rest of this chapter to the consideration of her genius; we may mention, *en passant*, that she has suffered much domestic sorrow—among the greatest may be mentioned that she had the trial of witnessing

the death of a favourite brother who was drowned while swimming in Torbay.

The poetry of most female poets is almost invariably founded on the affections, and treated with a delicacy and tenderness which only a woman can impart: "in that sweet circle none can walk but she," but in addition to this exquisite gift, nature has endowed Miss Barrett with a force and subtlety of mind which *renders her the loftiest specimen of her sex.*

> "Gentle in heart, subtle and strong in mind,
> She shines the marvel of all womankind!"

Mr. Leigh Hunt in one of his clever poems calls her "the sister of Tennyson"—we object to this, and claim her as Shakspere's daughter!—great as Robert Browning is in the world of poetry, his wife is literally "the better half."

One of the most original female writers of America, Margaret Fuller, has so well expressed our own opinion of Miss Barrett that we give it in her own words.

> "In delicacy of perception Miss Barrett may vie with any of her sex. She has what is called a true woman's heart, although we must believe that men of a fine conscience and good organization will have such a heart no less. Signal instances occur to us in the cases of Spenser, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. The woman who reads them will not find hardness or blindness as to the subtler workings of thoughts and affections.
>
> "If men are often deficient on this score, women on the other hand are apt to pay excessive attention to the slight tokens, the little things of life. Thus in conduct or writing, they tend to weary, as with a morbid sentimentalism. From this fault Miss Barrett is wholly free."

It is not in Miss Barrett's longest and most ambitious poem that she is the most successful. Her blank verse is sweet and full of tender cadence, but it wants the muscular force to render it fit for so long a march as the "Drama of Exile."

Still this is a poem which none but Miss Barrett

could have written. The tenderness, the delicacy, and the grace of this sweet Paradise belong entirely to the female heart. The perusal of "the Drama of Exile" will give the reader a more complete idea of the nature of woman by comparing our first parents in this poem with Milton's Adam and Eve, than a volume of philosophy, with all its physical and mental analysis.

Miss Barrett's Eve is one of the most refined, tender, and etherialised creation of sad smiles and gentle tears that ever stept forth into the world of poetry. Even Lucifer became *Barrettised* and softened to a horrible beauty. Listen to a speech he makes to Gabriel.

> "Here's a brave earth to sin and suffer on!
> It holds fast still—it cracks not under curse,
> It holds, likewise immortal. Presently
> We'll sow it thick enough with graves as green
> Or greener, certes, than its knowledge tree,
> We'll have the cypress for the tree of life,
> More eminent for shadow:—for the rest
> We'll build it dark with towers and pyramids,
> And temples if it please you:—we'll have feasts
> And funerals also, merry wakes and wars,
> Till blood and wine shall mix and run along
> Right o'er the edges—and good Gabriel
> Ye like that word in Heaven!—I too have strength,
> Strength to behold, and not to worship Him:
> Strength to fall from him, and not rely on Him:
> Strength to be in the universe, and yet
> Neither God nor his Servant. The red sign
> Burnt on my forehead, which you taunt me with,
> Is God's sign that it bows, but not unto God;
> The potter's mark upon his work to show
> It rings well to the striker!"

With what a magnificent pity Gabriel rebukes his fallen compeer.

> "Thou speakest in the shadow of thy change,
> If thou hadst gazed upon the face of God
> This morning for a moment, thou hadst known
> That only pity fitly can chastise,
> While hate avengeth."

The rejoiner of the ruined archangel shows a womanly feeling, curiously mixed with a diabolical undauntedness, which may well astonish the prosaic minds who cannot realize that wondrous faculty which enables the true poet to enter at will the mysteries of natures hermetically sealed to the rest of the world.

"As it is, I know
Something of pity. When I reeled in heaven,
And my sword grew too heavy for my wrist,
Stabbing through matter, which it could not pierce
So much as the first shell of—toward the throne;
When I fell back, down—staring up as I fell—
The lightning holding open my scalded lids—
And that thought of the Infinite of God,
Drawn from the finite, speeding my descent:
When countless angel faces, still and stern,
Pressed out upon me from the level heaven,
Adown the abysmal spaces, and I fell.
Trampled down by your stillness, and struck blind
By the light in your eyes: 'twas then I knew
How ye could pity, my kind angelhood!"

In the next scene when the fallen pair are driven from Paradise, how exquisitely true to nature is Eve's reply to Adam when he asks her,

"Hast thou strength,
Beloved, to look behind us to the gate?"
EVE.—'I have strength to look upward to thy face.'"

And how awful, and powerfully expressed is Eve's remark upon the nature of Lucifer.

"The precipice of ill
Down this colossal nature, dizzies me—
And hark—the starry harmony remote
Seems measuring the height from whence it fell."

Here the pure womanly imagination diminishes the colossal horror of satanic will and intellect, and throws an ideal robe, woven of pity, over the thunder-scarred form of the king of Evil. Yet, amid this subtilty of feeling, there is a simplicity of thought and expression working through, which

relieves it from the abstractedness, otherwise, its inseparable defect. The following sketch will illustrate my meaning:

"ADAM.—Night is near!
"EVE.—And God's curse nearest. Let us travel back,
And stand within the sword glare till we die:
Believing it is better to meet death
Than suffer desolation.
"ADAM—Nay, beloved!
We must not pluck death from the Maker's hand
As evil we plucked the apple; we must wait
Until he gives death as he gave us life:
Nor murmur faintly o'er the primal gift,
Because we spoilt its sweetness with our 'sin.'"

How intellectualized becomes the heart of Eve beneath the poet's hand. How tremblingly downward sensitive nature grows at her voice.

Eve thus apostrophises the past.

For, was I not,
At that last sunset scene in Paradise,
When all the westerd clouds flashed out in throngs
Of sudden angel faces, face by face,
All hushed and solemn, as a thought of God
Held them suspended—was I not, that hour,
The Lady of the world—princess of life,
Mistress of feast and favour? Could I touch
A rose with my white hand, but it became
Redder at once? Could I walk leisurely
Along our swarded garden, but the grass
Tracked me with greenness? Could I stand aside
A moment underneath a cornel tree,
But all the leaves did tremble as alive
With songs of fifty birds, who were made glad
Because I stood there? Could I turn to look
With these twain eyes of mine, now weeping fast,
Now good for only weeping—upon man,
Angel or beast, or bird, but each rejoiced
Because I looked on him? Alas! alas!

"The Drama of Exile" is a Greek drama of desolation. It has beauty of time, thought and action. Its opening strain is mystical, sad and solemn: and this beautiful vision of a woman's brain is rendered visible to the same mournful

music of joys lost for ever. The haunting memories of Paradise cling to every tone, and steep in the profoundest sorrow the breasts of the Exile: yet a sublime consolation rises from its very depth and abandonment, and the crowned and sceptered majesty of grief dignifies the sufferers.

The loftier attributes of human nature rise majestically from the grave of pleasure.

From this mystical gloom we will follow Miss Barrett, and listen to the Pythoness, her fit having passed away, as the English maiden in her bower, singing a pleasant song.

THE LADY'S "YES."

'Yes,' I answered you last night;
'No'—this morning, sir, I say;
Colours seen by candle light
Will not look the same by day.

When the tabors played their best,
Lamps above, and laughs below,
'Love me,' sounded like a jest,
Fit for 'Yes,' or fit for 'No.'

Call me false, or call me free—
Vow, whatever light may shine
No man on thy fall shall see
Any grief or change on mine.

Yet the sin is on us both—
Time to dance—is not to woo;
Wooer light makes fickle troth;
Scorn of me recoils *on you*!

Learn to win a lady's faith
Nobly, as the thing is high;
Bravely, as for life or death,
With a loyal gravity.

Lead her from the festive boards,
Point her to the starry skies,
Guard her by your truthful words,
Pure from courtship's flatteries.

By your truth she shall be true,
Ever true, as wives of yore,
And her 'Yes,' once said to you,
Shall be 'Yes,' for evermore.

We must content ourselves by quoting a specimen of her success in sonnet writing.

TEARS.

Thank God—bless God:—all ye who suffer not
More grief than ye can weep for. That is well—
That is light grieving!—lighter, none befel
Since Adam forfeited the primal lot.
Tears! what are tears? The babe weeps in its cot,
The mother singing: at her marriage bell
The bride weeps:—and before the oracle
Of high faned hills the poet hath forgot
That moisture on his cheeks. Commend the grace,
Mourners, who weep!—Albeit, as some have done,
Ye grope tear blinded, in a desert place,
And touch but tombs:—look up! these tears will now
Soon in long rivers, down the lifted face,
And leave the vision clear for stars and sun.

Miss Barrett must pardon our calling attention to her singularly defective *rhymes?* We take a few specimens at random:—

"A rose once grew *within*
A garden, April *green*,
In her loneness, in her loneness,
And the fairer for that oneness."

"On a *mission*
To declare the coming *vision*."

"Wheeling *o'er me*,
Coronals of motioned *glory*."

"Singing gladly all the *moontide*,
Never waiting for the *suntide*."

"And earth will call her *flowers*,
To hasten out of *doors*."

"Guess him on the happy *islands*
Learning music from the *silence*."

As many others we could quote; these examples are all taken from the earlier stanzas of "*A Lay of the Early Rose*."

Our fair poetess must have been thinking of Hudibras:

"And other deleterious *medicine*,
So those who took them are all *dead since*."

There are also many evidences of affectation, which somewhat mar the full effect of her verse:

"There, Shakspere, on whose forehead climb
The crowns o' the world! Oh, eyes sublime,
With tears and laughter for all time."

The kindness of an American friend, at our request, has enabled us to lay before our readers some specimens of the correspondence of this fine poetess. We feel the more pleasure as it evidences the warm feeling which animates her towards this great Republic. This, however, must be the case with every intelligent English thinker, for it is impossible not to admire the energy, sagacity, and adventurous spirit of the western Anglo-Saxon.

"The cataracts and mountains you speak of, have been, are, mighty dreams to me; and the great people, which, proportionate to that scenery, is springing up in their midst to fill a yet vaster futurity, is dearer to me than a dream. America is our brother land, and though a younger brother, sits already in the teacher's seat and expounds the common rights of our humanity. It would be strange if we in England did not love and exult in America; if English poets, of whom I am least, if at all—did not receive with a peculiar feeling of gratitude to America, grateful to your Arcturus, to the MEMORY of your victories, must I say? grateful to the North American Review, grateful personally to yourself and your friend, and grateful to all; will you assure him of it, with no passing emotion. It is delightful and encouraging to me to think that *there*, among 'the cataracts and mountains,' which I never shall see, and there is 'dream-land,' sound the voices of friends; and it shall be a constant effort with me (as I told Arcturus before) to deserve, presently, in some better measure, the kindness for which I never can be more grateful than now.

"We have one Shakspere between us, your land and ours, have we not? and one Milton, and now we are waiting for you to give us another. Niagara ought,

"'And music born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into his face.'

In the meantime we give honour to those tuneful voices of your people, which prophecy a yet sweeter music than they utter. You

do honour to my verses in permitting them to approach and breathe the 'sweet air' of Mr. Bryant's.

"You will wonder a good deal, but would do so less if you were aware of the seclusion of my life, when I tell you that I never consciously stood face to face with an American in the whole course of it. I never had any sort of personal acquaintance with an American, man or woman, therefore you are all dreamed dreams to me—'gentle dreams.' I may well account you.

"I do hope, however, that the book promised me, has not, dream-like,' dispersed, because *that* seemed in the promise 'a golden dream.'"

"Wordsworth having been invited or commanded up for the purpose of attending the queen's ball, Rogers lent him a court dress and sword; and as he kissed Victoria's fair hand, she told him that she had never seen him before, and was to do so then? And so do queens speak to kings! He is as well as possible, and reached his seventy-sixth birth day some few days ago. As to Rogers who lent him the sword, and who is a patriarch by profession, and several years past eighty, he continues to be young, though the world robs his coffers. He makes assignations with the sun, to set it in the park as he goes out to dinner, and catches the star light as he comes home. How delightful to keep such a young poet's heart alive to the simplest uses of beauty, after so many fears of the world. I do not know him personally—but I hear of his having said the other day at a concert—'How sublime! presently we shall see the angels.'

"Mr. Lough, the sculptor, has finished a very beautiful reclining figure of Southey—but the expression of the face and general attitude is criticised as being ambiguous and suggestive of a painful doubt as to whether the poet sleeps or dies. A book is falling from his hand—and the striking resemblance and exceeding beauty of execution are said to increase the painfulness of the ambiguity in question.

"Mr. Horne is still in Germany—but I expect soon to hear of his return. He thought of coming home in April—and here is April on the verge of turning into May.

"Mr. Chorley, of the Athenæum, and 'Music and Manners,' has a comedy on the anvil, and a novel of it, which last will appear, it is supposed, in the autumn at hand.

"Mr Browning, with whom I have had some correspondence lately, is full of great intentions, the light of the future is on his forehead—also he will turn clear I think, as he turns on, he is a poet for posterity. I have a full faith in him as poet and prophet. He talks of going abroad again this summer.

"Poor Hood is dying; in a state of perfect preparation and composure, among the tears of his friends. His disease has been consumption—is in fact: but the disease is combined with water on the chest, which is expected to bring death. To a friend who asked him the other morning how it was with him, he answered with a characteristic playful pathos—'The tide is rising, and I shall soon be in port.' It is said of him that he has no regrets for his life, except for the un-

born works which he feels stirring in his dying brain—a species of regret which is peculiarly affecting to me, as it must be to all who understand it—Alas, it is plain that he has genius greater than anything he has produced—and if this is plain and sad to us, how profoundly melancholy it must be to him. The only comfort is that the end of development is not here. Sir Robert Peel wrote a long letter to him lately in a tone of respect and consideration, which was honourable to the minister, and relieved him from pecuniary anxiety, by attaching his pension to the life of his wife, rather than to his own. Poor Hood and poor Sidney Smith, how we are losing our Yoricks! 'All dumb!'—'All gone!'

"You will see the announcement of Mrs. Norton's new poem on the 'Child of the Islands,' namely, our little Prince of Wales, in which she exhorts him to all manner of righteousness and justice and proper kingliness. I have read the poem only in extracts as yet, but the melody, and cadence, and eloquence of thought and tongue seem very delectabe. Tell me what you think of Mrs. Butler's poems, which assuredly (at least to my mind's assurance) have more poetry in them, properly so called, if less of suavity and grace. And tell me if you have been taken and charmed as I have been, by the prose romance of the 'Improvisitore' translated from the Danish of Andersen by Mary Howitt, and call it prose—but the poetry of it is true and rare."

"As to Flush, I thank you for him; for being glad that he has not 'arrived at the age of gravity and baldness.' and I can assure you of the fact of his not being yet four years old, (the very prime of his life,) and of his having lost no zest for the pleasures of the world—such as eating sponge-cake and drinking coffee *a la creme.* He lies by me on the sofa, where I lie and write; he lies quite at ease between the velvet of my grown and the fur of my *couvre-pied,* and has no wicked dreams, I can answer for it, of a hare out of breath, or of a partridge shot through the whirring wing; if he sees a ghost at all, it is of a little mouse which he killed once by accident. He is as innocent as the first dog, when Eve patted him. I had a visit the other day from Mrs. Jameson, and was delighted with her, of course. She is one of those fervid admirers of your America, who constitute, in fact, the flower of our England. Harriet Martineau's mesmeric experience (and she, by the way, is another instance) is making a great noise and sensation here, and producing some vexation among her unbelieving friends. It was, however, worthy of herself, having, according to her own belief, received a great benefit from means not only questionable, but questioned, to come forward bravely and avouch the truth of it. Do you believe at all? *I do,* but it is in the highest degree repulsive to me as a subject, and suggestive of horror. It is making great way in England, and, as far as I can understand, is disputed more by the unlearned than by the learned. Let me hear from you—I am, most gratefully, your friend."

"Wakondah has appeared, and having written to you of the delay

in his avatar, I write quickly to apprise you of its occurrence, assuring you, at the same time, that if I was obliged to you for your intended gift, my gratitude has increased with my knowledge of its value. The poem is a fragment indeed, and so fragmentary as to forbid all guessing at the full design and ultimate aspect of the whole; still there are two great *goods* obvious in it; one is, the Americanism of the subject, and the other, a force and energy, and occasional majesty of expression and cadence, which are not common qualifications of poems, whether American or European: I am much struck by such lines as these, for instance:

"'The rivers loiter like a calm-bound sea,'

or,

"And threatenings full of thought and steadfast ends,'

or,

"'A bulk that swallows up the sea-blue sky.'

And I earnestly hope that Wakondah may attain his full 'bulk' as a worthy national poem, and be recognized as such on either side of the Atlantic. When American poets write, as they too often do, English poems, must not the sad reason be that they draw their inspiration from the English poets, rather than from the grand omnipresence of Nature; must not both cause and result partake of a certain wrongness? I fear so. And all should be hope, and nothing fear, in America! You have room there for whole choruses of poets—Autochthones—singing out of the ground. You, with your Niagara for a Hippocrene, and your silent cities of the woods, too old for ruins, and your present liberties, and your aspirations filling the future."

"Before all this, I should have told you that I have heard from Mr. Tennyson, and that he uses, in speaking of the newspapers, these words: 'The criticism is, on the whole, friendly and genial, and I have every reason to be obliged to the writer.'

"I am sure you will sympathize with many English hearts in my dear friend Miss Mitford's distressing embarrassments, as the public prints bring to your knowledge; and I can scarcely be wrong in telling you that her appeal to the tenderness of her friends, and the gratitude of her readers, has been answered here with a liberality adequate to our expectations. She is admirable in domestic life, admirable in literature, and womankind may be doubly proud of her, and the fortune should be worthy of the merit.

"I will not write to you any more to-day, you will lose your patience with me for ever if I do."

"Pisa-Collegio, Ferdinando.

"Now once for all, and I say once for all, not so much because my hope is desperate of being forgiven, as because, when forgiven, I really mean to leave off sinning—I stand before you in sackcloth

praying for absolution. Hope is not desperate altogether; for I do think that by the time you have considered the 'extenuating circumstances' of my being actually married, and of the very imaginable conditions and anxieties which are apt to precede such an event in every woman's life when she feels at all, and especially when, as in my marriage the event involves other change—as from the long seclusion in one room, to liberty and Italy's sunshine in these two kinds,—when, for a resigned life, I take up a happy one, and reel under it with my head and heart, why you will understand it to be pardonable, I do think, that I too have forgotten some obvious social duties, such as writing letters, even to such true and tried friends as yourself Shall I tell you, I find in my writing case an unfinished note to you, began before I left England, which I did immediately on my marriage—a fragment of a note, begun to inform you briefly of the position in which I stood, and of the meaning of my 'extraordinary conduct' to you. Now, have you not called it 'extraordinary' twenty times? But the course of events was too strong and full for me, and I was carried off my feet before I could have strength to speak my speech audibly. So forgive, forgive me. I shall behave better you will find for the future, and more gratefully, and I begin some four months after the greatest event of my life, by telling you that I am well and happy, and meaning to get as strong in the body by the help of this divine climate as I am in the spirit *the spirits*! so much has God granted me compensation. Do you not see already that it was not altogether the sight of the free sky which made me fail to you before. So forgive me for all, all at once, forgive for all. My husband's name will prove to you that I have not left my vocation to the rhyming art, in order to marry: on the contrary, we mean, both of us to do a great deal of work, besides surprising the world by the spectacle of two poets coming together without quarrelling, wrangling, and calling names in lyrical measures. He is preparing a new edition of his collected poems, in which he pays peculiar attention to the objections made against certain obscurities. As for me, the last thing I did was to send to Mr. Lowell, who wrote to me a year ago on behalf of the American Anti-Slavery Society, (Mrs. Chapman doing the same thing,) the poem which they asked for. My conscience has been restless about it ever since, (whenever I thought that way,) but neither head nor heart were at liberty sufficiently to do anything. What I have sent at last, my belief is, will never be printed in America, or will, if it should be, bring the writer into a scrape of disfavour. But I did only write conscientiously, you know, in writing at all; and my 'Cry of the Children,' was not written against my own country. Your 'Man in the Republic' should have had the article 'Slave.' And now let me thank you for the pretty minute copy of the last edition, which you had the goodness to send me. I was glad to receive it on every account, and not least as an evidence of the success of your work. My husband desires me to thank you on his own part, for gifts of this sort which you have sent to him, and which he did not know how to return his acknowledgements for until the present time,

when he is able to do so, with your permission, as to my friend and his friend together. Talking of friends, Miss Fuller was too late for me; I have not seen the track of her footsteps, otherwise I should have gladly received a woman who had brought the sign of your friendship with her, apart from other merits. We live here in the most secluded manner, eschewing English visitors and reading Vasari, and dreaming dreams of seeing Venice in the summer. Until the beginning of April, we are tied to this perch of Pisa, as the climate is recommended for the weakness of my chest, and the repose and calmness of the place are by no means unpleasant to those who, like ourselves, do not lack for distractions and amusements in order to be very happy. Afterwards we go anywhere but to England—we shall not leave Italy at present. If I get quite strong, I may cross the desert on a camel yet, and see Jerusalem. There's a dream for you—nothing is too high or too low for my dreams just now. In the meanwhile you rage at me for my impertinency as to business, and common sense. I do believe that I sent no answer to the proposition of printing a selection from my poems, and perhaps by this hour of the day, both booksellers and public have forgotten me perfectly. If they care a jot for the said proposition, let me know; for I should like to have a voice in the selection of the poems. As to the prose volume I can't do it here, I am afraid—perhaps nobody cares for that. Tell me what you are doing, writing, thinking, because I care for all three. Mr. Poe sent me his book, and I had grace enough to send him my thanks, though you would not think it of me!!! Ashes I cast upon my head for all my misdeeds; now do, do forgive me for all! I have Flush with me here, and he adapts himself to the sunshine as to the shadow, and when he hears me laugh lightly, begins not to think it too strange. As to news, you will not expect news from me now—until the last few days, we had not for months even seen a newspaper, and human faces divine, are quite 'rococo' with me, as the French would say. Mrs. Jameson however travelled with us from Paris, and we all went together to do pilgrimage at Vaucluse, where the living water gushes up into the face of the everlasting rock, and there is no green thing except Petrarch's memory. Yes, there is the water itself—that is brightly green—and there are one or two little cypresses. Now she has gone on to Rome, where Mrs. Butler and her sister are residing. Dickens is in Paris—Tennyson when I heard of him last, was in Switzerland, and 'disappointed with the mountains.' I wonder how anybody can be disappointed with anything—with Nature, I mean. She always seems to me (or generally) to leap up to the level of the heart. Miss Martineau is gone to Egypt it appears. All the world is abroad. And all England is freezing—such accounts we hear of the cold—and then the dreadful details from Ireland—oh, when I write against slavery, it is not as one free from the curse—'the curse of Cromwell' falls upon us also! 'Poor, poor Ireland.' But nations, like individuals must be 'perfected by suffering.' In time we shall slough off our leprosy of the pride of money and of rank, and be clean, and just, and righteous.

"ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING."

ROBERT BROWNING.

ROBERT BROWNING, the author of some of the most singular poems in the English language, was born at Camberwell, a village near London, in 1812. His father, who is a clerk in the Bank of England, seems to have had prophetic impression of his son's poetical genius, for he resolved to set him apart for a life of study. His family abound with little anecdotes of the poet's precocity, and we were told by his mother that at four years old, when compelled by her to take some medicine, he said, with much heroic gravity,

> "Good people, if you wish to see
> A boy take physic, look at me."

These little anecdotes may be considered as trifling, but they show the current of the early mind, and are sure evidences of the existence of the poetical vein.

Till his fourteenth year he was educated at a daily school in Dulwich, where he made great progress in his studies. Even in his eighth year some of his translations from Horace are remarkable for that peculiarity of mirth which he has since carried out to a fatal mannerism.

From this school he was removed to the London University, where he completed his routine of clas-

sical education. So far as our recollection serves, he is the only man of genius that college can boast.

In his twentieth year he published a poem called "Pauline," which he has never acknowledged, and of which he now appears to be ashamed. It has little merit beyond a certain faint evidence of sensuous feeling running through it; that kind of murmuring music which ever accompanies a poet in his walk through life.

In 1836 his first acknowledged poem appeared, called "Paracelsus," and it is the opinion of many of the critics of the day that this will be the work by which he will be the most remembered. A critic has remarked, that one of the finest thoughts of modern times is embalmed in three lines in this poem.

> "There are two points in the adventure of a diver,
> First when a beggar he prepares to plunge,
> Then when a prince he rises with his pearl.
> Festus, I plunge!"

An eminent poet remarked that Mr. Browning had lost the chief force of the thought by the first line, which he maintained was very prosaic; he suggested that it ought to be altered, as

> "There are two moments in a diver's life," &c.

This is a point for the author. We named this to Mr. Browning, who acknowledged his own line was feeble.

Mr. Browning's Paracelsus excited little attention. Mr. Forster, of the Examiner, praised it, Mr. Fox, of the Montly Repository, and Heraud's New Monthly Magazine—and there was an end of the matter. It, however, gave the poet a quiet pedestal for his future station, and he is now so proud of his young creation that he generally

places it as his peculiar characteristic, and calls himself author of Paracelsus.

To Paracelsus succeeded a tragedy, called Strafford, which, owing to Mr. Forster's influence with Mr. Macready, was performed. The great tragedian acted Strafford—but all his efforts were unavailing. It was the tragedy of spasms; the want of personal interest is too deeply felt to allow of any doubt, and the work of a strong *mentality* went to the tomb of the Capulets for want of a physical Romeo. We fear it will be found to be the verdict of the public, that the author of Sordello is a noble abstraction; a great spirit, but he lacks the flesh and blood of Shakspere, and the milk of human kindness.

Four years afterwards Sordello astonished his friends, and amazed the world—of this work we shall speak more anon, contenting ourselves here with the relation of an anecdote we heard of Douglas Jerrold, when the work first appeared. He was recruiting himself at Brighton after a long illness. In the progress of his convalescence a parcel arrived from London, which contained, among other things, this new volume of Sordello; the medical attendant had forbidden Mr. Jerrold the luxury of reading, but, owing to the absence of his conjugal "life guards" he indulged in the illicit enjoyment.

A few lines put Jerrold in a state of alarm. Sentence after sentence brought no consecutive thought to his brain. At last the idea crossed his mind that in his illness his mental faculties had been wrecked. The perspiration rolled from his forehead, and smiting his head, he sat down in his sofa, crying, "O, God, I *am* an idiot!" When his wife and her sister came, they were amused by his pushing the volume into their hands, and demanding what they thought of it. He watched

them intently while they read—at last his wife said;" I don't understand what the man means; it is gibberish." The delighted humourist sank in his seat again: "thank God I am *not* an idiot." Mr. Browning, to whom we told this, has often laughed over it, and then endeavoured to show that Sordello was the clearest and most simple poem in the English language. We know only one person who pretends to understand Sordello, and this is Mrs. Marston, the poet's wife.

Mr. Browning's next work was Pippa Passes, the first of a series which he has called "Bells and Pomegranates." Here begins the real poetic life of Browning, so far as the public know him, and out of these singular productions we hope to justify our faith to the world. The idea of *Pippa*, a poor factory girl, purifying human nature as she *passes* about on her vocation, is a fine conception, and it is to be lamented that it is not made so intelligible to the common mind as to be capable of a wider appreciation. To the poet, however, it remains what Keats said of Beauty, "a joy for ever." After a time Mr. Macready produced another play, and the reception which the Blot in the 'Scutcheon had at Drury Lane in 1843, and at Sadler's Wells in 1848, seems to justify the current opinion that the author is only a dramatist for the poet and the critic. He cannot touch the hearts of the million. That he abounds in the esthetic, may be presumed, but the world at large care little for the subtler and more minute workings of the human heart. They demand a broader, wider range, a rougher "guess" at their nature; when it is borne in mind how many words are not heard in a large theatre; how few of the actors know how to deliver a speech intelligibly; it is evident that a tortuous, obscure and condensed style must

be so much Greek to a mixed audience who hear a drama for the first time; when, however, you add to these disadvantages, a plot not springing from the every day impulses of the heart, but evolved from some peculiar idiosyncracy of the mind, it is evident you make a very fatiguing and ingenious puzzle, and not a drama to move our tears or smiles. A rapid comparison between three acted dramatists may help the reader to a somewhat better idea of Mr. Browning's "fallings short" in this particular.

While Mr. Browning's plays are chiefly metaphysical or psychological dialogues continued until one of the speakers falls a victim to some special peculiarity, which concludes the affair:—while Mr. Marston takes some common-place wrong, or makes the hero, who is going to redress the evil, some minor poet, who invariably manages to break his own heart and the reader's patience; Mr. Sheridan Knowles goes altogether to the other side of the question. Our readers may think it is inconsistent to blame both extremes—but we do not ask for a *profile view*—we want the *full countenance;* this we get in Shakspere. The modern playwrights give us but one side of the face; we see it is onesided, we ask for a fuller, bolder, broader view; they then present to us the other profile; they seem afraid to look human nature full in the face: or do they think truth is a Medusa, and that we shall be turned into stone by its Gorgon look? Mr. Browning's plots are singularly deficient also in human interest; with the exception of "Strafford" and the "Blot in the 'Scutcheon," they are all founded on subjects which make no appeal to the masses; he is truly caviare to the million. He is the poet of the exception, not the rule! He will be highly prized by the one, but

totally neglected by the many. His poetry is a curiosity, and a rarity for the virtuoso, and not a thing of interest for the crowd. Mr. Browning can, however, select a simple touching subject, and treat it intelligibly. Witness the little incident at Ratisbon :—

"You know we French stormed Ratisbon,
A mile or so away,
On a little mound Napoleon
Stood, on our storming day;
With neck out thrust; you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow,
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as, perhaps, he mused—'my plans
That soar to earth may fall,
Let once my army leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall.'
Out 'twixt the battery smokes there flew
A rider, bound on bound,
Full galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy—
You hardly could suspect,
(So tight he kept his lips compress'd
Scarce any blood came through,)
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was all but shot in two.

'Well,' cried he, 'Emperor, by God's grace
We've got you Ratisbon!
The marshal's in the market-place,
And you'll be there anon,
To see your flag-bird flap his vans
Where I, to heart's desire
Perched him!' The chief's eye flashed, his plans
Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed, but presently
Softened itself, as sheathes
A film, the mother eagle's eye
When her bruised eaglet breathes.
'You're wounded!' 'Nay'—his soldier's pride
Touched to the quick, he said,
'I'm killed, sir,' and his chief beside
Smiling, the boy fell dead."

With a few cramped abbreviations this is plain enough, and the action is presented graphically to the reader's imagination ; as a contrast, let him turn to a poem entitled "Christina." We will help the otherwise bewildered student a little, by informing him that the poem is supposed to be the meditation of a youth who has gone mad for love of Queen Victoria. He commences by reproaching the royal object of his passion, that she *encouraged* his attachment by looking at him accidentally when her carriage passed him :

"She should not have looked at me,
If she meant I should not love her ;
There's plenty—men you call such
I suppose—she may discover
All her soul to, if she pleases,
And yet leave much as she found them ;
But *I'm not* so, and she knew it,
When she fixed me, glancing round them.

What, to fix me thus meant nothing ?
But I can't tell—there's my weakness—
What her soul said—no isle can't soar
About—heed to strew the bleakness
Of some lone shore, with its pearl seed,
That the sea feels—no strange yearning
That such souls have—most to lavish
Where there's chance of least returning.

. . . .

Oh ! observe of course next moment
The world's honours in derision,
Trampled out the light for ever ;
Never fear but there's provision
Of the devil's to quench knowledge,
Lest we walk the earth in rapture!
Making those who catch the secret
Just so much more prize their capture !"

Very mad, indeed, as a poet says—

"Tilburina in white satin, and her attendant in white muslin,
I declare, upon my word, are not one half so puzzling!"

Mr. Browning seems to be fond of verses supposed to be written by madmen. The two other poems are of the same class, entitled "Mad House

Cells." Mr. Coleridge laid himself open to Lord Byron's sarcasm for writing verses on an ass, and drew from the splenetic poet

> "How well the subject suits his noble mind,
> A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind!"

We are quite certain he would not have spared the author of these "mad poems."

"What, however, will our readers say when we assure them that Mr. Browning has written a poem of three hundred and twenty pages in the same unintelligible style; it is composed in heroic couplets, and is altogether a perfect marvel. We have before incidentally alluded to this as almost persuading Mr. Douglas Jerrold of his own idiocy, from his inability to comprehend two consecutive lines.

An English writer endeavoured to account for this terrible phenomenon by giving it as his opinion, that when the whole poem was set up, some unlucky or malignant printer's devil or compositor disturbed the type, taking care to leave the final words unaltered. This is, so far as I can imagine, the only rational way for accounting for the poem; if, however, it should not be so, certainly the work is intended for a seventh sense, not yet vouchsafed to us.

With regard to what appears to be most obscure in these "Lyrics," we should never lose sight of the fact that they are dramatic, for Mr. Browning's mind is so essentially "abstractedly dramatic," that this quality pervades every thing he writes. When you have studied the matter as though it were a puzzle, a problem, or a hieroglyphic, then many beauties appear in bold relief; but, as we said before, a writer should not give his readers that trouble, but take it off their hands himself, and render it clear to all. We might just

as well write in stenography or Greek, and insist upon all learning either the system or the language. Mr. Jerrold once observed that Browning did worse than even that, viz. "*wrote Greek in short-hand.*" The originality of Browning appears often a distortion rather than a novelty; a contradiction to the course of nature, a growing of the roots in the air! and not in the earth; an originality is nature in a new and legitimate form, and not a *lusus naturæ.*

We doubt if any reader ever enjoyed thoroughly the fine poem entitled "France," till the whole had been explained to him. The argument is this: An orphan girl is brought up by an uncle whose two daughters are envious of their cousin's beauty and accomplishments; their jealousy reaches such a pitch that it prompts them to urge the betrothed knight of one of them to accuse the beautiful orphan of unchastity. They select the morning of the day when the object of their hatred is to be crowned Queen of the May. It must be borne in mind that the fair victim is relating to a female friend of hers this dreadful passage in her youthful days. We may as well put our readers in possession of all the story at once. The knight accuses her, as prompted by the cousins; another knight, who secretly loved the beautiful orphan, gives him the lie; they fight; the traducer is killed—confessing, ere he dies, the plot, and the rescued beauty rewards the noble champion with her hand. When she is relating this, she has been a happy wife and mother for some years. The scene is laid in France. The poem commences in the following startling manner:—

"Christ God, who savest man, save most
Of men, Count Gismond, who saved me!
Count Gauthier, where he chose his post
Chose time, and place and company

To suit it; where he struck at length
My honour's face, 'twas with full length."

The fair orphan believes all love her; especially her two cousins:

"They too so beauteous, each a queen,
By virtue of her brow and breast."

The following stanza is a curious instance of Mr. Browning's wilfulness on the score of versification.

"But no; they let me laugh and sing
My birth-day song quite through; ADJUST
The last rose in my garland; FLING
A last look in the mirror; TRUST
My arm to each, an arm of theirs,
And so descend the castle stairs.

And they could let me take my state
And foolish throne, amid applause
Of all come there to celebrate
My queen's day; oh! I think the cause
Of much was; they forgot no crowd
Makes up for parents in their shroud.

See Gismond's at the gate: in talk
With his two boys: I can proceed!—
Well, at that moment, who should stalk
Forth calmly (to my face indeed)
But Gauthier, and he thundered 'stay,'
And all did stay! 'no crowns I say.'

Bring torches! wind the penance sheet
About her! Let her shun the chaste,
Or lay herself before their feet!
Shall she, whose body I embraced
A night long, queen it in the day!
For honour's sake, no crowns, I say.

I? what I answered? As I live
I never thought there was such thing
As answer possible to give,
What says the body when they spring
Some monstrous torture engine's whole
Strength on it? no more says the Soul!

Till out strode Gismond! then I knew
That I was saved! I never met
His face before, but at first view
I felt quite sure that God had set
Himself to Satan:—who could spend
A minute's mistrust on the end!"

The next stanza is one of the finest in the whole range of poetical painting.

"He strode to Gauthier: in his throat
Gave him the lie, then struck his mouth
With one back handed blow that wrote
In blood men's verdict there.—North, South,
East, West, I looked, the lie was dead
And damned—and truth stood up instead.

This glads me most—that I enjoyed
The heart of the joy; nor my content
In watching Gismond was alloyed
By any doubt of the event,
God took that on him—me he bid
Watch Gismond for my part. I DID.

Did I not watch him, while he let
His armourer just brace his greaves,
Rivet his hauberk, on the fret
The while, his feet, my memory leaves
No least stamp out, nor how anon
He pulled his ringing gauntlets on."

Mark how graphically the whole scene is brought before the reader. The two last lines sound just like the gauntlets themselves. No puling fine words; bold, nervous Saxon!—every word a piece of the picture.

"And e'en before the trumpet's sound
Was finished; there lay prone the knight,
Prone as his lie upon the ground:
My knight flew at him! used no sleight
Of the sword, but open breasted drove
Cleaving till out the truth he clove.

Which done he dragged him to my feet
And said 'Here die, but end thy breath
In full confession, lest thou fleet
From my first to God's second death!
Say, hast thou lied?' and 'I have lied
To God and her'—he said and died!

Then Gismond, kneeling to me asked
What safe my heart holds—though no word
Could I repeat now—tho' I tasked
My powers for ever—to a third
Dear even as you are: pass the rest,
Until I sunk upon his breast.

Over my head his arm he flung
Against the world; and scarce I felt
His sword, that dripped by me and swung,
A little shifted in its belt,
For he began to say the while
How South our home lay many a mile.

So 'mid the shouting multitude
We two walked forth, to never more
Return."

As a proof that Mr. Browning is deficient in that necessary constructive faculty which enables a dramatist to preserve the identity of his character, we may adduce as an instance the following part of Pippa's soliloquy. Pippa is a poor factory girl.

"Day!
Faster and more fast
O'er night's brim day boils at last,
Boils pure gold o'er the cloud capp'd brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay—
For not a froth flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray,
Of eastern cloud an hour away,
But forth one wavelet, then another curled,
Till the whole sunrise not to be suppressed
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the world."

Certainly Pippa is no other than Robert Browning in petticoats. Her morning and evening hymn is also a singular piece of devotional metaphysics:

"All service ranks the same with God,
If now as formerly he trod
Paradise, God's presence fills
Our earth, and each but as God wills
Can work—God's puppets best and worst,
Are we: there is no last nor first.

Say not a small event!—why small?
Costs it more pain this thing ye call
A great event shall come to pass
Than that? Untwine me, from the mass
Of deeds that make up life, one deed
Power shall fall short in or exceed!"

Pippa is certainly a very singular young lady,

and must be half sister to the lady described in Don Juan.

"Her favourite science was the metaphysical."

We have heard Mr. Browning frequently reply in answer to some of the critics who have accused him of an impracticable style, that he is as clear as any poet can be, who uses a new set of symbols; he declares that he is weary of phœnixes, roses, lilies, and the old stock in trade, which with the aid of ten fingers, has enabled mere versifiers to inundate the reading world with a deluge of "verse and water."

For instance, if Mr. Browning wishes to make a simile, and illustrate redness, he will not take the rose, but select some out-of-the-way-flower equally red, but of whose name not one in a thousand has ever heard: this, added to a style so condensed and clipt of all aids as to be sometimes unintelligible, has sealed Mr. Browning's works to the many. It is indeed the shorthand of poetry. It requires the author or some duly qualified admirer to interpret it to the world. We feel sure it is a great defect in an author when he requires "an explanator." He should be able to converse with his reader without intermediate aid. He should sit face to face, flashing bright thoughts into the gazer's mind.

We must not conclude our notice of Robert Browning without alluding to the exquisite spiritual grace and purity he has thrown around his female characters. We confess that they all seem to belong to one family, although brought up at different colleges, (for all his women are great metaphysicians,) still there is a purity and unselfishness about them which makes one wish that the world were peopled only with such divine

creatures as Shakspere and Browning's heroines are.

Lamb once told a friend that he would any day marry, old as he was, if he could only "find one of Shakspere's women." The poet, logician, and metaphysician would, in like manner, look out for some Sordellian creature such as Mildred, Pippa, Anael, or one of her sister heroines. The purity of a poet's heart may frequently be tested by his ideal seraglio. We have only to refer to Byron, Shakspere and Browning, for strong cases in support of our opinion.

It would be unjust to Mr. Browning to give any specimen from his larger works; they should be read by themselves; they do not abound in fine isolated passages, like most poets. All their beauties are so interwoven as to render extracts, to inform the reader, well nigh as absurd as to bring a brick as a specimen of the architecture of any particular building.

In November, 1846, Mr. Browning married Miss Barrett, the celebrated poetess, and shortly after went to Florence, where he now remains. The conjugal union of the first poetess of the age with the author of Paracelsus is certainly an unparalleled event in the history of matrimony, and a singular illustration of Shakspere's sonnet,

> "Let me not to the marriage of pure minds
> Admit impediments."

We are happy to add, that the first social production of these highly favoured children of Apollo is a fine boy, born in the sunny south. In person Browning is small, but well made and active; very dark, with a Jewish cast of countenance; has large black whiskers, which he cultivates under his chin; his eyes are dark; complexion almost approaching to sallow. However obscure

in his writings, he is intelligible in his conversation; and his dislike to brusquerié often borders on affectation and punctiliousness unworthy so true a poet. His marriage with Miss Barrett was the result of a short courtship; their correspondence commenced in Greek, and doubtless in that language their love longings were expressed.

Mr. Browning is very susceptible of criticism, although pretending to a great contempt of it. He is a strong disbeliever in the genius of his contemporaries, and is as chary of his critical praise as Shakspere himself. The absurdity of some of his dedications is in striking contrast to this hesitation, as those to Talfourd, Barry Cornwall, &c., abundantly testify. This is a contradiction in his nature we cannot easily explain, and most probably proceeds from that false courtesy which is, perhaps, his solitary blemish; in other respects he is a gentleman and an undoubted poet. His political principles are republican. He is in his thirty-ninth year.

HENRY TAYLOR.

THE author of "Philip Van Arteveldt" may truly be considered the poet of elaboration; abounding in fine passages, artificially worked up to a deceptive appearance of poetry, they remind one of false metals, or to speak more poetically, of that beautiful waxen fruit which might almost deceive a gardener. The body is there, but the soul is wanting. It is calm, classical, and frigid. Mr. Taylor is sufficiently sagacious to know that he has no imagination, and he, therefore, to cover the defect, constantly cries that a redundancy of imagination is fatal to the great poet, as though Apollo could not bridle his own Pegasus. The palpable inference which he wishes drawn is, that he, Mr. Taylor, has a great deal of poetical fire and genius, but he is philosopher enough to subdue it to the mastery of reason.

Mr. Taylor, in his preface to Philip Van Arteveldt, enters into a minute account of his philosophy of poetry; he there largely insists upon a balance of faculties, and regards good sense as "the essential constituent of genius." This is certainly a startling doctrine! to deny to Marlow, Shelley, and a host of great imaginations, the poetic faculty, because they had not good sense; "*good*"

is a very vague word, it has numerous significations; in the present instance it seems to be used to mean "common sense." That a poet with "common" or "good sense" is more perfect than a poet *without* that excellent quality of the mind, is undoubtedly true, for the more faculties a man has, the greater he must necessarily be; but we deny that it is essential to the poetic mind. All experience contradicts it, and let us tell Mr. Taylor very pointedly, if he means "good taste and judgment," *so far as poetical composition* is concerned, we agree with him; but if he uses the word "good sense" in the common acceptation of the word, he is stating an absurdity, or else a falsehood, to cover his own want of genius. Mr. Taylor has no doubt "good sense," or "common sense," but he has no poetical genius, none of that "divine afflatus" which carries a man not out of logic and cold reason, but *above* it. Mr. Taylor will never persuade the world to believe that Shelley is no poet, because his imagination was too vivid; and that Keats and Coleridge were deficient in a great essential of the human heart, because they were not sufficiently alive to the wonderful importance of "good sense," which Mr. Taylor declares to be "the most essential constituent of genius." Mr. Horne observes, "There must be something peculiarly undramatic in the mind that could conceive and execute a dramatic subject in so lengthy a form as to comprise the same number of lines as six plays, each of the ordinary length." Mr. Horne has not, however, stated the whole question; he has let the "undramatic author of Philip Van Arteveldt" off too easily; he should remember that it is not the number of lines that makes a drama undramatic, it is the number of *scenes!* One poet may write his dialogues too fully, but the action

will be there; the ballet skeleton will remain, though possibly clothed somewhat too heavily with robes; while another may with some self-important tragedian, consider the words as the necessary evil of a tragedy, infinitely preferring their own spasms, convulsions, glaring eyes, distorted scowls, drawn down mouths, and volutions; marchings about the stage, to the noblest outbursts of passionate defiance or poetical musings; they no doubt would prefer not to share the glory with the author of "As You Like It," but, instead of speaking "All the world's a stage," would go through the seven ages so beautifully described by the poet, and turn it into a pantomimic imitation of the progress of human life, from the infant "muling and puking" in its mother's arms, to the last state of all—

"Sans eyes, sans ears, sans nose, sans—everything."

In order to get a complete idea of Mr. Taylor's "good sense," as developed in the composition of a tragedy, let the reader move his eyes over the actions of the almost innumerable scenes of "Philip Van Arteveldt" or "Edwin the Fair." Mr. Taylor very amusingly adds, "My critical views have rather resulted from composition than directed it." Exactly so, he has made a dull poem instead of a play, and seeing what he has done, he says: "I like a dull poem; I mean to write a dull poem! The highest effort of genius is a dull poem." The only parallel case we know to this, is a story a celebrated novelist tells. Going into a coffee-house in the city one day, he ordered a steak; when it came he found it so abominably tough he could scarcely get his knife into it. Calling the waiter to him, he remonstrated with him: "Don't like a tough steak, sir," said the astonished attendant, "I am surprised at that, sir; most people prefer a tough steak; I DO!"

Mr. Taylor will not be more successful than the advocate of uneateable steaks, if he hopes to argue the public into a belief that a dull and unreadable poem is the "essential" effort of human genius. But while we deny to this author the dramatic crown, we are perfectly alive to his excellence as a writer where "good sense" is paramount, and therefore suggest that perhaps Mr. Taylor meant to say "that good sense is a constituent part of *his* poetical genius;" in this light we echo his diction. Even in the best of Mr. Taylor's verses there is a laborious effort:

"The line too labours, and the verse moves slow."

Whatever may be the subject described, the same heavy, monotonous tread is heard; he dances a minuet and a jig in the same funeral measure. His words and thoughts are always standing harnessed, ready for their usual rate of four miles an hour. He rides a slow tame Pegasus—rider and horse jog on at the same pace, sometimes both fast asleep, now and then shaking themselves half awake, but vain is it to expect a breathless gallop. The idea never enters the head of either of them. "The lines written in remembrance of the Hon. Charles Edward Ernest Villiers," are a favourable specimen of his style; they are written in rhyme, a measure he seldom uses; he prefers to walk steadily on the road of blank verse; it better suits the common-place peculiarity of his mind—

"His life was private; safely led, aloof
From the loud world—which yet he understood
Largely and wisely, as no worldling could.
For he by privilege of his nature proof
Against false glitter, from beneath the roof
Of privacy, as from a cave, surveyed
With steadfast eye its flickering light and shade,
And gently judged for evil and for good.

But whilst he mixed not for his own behoof
In public strife, his spirit glowed with zeal,
Not shorn of action, for the public weal;
For truth and justice as its warp and woof,
For fredom as its signature and seal.
His life thus sacred from the world, discharged
From vain ambition and inordinate care,
In virtue exercised, by reverence rare
Lifted, and by humility enlarged,
Became a temple and a place of prayer.
In latter years he walked not singly there;
For one was with him, ready at all hours
His griefs, his joys, his inmost thoughts to share,
Who buoyantly his burdens helped to bear,
And decked his altars daily with fresh flowers.

But further may we pass not; for the ground
Is holier than the Muse herself may tread;
Nor would I it should echo to a sound
Less solemn than the service for the dead.
Mine is inferior matter,—my own loss—
The loss of dear delights for ever fled,
Of reason's converse by affection fed,
Of wisdom, counsel, solace, that across
Life's dreariest tracts a tender radiance shed.
Friend of my youth! though younger yet my guide,
How much by thy unerring insight clear
I shaped my way of life for many a year,
What thoughtful friendship on thy death-bed died!
Friend of my youth, whilst thou wast by my side
Autumnal days still breathed a vernal breath;
How like a charm thy life to me supplied
All waste and injury of time and tide,
How like a disenchantment was thy death!"

The work by which Mr. Taylor is best known is his Drama of "Philip Van Arteveldt." This may be called the crowning triumph of level writing; it has but one single burst of dramatic passion. It is the reply of Elena, the mistress of Van Arteveldt, who when discovered embracing the dead body of her hero lover is reproached by some as being his paramour—a French knight, with the characteristic generosity and gallantry of his nation volunteers her defence. She interrupts him with the passionate exclamation,

"Thou liest—I was his paramour!"

Mr. Taylor brings down everything to the same cold temperature of his own "reason!" It is in these words that he makes his hero ask a fiery souled Italian woman if she can love him?

"Tell me, sweet Elena,
May I not hope, or rather can I hope,
That for such brief and bounded space of time
As are my days on earth, you'll yield yourself,
To love me living, and to mourn me dead!"

And mark how successful this "cold water" dramatist is in quenching the small degree of interest we should have otherwise felt in his hero! He reverts thus to some hours passed in the society of Elena, the woman he loves, or affects to love.

(After a pause.)

"ARTEVELDT.—The night is far advanced upon the morrow,
And but for that conglomerated mass
Of cloud with ragged edges, like a mound,
Or black pine forest on a mountain's top,
Wherein the light lies ambushed, dawn were near—
Yes, I have wasted half a summer's night.
WAS IT WELL SPENT. SUCCESSFULLY IT WAS.

How little flattering is a woman's love,
Worth to the heart, come how it may, a world.
Worth to men's measures of their own deserts,
If weighed in wisdom's balance merely nothing."

The cold-blooded, arrogant coxcombry of Philip Van Arteveldt is perfectly ludicrous! Wonderful dramatist, Henry Taylor, truly thou art the tailor of poets, not the ninth part of one!

His other dramatic poems resemble their elder brother, the Flemish hero, and confirm his previous failure unmistakeably.

We are inclined to think that "The Eve of the Conquest," is the best of Mr. Taylor's poems. There is less *to* offend in it, if there is not more to admire, and truly that is a negative attraction. The fall of Harold is a noble theme, and might well have inspired a true poet to a great exertion,

have brought the *manner* as well as the *matter*; but it becomes a heavy sluggish affair beneath the levelling process of the author's "reason." He here indeed makes it evident to all that the constituent part of his genius is "common sense." Alas! that his good sense was not sufficient to save him from the attempt altogether! The incident of the poem is well chosen; in a more stirring writer's hand it would have been eminently touching and graphic.

We are introduced to Harold "the eve before the fight of Hastings"—in his tent. His troubled mind courts repose in vain! exemplifying Young's description.

> "Tired nature's sweet restorer---balmy sleep!
> He like the world his ready visit pays
> Where fortune smiles---the wretched he forsakes.
> Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
> And lights on lids unsullied with a tear!"

He sends for his daughter, who is found kneeling before an altar in her convent! He then makes her the depository of his confession and his vindication. Mr. Taylor's cold unimpassioned style in this scene now and then comes in light admirable effect, as it harmonizes with the solemn predestination under which the Saxon monarch labours; but we miss altogether those escapes of suppressed passion, and those touches of melancholy regrets which must of a necessity have revealed themselves. Mr. Taylor freezes his characters with the predominance of his favourite "good sense." He forgets that if his heroes had really possessed the good sense he is so constantly claiming for them, they never could have got into the scrapes which constitutes the tragedy of their position.

> "'A woman child she was: but womanhood
> By gradual afflux on her childhood gain'd,

And like a tide that up a river steals
And reaches to a lilied bank, began
To lift up life beneath her. As a child
She still was simple—rather shall I say
More simple than a child, as being lost
In deeper admirations and desires.
The roseate richness of her childish bloom
Remain'd, but by inconstancies and change
Referr'd itself to sources passion-swept.
Such had I seen her as I pass'd the gates
Of Rouen, in procession, on the day
I landed, when a shower of roses fell
Upon my head, and looking up I saw
The fingers which had scattered them half spread
Forgetful, and the forward-leaning face
Intently fixed and glowing, but methought
More serious than it ought to be, so young
And midmost in a show.'"

It is thus that the king concludes his narrative—

"'Here we stand opposed;
And here to-morrow's sun, which even now,
If mine eyes err not, wakes the eastern sky,
Shall see the mortal issue. Should I fall,
Be thou my witness that I nothing doubt
The justness of my doom; but add thou this,
The justness lies betwixt my God and me;
'Twixt me and William.'"

"Then uprose the King;
His daughter's hands half startled from his knee
Dropt loosely, but her eye caught fire from his.
He snatched his truncheon, and the hollow earth
Smote strongly, that it throbbed: he cried aloud--
''Twixt me and William, say that never doom,
Save that which sunders sheep from goats, and parts
'Twixt Heaven and Hell, can righteously pronounce.
---He sate again, and with an eye still stern,
But temperate and untroubled, he pursued:
''Twixt me and England, should some senseless swain
Ask of my title---say I WEAR THE CROWN,
BECAUSE IT FITS MY HEAD.'"

The king's head differed hugely from that of the monk who declared he was unlucky in his hopes of promotion, that he verily believed if *it rained* mitres, not one would be found to *fit him.*

The closing lines of the poem are very fine and solemn. It seems a piece of sculpture.

"In Waltham Abbey on St. Agnes' Eve
A stately corpse lay stretched upon a bier.
The arms were crossed upon the breast; the face,
Uncover'd, by the taper's trembling light
Show'd dimly the pale majesty severe
Of him whom death, and not the Norman Duke,
Had conquer'd; him the noblest and the last
Of Saxon Kings; save one the noblest he;
The last of all. Hard by the bier were seen
Two women, weeping side by side, whose arms
Clasped each the other. Edith was the one.
With Edith, Adeliza wept and pray'd."

Thus ends "the Eve of the Conquest."

Mr. Taylor's narrative poetry naturally suggests a reference to his contemporaries who have written in that form. We will take his verse, therefore, at his own valuation; and for the sake of testing his dogma, we will assume that the constituent essence of his own poetry is "good sense." In Byron, every tongue proclaims it is passion, fierce, resistless, human passion; bearing us like a torrent through the breathless space of his narrative. With Scott it is stirring incident, romantic costume, and the reanimated chivalry of the stormy past. Southey clothes his song in the marvellous, the wild, and the elevated! Leigh Hunt is always vivacious, *sometimes picturesque*, and not unfrequently *frivolous;* now and then indulging in a pretty image or conceit, when he ought to be voiceless with emotion. Mr. Landor arrays his characters in the classical dress of the antique Greek, and we are repelled from all sympathy by their stateliness and their heroism. Coleridge spirits us away with him to a supernatural region, where the heart is not roused, but where it seems to beat under some wizard spell. Wordsworth makes mountains, waterfalls, and lakes, represent certain characters, and endeavours to make his voice sound from them as though speaking under certain influences, and in divers words; but, like

a poor ventriloquist, he has but one voice, and the monotony of his intonation betrays him. In his drama of "The Borderers" the *dramatis personæ* are a family of Wordsworths, all differing somewhat in moral or mental calibre, though their dialogue is a curious combat of weaker and stronger Wordswortheanisms. The catastrophe is brought about by the strongest one in the family coming forward, and in a dictatorial manner uttering a few philosophical sentences, which settles the question, silences the others, and ends the play.

Keats, in his narrative, with its haunting sense of beauty, its wondrous superfluities of description, and its remoteness from human interest; Shelley, also, with his dazzling metaphysical distinctions; and Tennyson, with his refined psychologies, possess too little of the nature of men and women to come altogether within the range of humanity; while Crabbe, with his hard, dry paintings, as though he used charcoal instead of colours, converts the world into one huge pauper planet, where there are but two classes, the jailor and the thief—the tyrant and the slave—the millionaire and the destitute—the Pharisee and Lazarus.

In which of these, we would ask Mr. Taylor, is common sense the constituent essence of genius?

We shall close our mental portrait of Mr. Taylor with two extracts from a poem of his, entitled "Ernesto:"

> "Thoughtfully by the side Ernesto sate
> Of her whom in his earlier youth, with heart
> Then first exulting in a dangerous hope,
> Dearer for danger, he had rashly loved.
> That was a season when the untravelled spirit,
> Not way-worn nor way-wearied, nor with soil,
> Nor stain upon it, lions in its path
> Saw none—or, seeing, with triumphant trust
> In its resources and its powers, defied—
> Perverse to find provocatives in warnings

And in disturbance taking deep delight.
By sea or land he then saw rise the storm
With a gay courage, and through broken lights,
Tempestuously exalted, for awhile
His heart ran mountains high, or to the roar
Of shattered forests sang superior songs
With kindling, and what might have seemed to some,
Auspicious energy; by land and sea
He was way-foundered; trampled in the dust
His many-coloured hopes; his lading rich
Of precious pictures, bright imaginations,
In absolute shipwreck to the winds and waves
Suddenly rendered."

It is very apparent that the writer is a poet whose deficiency of imagination renders his journey a toilsome march, and not a glorious flight. He treads the earth heavily, not flies through the air, or marches with the stately force and untiring alacrity of the athlete or the belted knight.

The conclusion of Ernesto is one of the few attempts which our author makes to be tender—

"Once again
He sate beside her; for the last time now,
And scarcely was she altered; for the hours
Had led her lightly down the vale of life,
Dancing, and scattering roses; and her face
Seemed a perpetual daybreak; and the woods
Where'er she rambled, echoed through their aisles
The music of a laugh so softly gay
That Spring with all her songsters and her songs
Knew nothing like it. But how changed was he!
Care and disease and ardours unexpressed,
And labours unremitted, and much grief,
Had written their death-warrant on his brow.
Of this she saw not all; she saw but little;
That which she could not choose but see she saw;
And o'er her sunlit dimples and her smiles
A shadow fell; a transitory shade;
And when the phantom of a hand she clasped
At parting, scarce responded to her touch,
She sighed; but hoped the best.
When winter came
She sighed again; for with it came the word
That trouble and love had found their place of rest,
And slept beneath Madeira's orange groves."

We bid good-bye to the author of Philip Van Arteveldt, by assuring him that one half the pains he has bestowed upon his dramas would have given to the world a translation of Virgil little inferior to the original. We are not aware of any poet who possesses so many first-rate qualities for a translator.

CHARLES DICKENS.

THIS popular author was born in February, 1812, at Rochester; and passed his early years beneath the shadow of that fine old well-preserved ruin, the castle, wandering on the banks of the Medway, or listening (we strongly suspect, outside) to the chaunting of the cathedral service.

His father, who was a clerk in the Chatham dock-yard, retiring on a pension some years after, came to London, where his celebrated son finished the little education he ever received; he was then articled to a solicitor in Bedford Row, where he formed the acquaintance of a reporter engaged in the "Morning Chronicle." He soon grew disgusted with the drudgery of the desk's "dead wood," and exchanged it for the more exciting life of the public press. He, therefore, became one of the staff of the leading liberal journals, the paper already named.

Here his sagacity, quickness, and, above all, his skill in seizing on the prominent features of a subject, made him one of their most useful attaches, and he was generally despatched to attend the most important political meetings.

In the "Chronicle" appeared those clever sketches which first made the name of "Boz"

known to the world; this *soubriquet* he had given to his youngest brother, Augustus, whom he called Moses, which, corrupted into Boses, finally became "Boz," and, as a remembrance of fondness for the child, he resolved to adopt it as his literary name. These sketches are too well known to need any distinct criticism; the surprising minuteness of their details, the ingenuity with which he selects peculiarities, and by humorous exaggeration carries them into the world of caricature, made him at once the favourite author of those who read only to be amused. It may be doubted whether these sketches will not be his chiefest passport to fame in future times; unable to construct a symmetrical plot, his larger works grow tedious; compelled by the very nature of his plan to publish his chapters separately, he has confined the artistic unity of his novel to the ephemeral necessity of producing something very piquant for every number; the great effects are, therefore, frittered away in the progress of the work, and the crowning interest of the climax is divided among twenty numbers, published at stated intervals: this unfortunate dilution of an originally strong article is avoided in his first production, and the "sketches" will probably always remain as a record of the life of the lower classes of England.

His next work was a smart brochure, entitled "Sunday under three heads," to which he placed the assumed name of "Timothy Sparks." Here he lays bare, with an unsparing hand, the hollowness of that pharasaical sect which endeavoured, by legislation, to enforce the gloom of a puritanic fast on the christian's cheerful Sabbath. This work, which is not generally known, had prefixed to it an ironical dedication to the Bishop of London, who had rendered himself busy in the matter.

There are many admirable sketches in this little volume, full of point and bitter truth: such as the description of a "fashionable congregation of miserable sinners," where the levity, foppery, and millinerism, of the whole assembly of "prayerful persons," are depicted with much power and sarcasm. A picture in this sketch, of a father fetching home the Sunday dinner from the baker's, with all his little ones hailing him as he comes up the street, within sight of his own door, is one of those graphic touches of low life which places Mr. Dickens far above all competition in that inferior class of writing. We have a great objection to this eternal painting with *mud*, instead of *colours;* introduced into a story as a part of the whole, it is an agreeable change, and gives greater effect to the pathetic and loftier portions, as the scenes where Dogberry and Verges figure, in Shakspere's drama of "Much ado about Nothing;" but when this is the entire staple, the work becomes degraded to a far lower style of art, and is not the representation of life, but only of a particular phase of it; a Hamlet of gravediggers, or a Henry the Fifth, full of Nyms and Bardolphs, would be an equivalent in the world of letters to most, if not all, of Mr. Dickens' works.

The writing of "Pickwick" was one of those accidents which now and then happens in a "literary life;" it is, however, an absurdity to believe that had not this special opportunity occurred, the author of "Oliver Twist" would have waited for *circumstance* to make him a popular writer; his genius would have created the circumstance had it not been offered to him without the trouble of waiting. It is, however, strictly true that Mr. Dickens was at first engaged merely to illustrate the design of Mr. Seymour, the artist, who had formed the idea of ridiculing, in a series

of engravings, that class of pompous dullnesses which strut about society in the peacock feathers of a few facts learned by rote, and which they consider and call learning; we are sometimes inclined to agree with Lamb, who, when asked by a member of the Royal Society to define learning, boldly answered, and maintained for a considerable time, that it was the systematic arrangement of ignorance—a grammar which all solemn fools quoted. Seymour thought that a club of Cockneys, travelling about geologizing, botanizing, gormandizing, and employed on other equally scientific pursuits, would be the most popular vehicle for satirizing that class of "emphatic nothings" which delight in the appendage to their name of F. R. S., A. S. S. or any other mysterious signs which they think have the magic power of bestowing learning or distinction. The melancholy termination of the caricaturist's career, soon, however, gave to Mr. Dickens the paramount voice in this joint work.

The suicide of Mr. Seymour was rendered doubly distressing to him, by the fact of his having dined with the novelist the very day in which he perpetrated this terrible deed of despair.

He had left Mr. Dickens' house after a merry evening, when he had pointed out to Mr. Seymour two passages in the new number which he wished illustrated. Next morning Mr. Dickens was surprised at receiving a very early visit from one of his publishers, Mr. Chapman. His manner was so agitated that the author's first impression was that he had come to announce a suspension of payment. "Good heavens," cried Mr. Dickens, "what is the matter?" Mr. Chapman's reply horrified him—"Poor Seymour has destroyed himself!" They both started for the ill fated artist's

house, where they found the melancholy report was too true: there lay the hapless son of genius dead, and the cause of the rash act was perfectly apparent to them, for looking round his studio they saw many lithographic stones with the designs scarcely commenced, but which the sanguine sketcher had represented to his publishers as being nearly completed.

Mr. Dickens' solution of the mystery is, that on his return home from dining with him, the contemplation of the heavy arrears of works he had to do, operating on a quick nervous temperament, somewhat excited by wine, produced a temporary delirium, under which influence he destroyed himself. Every reader of Pickwick knows that Mr. Browne was engaged to complete the illustrations, and he has done it with such spirit and felicity that we venture to assert very much of Mr. Dickens' popularity is owing to the tangible shape in which the artist places the author: in a certain sense his rapid and graphic pencil lends to airy nothing a local habitation and a name.

Mr. Dickens' next work was Nicholas Nickelby, and during this he edited "Bentley's Magazine." Here he had a disagreement with the proprietor and retired from its management. He, however, finished, according to his agreement, the tale of Oliver Twist, which first appeared in this periodical. The dispute originated in the remuneration he received as editor. Mr. Bentley complains that he nearly doubled in less than a year the annual sum he had engaged to pay Dickens, and upon his hesitating to comply with another increased demand, he threw up the contract altogether.

The novel of Oliver Twist is certainly the finest piece of construction Mr. Dickens has ever given to the world, and notwithstanding the revolting

picture it presents of part of human nature, there is little doubt but that its total effect has been beneficial.

We have been told by English magistrates that they had no idea of the infamous system then flourishing, till Dickens attacked it, pen in hand: —and several have declared that the recollection of Oliver Twist has compelled them to give a more patient and indulgent hearing to the unfortunate orphan, who, tossed upon the world, falls into the hands of evil men, and becomes their dupe and their victim. In this work he also exposed the ignorance, brutality, and conceit, of some of the paid officials of London, who are little better than an inferior kind of Jeffries, men who bow to the titled or wealthy criminal, and who exhaust their indignation and legal vengeance on the weak and the destitute offender. The character of Mr. Fang in this novel was well known to be intended for Mr. L——, the notorious Bow-street magistrate; and so conscious was he of the resemblance that it was currently rumoured at the time that he wrote to "Boz," inquiring if he intended to personify him in this picture.

Report adds, that Mr. Dickens' reply stated, that Mr. L—— must be the best judge how far he felt the cap fitted him. On a later occasion Mr. Dickens told us that he intended to hold up to the scorn and detestation of his fellow citizens the conduct of Alderman Sir P—— L——, who, in the arrogance and stupidity of undeserved power, declared he would "put suicide down"—as though the terrors of the law would have any effect on the phrensied spirit, who fearing not his God, rushed unannounced into his presence. When the "Chimes" appeared, the Alderman Cute, in the book so admirably done, every one acknowledged,

by acclamation, the likeness to L——. The astonished alderman roared out in the indignation and vexation of the moment, "I wonder Mr. Dickens is so ungrateful to attack me: I have always been civil to him, and didn't I, at the last Lord Mayor's ball, lead Mrs. Dickens down to dinner?"—Unhappy Cute! did not the gormandizing noodle see that when the wife of a man of genius condescends to honour such a man by accepting a personal attention, it is she who confers the favour, and renders him the obliged party!

The passage in the Chimes, in which the indignant author ridicules and denounces the blasphemous folly of putting human madness down, is powerfully written, and a good specimen of Mr. Dickens' best style. No man can write simpler and stronger English than the celebrated Boz, and this renders us the more annoyed at those manifold vulgarities and slipshod errors of style, which unhappily have of late years so disfigured his productions.

While we are on this point we may as well allude to the character of Dombey, the hero of Mr. Dickens' last completed monthly novel; this is well known as intended to represent a shipowner and merchant "not a hundred miles" from Leadenhall-street, in whose office a relative of the novelist is clerk.

The "little wooden midshipman" of Solomon Gills with his sextant in his untiring hand, with his one foot advanced, and his coat tails flying back, may be seen any day two or three doors down Leadenhall-street, and immediately facing the office of the self-satisfied and arrogant merchant who sat for the portrait of Dombey. When the first number appeared the likeness was readily recognized by this wealthy merchant's relatives,

and he was christened Dombey on the spot; he himself was not averse to the "high distinction of being the hero of a work by so popular a writer as Mr. Dickens:" we ourselves have seen him blandly smile as the allusion has been made in his hearing; but as the work proceeded, and the heartless mercenary character of a London merchant was unfolded, his face grew tragically dismal at the slightest reference to what had formerly fed his pride! Alas! poor little human nature, how dreadful to thy ear is the truth when presented by another!—well did the Scotch exciseman show his far-sighted knowledge of the heart of man when he wrote

> "Oh, would some gentle power gie us
> To see ourselves as others see us!"

But perhaps in both cases it would only wound self-love, and not kill the slumbering devil! We cannot help in this place remarking, that when Mr. Dickens commenced "Dombey" he stated to several that, in his new work, it was his intention to expose the arrogance and pride of every English merchant, with an eye to the correction of those notorious vices. It is evident to all that he either lacked the courage or the power to achieve so great and praiseworthy an object. It has resulted in the miserable failure of grossly libelling and caricaturing one person, and thus narrowing a great public object to a private end. Had the castigator of the Yorkshire schoolmasters, the paid magistrates, the impostor architects, the dandy milliners, and the grinding usurers, possessed the nerve to teach the arrogant merchants of London that their clerks and dependents were worthy better treatment than they receive at the hands of their Egyptian taskmasters, Mr. Dickens might have secured a fame which is fast fading away under his new dispensation of

writing; but this narrowing of an originally fine and broad-viewed mind will always happen when an author deserts the manly code of his early years, and transforms himself into the companion of fashionable dandies, literary lords, and heartless millionaires.

It is unnecessary to follow, seriatim, the progress of so well known a writer. His works are familiar to all, and we shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a few critical remarks on his remaining productions.

Few writers of modern times equal Mr. Dickens in the fidelity with which he selects some family in low life, and paints their portraits; they are complete Dutch pictures; even the tone of voice, and the look are given, and the Crummels, the Kenwigs, and the Squeers, are daguerreotyped for posterity with an unerring accuracy. When, however, he ventures upon the loftier and more complex phases of human nature, he miserably fails, and evidences at once that want of universality which renders him, perhaps, one of the most one-sided delineators of the human family that ever enjoyed a popular reputation. His want of success in this department was once illustrated by a sarcastic writer, as reminding him of the story of the scavenger.

An old master in that, the dirtiest of sciences, was asked one day his opinion of a new and popular apprentice he had. Scratching his head, and looking very profound, he uttered in an oracular tone of voice, "In a straightfor'ard piece of business, such as sweeping a crossing, he was undeniably great, but when he came to a little dainty bit, a loftier kind of fancy work, such as tittivating round a post, he showed a sad *want of genius;*" so with Dickens in low characters; he is wonderfully true,

graphic and amusing; but when he comes to a little dainty piece of portraiture, such as a gentleman, or a young lady of birth, breeding, or fashion, or indeed of any heroic character, he shows a deficiency of power both in conception and execution which materially diminishes his chance with posterity.

His powers of description seem to stop short at Cockneys; his heroes are generally men-milliners, and his heroines lackadaisical and artificially virtuous nursery maids. He seems to be in an everlasting scuffle with schoolmasters and boarding-house keepers; and though these are perhaps two very disgusting specimens, we do not think they ought to form the Alpha and Omega of mankind; a writer whose staple is of this quality will soon exhaust the patience of the critics and lower the standard of his readers.

We notice, with much regret, that a tyrannical schoolmaster is a prominent character in his present work, "Copperfield;" surely we have had more than enough of Squeers, Blimbers, and Creakles. Mr. Dickens herein becomes the libeller. A survey of his works would lead to the infallible conclusion that all the instructors of youth were bad; we believe that so far as Mr. Dickens' own experience of the schoolmaster is concerned it is very limited; we do not mean this reproachfully to our distinguished countryman; a moment's reflection must convince every one that in proportion as art has done little for him, nature has done more; but we merely quote it as a singular instance of Mr. Dickens' being unable to get beyond his own experience; he can only describe; what he has seen he can tell; the retina of his wonderfully observant eye is perfect; his organ of language is full; the scene is brought before you, heightened

into piquancy by his powers of exaggeration; but here he stops. He has no imagination; he is, in a word, a daguerreotypist, not a great painter.

If this estimate be correct, it necessarily places the author of Pickwick in the second class of literature, and even here not as the first, so long as Fielding remains to contest the point. That he exceeds Smollett we feel assured, from a certain instinct more unerring than all the logical deduction in the world; but so long as breadth and boldness of sketching, force of expression, naturalness and brilliancy of colouring are regarded, the author of Tom Jones will always be considered the chief in this department of literature. With reference to the unfairness of Mr. Dickens to schoolmasters, we must be allowed to offer our own experience against his. Our school recollections are the pleasantest part of our existence, and we hear few names pronounced with more pleasure and gratitude than those of Thelwall, Alvey, Gaunt, and Rachham, the names of our schoolboy masters.

It is impossible to avoid noticing the strong family likeness existing between the writings of an American author and Mr. Dickens. When this was first pointed out to us, with true English partiality we, of course, unhesitatingly pronounced him to be an imitator of the author of Pickwick. We were, therefore, proportionably surprised when, on comparing dates, we found that the American, although a much younger man, was in the field before his brother Englishman. It would not be just to accuse Mr. Dickens of being an imitator of the transatlantic writer; but the coincidence is curious, and as such we invite the attention of our readers to the parallel passages. The style is somewhat different, to be sure; but with all our English prepossessions we are forced to give the

preference to the American; for it will be seen that the latter completes his picture in fewer strokes, is quite as graphic, without being so ultra a caricaturist, and has a bolder and more philosophical mind.

Alas! that I should write it! but our friends on the other side the water applaud the author of Pickwick to the echo, but leave their own countryman in comparative obscurity. America will always want the highest element of a great and enduring nation, so long as she condescends to steal the literature of England, rather than pay her own undoubted men of genius. With regard to these extracts, we have only to observe, that the humour of the American writer is infinitely more universal than that of the English one. There is nothing comic in the abstraction of a poor child's dinner by a waiter, who had physical force to take it if he felt so inclined, while we can conceive nothing more Shaksperian in its humour than the picture presented of a full grown evening party standing by while a gormandizing functionary devours before their eyes the great bulk of the delicacies provided for their evening's entertainment. The humour in the latter case is heightened by the consciousness that they have indirectly brought it on themselves by their obsequious deference to the voracious alderman. The picture is admirably drawn, and notwithstanding the laughter it must ever occasion to the reader, we defy any critic to put his pen upon a single line, and say it is exaggerated.

We offer them both to the critical judgment of any impartial critic, be he American or English.

"'There's half a pint of ale for you. Will you have it now?'

"I thanked him, and said 'Yes.' Upon which he poured it out of

a jug into a large tumbler, and held it up against the light, and made it look beautiful.

"'My eye!' said he. 'It seems a good deal, don't it?'

"'It does seem a good deal,' I answered, with a smile. For it was quite delightful for me to find him so pleasant. He was a twinkling-eyed, pimple-faced man, with his hair standing upright all over his head; and as he stood with one arm a-kimbo, holding up the glass to the light with the other hand, he looked quite friendly.

"'There was a gentleman here yesterday,' he said, 'a stout gentleman, by the name of Topsawyer, perhaps you may know him!'

"'No,' I said, 'I don't think—'

"'In breeches and gaiters, broad-brimmed hat, grey coat, speckled choaker,' said the waiter.

"'No,' I said bashfully, 'I haven't the pleasure—'

"'He came in here,' said the waiter, looking at the light through the tumbler, 'ordered a glass of this ale, *would* order it, I told him not, drank it, and fell dead. It was too old for him. It oughtn't to be drawn; that's the fact.'

"I was very much shocked to hear of this melancholy accident, and said I thought I had better have some water.

"'Why, you see,' said the waiter, still looking at the light through the tumbler, with one of his eyes shut up, 'our people don't like things being ordered and left. It offends 'em. But I'll drink it, if you like. I'm used to it, and use is everything. I don't think it will hurt me, if I throw my head back, and take it off quick. Shall I?'

"'I replied that he would much oblige me by drinking it, if he thought he could do it safely, but by no means otherwise. When he did throw his head back, and take it off quick, I had a horrible fear, I confess, of seeing him meet the fate of the lamented Mr. Topsawyer, and fall lifeless upon the carpet. But it didn't hurt him. On the contrary, I thought he seemed the fresher for it.

"'What have we got here?' he said, putting a fork into my dish. 'Not chops?'

"'Chops,' I said.

"'Lord bless my soul!' he exclaimed, 'I didn't know they were chops. Why, a chop's the very thing to take off the bad effects of that beer! Ain't it lucky?'

"So he took a chop by the bone in one hand, and a potatoe in the other, and ate away with a very good appetite, to my extreme satisfaction. He afterwards took another chop and another potatoe. When we had done, he brought me a pudding, and having set it before me, seemed to ruminate, and to become absent in his mind for some moments.

"'How's the pie?' he said, rousing himself.

"'It's a pudding,' I made answer.

"'Pudding? he exclaimed. 'Why, bless me, so it is! What!' looking at it nearer. 'You don't mean to say it's a batter pudding!'

"'Yes, it is, indeed.'

"'Why, a batter pudding,' he said, taking up a table spoon, 'is my favourite pudding! Ain't that lucky? Come on, little 'un, and let's see who'll get most.'

"The waiter certainly got most. He entreated me more than once to come in and win, but what with his table-spoon to my table-spoon, his dispatch to my dispatch, and his appetite to my appetite, I was left far behind at the first mouthful, and had no chance with him. I never saw any one enjoy a pudding so much, I think; and he laughed, when it was all gone, as if his enjoyment of it lasted still"—COPPERFIELD, CHAP. V.

"The walls of the parlour upon which he had entered were lined all round with well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, sitting as erect as corpses, and gazing into the empty space in the middle of the apartment, as if some curious meteorological phenomenon were going on there, in which they all had a special interest. At the announcement of Puffer Hopkins by a pale young gentleman at the door, the corpses waked up a little, some twittered spasmodically, a few moved uneasily in their chairs, and by the time Puffer had attained a seat in the corner, the company had again subsided into its condition of tomb-like repose.

"They were presently, however, again wakened, and with rather more success. by the entrance of the host, Mr. Fishblatt himself, bearing before him, firstly, a huge ruffle, which stood straight out from his bosom like a mainsail; and secondly, reposing in the shadow of the said ruffle, a black teaboard of proportionate dimensions, garnished with small jugs or tumblers of lemonade.

"Mr. Fishblatt walked very erect and majestically, and holding the waiter at arms' length, smiling pleasantly, as a gentleman always does when he's engaged in a business he knows himself to be altogether too good for, but which the crisis of affairs requires him to look after, presented it to the ladies all around, beginning at the left hand as he was bound to do, and skipping ever so many thirsty gentlemen who gloated on the small jugs; and then coming down toward the right hand, as he was likewise bound, he allowed the thirsty gentlemen to glean from the waiter the tumblers that remained. It is not to be supposed that Mr. Halsey Fishblatt all this time held his peace; on the contrary, the bearing of the waiter was not a tithe of his toils, for he kept strenuously urging, wherever he went, the propriety of taking a tumbler, the necessity of a draught of the lemonade to cool themselves, and particularly soliciting and entreating the ladies to make a paradise of his (Mr. Fishblatt's) parlours, by enjoying themselves with all their might and main.

"The lemonade had scarcely vanished, and the empty tumblers been gathered and borne out of sight, when it was announced, to the discomfiture and confusion of the company, that the celebrated and distinguished representative of the thirteenth ward in the city councils, Alderman Punchwind, by name, was in the house, having, as it was understood, done Mr. Fishblatt the honour to call in and partake of the agreeable hospitalities that were then and there going forward. Mr. Fishblatt, at the thought of so august a presence, recoiled a little, but recovering speedily, a deputation was immediately sent out, consisting of Puffer Hopkins and two young gentlemen who wore large

watch seals, and were rather ambitious of office and employment of this kind, to wait upon his eminence. In a few minutes a heavy tread was heard upon the stair, a commotion in the entry, and in stalked, in a broad-brimmed hat, a portly, capacious, and solid gentleman, of such dimensions as to resemble not a little a great school-globe, stepped out of its brass ring, and taking a walk of pleasure.

"In he marched, accompanied by his delegation, who clung close to his skirts to watch the impression his presence might make on the commonalty assembled.

"Puffer Hopkins had a glimmering reminiscence of a broad brimmed hat, very much like the alderman's escaping into a pantry at the end of the hall as he came in at the beginning of the evening, worn by Crump—could it be so? Crump, the meek secretary who had been so browbeaten in the shower by Mr. Blinker. His brows overshadowed by the huge hat, and his chin buried in a capacious collar, Alderman Punchwind paused for a minute at the door, glanced about slowly and with an air of solemn importance, and then, without removing his hat or uttering a word, stalked across the parlour, proceeded to fill a glass from the sideboard, where relays of refreshments in liberal quantities were arranged, and at this moment, deigning to turn around and recognise the company, he intimated by a look that he would drink all their good healths; which he did, very emphatically, absorbing his wine much as the Norwegian Maelstroom might, if it were a corporate alderman and fed at the public charge. Having disposed of the wine, the alderman next devoted his attention to the cake and other eatables, of which great batches disappeared from time to time; with a pause now and then, to allow him to vary the entertainment with a friendly return, just to show he had'nt forgotten it, to the decanter; which proceedings were watched with painful interest by Mr. Fishblatt's guests—who were horrified at the miraculous disappearance of the provisions for the party, and who looked upon the performance much as they would at the elephant at the managerie, feeding with a bale or two of hay, or the pagan anaconda at the museum, lunching on a pair of fowls and a live rabbit, without so much as a grace to the meal.

"As soon as Alderman Punchwind had concluded his corporate banquet by stripping the board of something more than two-thirds of its contents, solid and liquid, he wiped his lips, and marching steadily toward the centre of the rooms, there planted himself by the side of a column, and looked abroad upon the company, fixing his eye, now and then, with peculiar sternness, on some young lady who happened to be fairer than her neighbours.

"After he had enjoyed this recreation for some time, various members of the company were brought up by Mr. Fishblatt, and introduced (by consent) to the distinguished functionary, who kept his ground manfully, and received them all with an air of bland and gracious condescension; allowing each of them to take him by the hand, and to enjoy a few minutes' contemplation of his very classic and expressive features, and then pass off, making room for others."

PUFFER HOPKINS, CHAP. IX.

We do not mean, nor wish to detract from the well deserved reputation of Mr. Dickens—all we ask is fair play for every author, there is room enough in the world for all! We shall conclude this by observing, in order to prevent the possibility of any retort, that the American alderman's gobbling up the destined feast of the evening party, had five years the start of the waiter's feat in Copperfield.

To return to Mr. Dickens:—it would be a curious study to go carefully through the works of every popular author, and trace the predominance of that peculiarity or excellence which first brought him into notice: having contrasted Mr. Dickens with an American contemporary, we will compare him with an English author with whom he is on familiar terms.

A leading distinction between Dickens and Thackeray is the *coolness* of the latter compared with the partisanship of the other. Thackeray is a calm, observant, indifferent spectator, with a man of the world's aspect for the conventionals of life, and, in spite of his sarcasms, it is evident he entertains the opinion of Candide, that this is the best of all possible worlds. His paradise is a club life, with ragouts, parties, and the most *recherche* of wines! His bower of bliss is an opera box. He looks at mankind through a lorgnette as he lounges on his seat, or enjoys the distinction of being safely ensconced in the Athenæum, while he observes the mob pass by the window.

Dickens is a poet and a zealot—with more humour than wit, and is totally destitute of sarcasm. He can vituperate, not sneer! and like most humourists, he has a tendency to exaggeration. We all know that a certain degree of exaggeration is necessary to get the reader up to the author's mark, but we maintain that Mr. Dickens magnifies till it

becomes so apparent as to expose itself. It may be necessary for an actress to rouge to a certain extent to counteract the ghastly effect of the broad stage lights on the human countenance, but what should we say of her who daubed it on indiscriminately and unsparingly, giving as much to the nose as the cheek? So with the author, he composes in a glow, and beholds things immensely brighter than it will appear to the coldness, stupidity, or apathy of the common reader! Mr. Dickens' humour is Falstaffian, we admit, but he too frequently stuffs the fine old knight so much as to make him little better than a heap of old clothes; he buries the man in the buck basket truly, but he also requires him to wear them content, but like the grave-digger in Hamlet, he has too many waistcoats to be funny. Still there is heart and feeling in all this, and while the judicious blame the artist for his sacrifice of truth and nature, they laugh at the outrageousness of the distortion. Thackeray, on the other hand, never loses his temper or his judgment, Dickens often does: both scourge the offender, but the first does it from liking the office, and the other because he is angry, and thinks the culprit deserves it. In Vanity Fair the lash is always ringing on the back of the unhappy victim, but it is applied with the calculating prudence of the slave driver, with a physician's regard for the life of the subject: he keeps him alive for further operations, and for future punishment. Dickens batters his opponent in a passion and gives up when tired: he rails and vituperates all the time, while Thackeray, with more severity, tortures at leisure. Both fish: but one pulls his trout out of the water at once and despatches it, while the other keeps it on the hook and drowns it by swimming. Dickens administers capital punishment on the spur of the moment;

Thackeray imprisons for life, and racks his prisoner occasionally by way of amusement.

'Becky is as cold and wicked—as Quilp is a monstrous abortion—Thackeray is a Mephistophiles; Dickens a Faust!—One has most head, the other most heart! Both are great observers, but they look different ways. The observation of Thackeray is particular, that of Dickens general; while one is content to regard only the artificial, the other narrowly chronicles the natural.

A modern critic has called Mr. Dickens the Hogarth of authors, and we think the epithet one of which the novelist may well be proud. In "Oliver Twist" we are perpetually reminded of the fact, and we can conceive nothing more perfect in the way of amusement than a novel written by Charles Dickens in his best manner, and illustrated by William Hogarth!

Among the scenes of that great fiction, one of the most touching things we ever read is the scene where the poor, sweet hearted, consumptive child, who is weeding the garden before any one else has risen, climbs up the gate, and putting his little arms through, clasps Oliver round the neck, wishing him "good bye" with a brother's kiss. They had both been beaten and starved together, and in the little child's "good bye—God bless you," rushed a world of thought, and old feelings enough to drown the voice of a poor law commissioner in tears.

It is in touches like this that Mr. Dickens is so superior to the rest of his contemporaries: he often conveys a crowd of associations in a line, but too often takes a page to reiterate what destroys the whole effect of his previous effort. He leaves nothing to the reader's imagination: indeed he so overpaints his picture as not unfrequently to

obliterate the original and successful design. Numberless instances of this might be given: we content ourselves by calling the reader's attention to the description of Ruth's pudding making, too well known to quote.

Mr. Dickens tells a story remarkably well, and being a good mimic, he often imparts to the narrative the reality and vivacity of life: the anecdote of Macready and Prichard is one of his most successful efforts: we have the more pleasure in relating this, as, it shows, under cover of an apparent icy reserve,

> "Still glows the warmth of genial heat
> In stern Macalpine's breast."

Mr. Macready on his return from some engagement in Edinburgh, called on Wordsworth, and was persuaded by the old bard to remain all night: they wandered about, talked of the drama, and parted, mutually pleased with each other. Shortly afterwards, a friend who knew Macready intimately, inquiring of Wordsworth what he thought of his visitor, received from the aged poet the following account. "I was much pleased with him indeed. He is a quiet, modest, unassuming man: without the slightest taint of conceit—in short, I gathered from what he said, about acting, that he is a bad actor, and he knows it: between ourselves, he confessed as much to me." Our friend's amusement may be easily conceived at this instance of the Poet Laureate's discrimination; it is, however, a curious instance of Mr. Macready's "private theatricals."

To return, however, to the story in question, which shows the eminent actor in a very amiable point of view; the simplicity of his guest is truly ludicrous.

A gentleman, of the name of Prichard, having

failed as an actor, settled down into the more useful occupation of stage-manager of Drury Lane Theatre. He had the peculiarity of being an extravagant admirer of celebrity, but the chief idol of his worship was Mr. Macready. His delight was intense when he heard that the great tragedian was engaged to play a number of his favourite characters. It seemed to be an honour to hear him talk. He resolved, therefore, to show him every attention.

On Mr. Macready's first visit he was almost driven to despair by the reserved manners of the actor, who seemed a frozen man with the powers of locomotion. He, notwithstanding, paid unremitting attention to the hero of his worship: looked to the fire in his dressing-room, placed lofty wax tapers there, and by a thousand delicate services expressed his deference. After a week's perseverance he was rewarded by an inclination of his idol's head. A few days more the face ripened into a smile: then came a more rapid thawing; and one morning Mr. Macready was so touched by the deferential respect and attention of the stage-manager that he actually spoke to him, "Good morning, Mr. Prichard." Balaam was not more astounded at his donkey's speech, than Prichard at his lion's condescension—in a little time it ripened into "*Good morning*, Prichard!" and one morning, never to be forgotten by the obsequious Prichard, Mr. Macready said, "Prichard, you don't look well; you want a change of air! I have a little cottage at Elstree; come down on Saturday and stay till Monday." In a state of speechless rapture the admiring stage-manager accepted the invitation. Never minutes crawled so slowly as those which intervened; at length the blissful time arrived, and in a state of joyful trepidation the highly

honoured man mounted the stage that was to convey him to this terrestrial seventh heaven. No monarch on his throne sat with a greater pride. He looked as though he felt all the passengers knew he was going to see Mr. Macready. His look seemed to proclaim, "Gentlemen, I am actually going on a visit to the great Mr. Macready —what do you think of that!" In due time he was deposited at the door of the cottage. Mr. Macready received him at the porch, led him to the parlour, and then told his servant to show Mr. Prichard his room. In this neat little dormitory the bewildered visitor endeavoured to calm the tumultuous rapture of his mind. After some little delicate devotion to his toilet he descended to the parlour, where he was introduced to Mrs. Macready. "My dear, this is my kind friend, Mr. Prichard, whose attention to me at the theatre I have named to you." Mrs. Macready, in her usual lady-like manner, welcomed him. Mr. Prichard flowered a little and said, "The pleasure he felt in showing his respect for so resplendent a genius as Mr. Macready was his greatest happiness and reward," &c. He was interrupted in his blushing and glowing enumeration by the tragedian's saying, "We don't dine till six, we shall have time for a stroll in the garden and paddock." Mr. Macready pointed out in his sententious way the wonders around. "That is my little paddock—there is my boy's horse—there is a small hen." Mr. Prichard put forth a word or two of rhetoric. "How blissful for a man of genius, tired with the fret and fever of the world to retire, and in the calm seclusion," and so on. Mr. Macready nipped this fine crop of oratory by saying, "That's a cow, it supplies our family with milk." "Happy cow, (exclaimed the manager,) to supply so great a

man's family with milk." Prichard in the intense adoration of the minute wished himself a cow! As Jupiter for love of Io turned himself into a bull, so would Prichard have done the synonymous for Mr. Macready.

Behold Mr. Prichard actually seated at the same table with Mr. and Mrs. Macready! In the course of the evening the courteous host happened to say to this simple-minded manager, "Prichard, make yourself at home; ask for whatever you want; I have a warm bath in the house; one would, I am sure, do you good; if you think so, you have only to ring; tell my man;—it is prepared in a minute —now don't stand on any ceremony—it is no trouble."

Dinner passed off; Mr. Macready was condescending—the manager seemed translated; towards midnight he was led to his room by his hero, and told that he was to consider himself at home, and do as he liked. Left alone, he gave himself up to a variety of pleasing reflections; wrapped in this reverie, time slid on unconsciously; at last the words of Mr. Macready, "a warm bath will do you good; it gives no trouble; it is prepared in a minute" fastened upon him with a fatal fascination. "It will do me good," involuntarily exclaimed Prichard; "I feel overpowered with the sensations that have rushed through me; I will have one; Mr. Macready pressed me to take it; he will be offended if I don't; I would not wound his feelings for the world." His hand instinctively pulled the bell; like fear in Collin's Ode,

> "He back recoiled, he knew not why,
> E'en at the sound himself had made."

The tinkling ceased; dead silence; again the bell was rung louder; no one came; Prichard gave up the idea of his bath, and thanked the abortive

ringing; at length, just as he was preparing to get into bed there was a rap at his door with a half-sleepy "Did you ring, sir?" "I should like to have a warm bath," faintly ejaculated Prichard, half suspecting the absurdity of the request; "A warm bath, sir?" said the servant. "Yes, Mr. Macready said I could have a warm bath." The servant vanished, and went to his master's bed-room door and rapped; the great actor was sleeping, no doubt dreaming of histrionic triumphs, with no Astor House in the vista.

Mrs. Macready was the first to hear this unusual sound. She listened a minute space, then touching the modern Macbeth's arm, said, "William, what is that?" a deep guttural growl was the response.

"Again the lady at his side
Her soul subduing voice applied."

"William, pray wake, I tell you I hear a noise. I thought I heard a bell ring twice before; William, pray wake, I am getting alarmed." When Mr. Macready was thoroughly awake, he sat up in bed. "Who is that?" said he. "Me, sir," said the servant. "What do you mean by disturbing us in the middle of the night?" "Please, sir, Mr. Prichard wants a warm bath!" "A warm bath!" gasped his master, "does he know it is the dead waste and middle of the night? a warm bath ha! ha!" continued he, "was there no pond on his road hither that he could have washed in? a warm bath, hah! hah! Rouse all the servants; let him have his bath; a bath! a bath! his kingdom for a bath!"—saying this he sunk hysterically on the pillow.

In 1836 Mr. Dickens married Miss Catharine Hogarth, and to all human appearance the union has been a happy one; they have a family of

children, the eldest a boy of about fourteen years. Two boys he has named after Alfred Tennyson and Francis Jeffreys, a piece of vanity unworthy so shrewd an observer of human nature.

In 1843 he visited America. We may say in passing, that much of the unsatisfactory nature of that visit is chargeable to the injudicious course taken by the very respectable body of gentlemen, who, totally ignorant of the peculiar temperament of the distinguished novelist, somewhat officiously, though doubtless with the best intentions, took charge of him, and in short, placed him under a complete *surveillance*, which impeded that free observation and genial intercourse with the masses which is absolutely necessary to the formation of a just opinion of the American people.

He has since passed a year in Italy, and another in Switzerland. He is fond of a trip to Paris, but the volatile manners of that vivacious nation seem to escape him, or baffle his powers of fixing on the canvas. It may be that he is unable to depict the finer traits of more polished life, and therefore wisely chooses the coarser and more boldly developed features of English and American manners to paint from; be it as it may, it is only as a sketcher of low life that he will descend to future times, and in this point of view he will be valuable to the future dramatist and historian to supply them with the manners and peculiarities of that class of mankind which constitutes the majority of the human race.

Mr. Dickens in private life is good-tempered and hospitable; he has a striking face; his hair is dark and long; his eye, which is the great fact of his countenance, is hazel; he is rather under the middle size, is neatly made, and very active; his favourite time for composition is in the morn-

ing; he writes till about one or two; lunches, then takes a walk for a couple of hours, returns to dinner, and gives the evening to his own or a friend's fireside.

He is a very gay dresser—eschews collars—rejoices in bright scarlet rolling facings to his waistcoat—is as fond of rings and gold chains as a Mosaic Jew. Indeed he dresses in a manner which, indulged by another, would inevitably call forth some of his genial banter. He is fond of country dances and similar amusements. By his own fireside he is as pleasant and companionable as his warmest admirer could wish: his conversation, however, is not what might be expected from a man so justly celebrated: he tells a story well, and with ever fresh variations or humorous exaggerations. He is a strong admirer of Tennyson and Browning; we have heard him declare that he would rather have written the "Blot in the 'Scutcheon" than any work of modern times.

Mr. Dickens lives in good style in the Regent's Park. He abominates argument; delights in walking the crowded thoroughfares of life, and noting the humours of his fellow-creatures. He has a strong sympathy with all the oppressed classes, and has no toleration for the misanthrope or the cold-hearted aristocrat. He now and then administers a little gentle rebuke to affectation, in a pleasant but unmistakeable manner. We remember an instance where he silenced a bilious young writer, who was inveighing against the world in a very "forcible, feeble manner;" during a pause in this philippic against the human race, Dickens said across the table, in the most self-congratulatory of tones: "I say, ——, what a lucky thing it is you and I don't belong to it? It reminds me," continued the author of Pickwick, "of the two men,

who on a *raised* scaffold were awaiting the final delicate attention of the hangman; the notice of one was aroused by observing that a bull had got into the crowd of spectators, and was busily employed in tossing one here, and another there; whereupon one of the criminals said to the other, 'I say, Bill, how *lucky it is* for us that we *are up here.*'"

In general, however, his remarks are not happy. Notwithstanding this apparent theoretical sympathy with the lower classes, he pays an absurd deference to men of rank, and thinks no dinner table complete without a lord, or a very rich merchant or banker. This has been decidedly injurious to his writings; it has cramped his hand "and checked the thunder in mid volley."

A little anecdote will illustrate this "amiable weakness" better than a lengthened disquisition.

An acquaintance of his, calling one morning upon a celebrated writer, distinguished for his plain speaking, was astonished by the latter saying, in his most plaintive Scotch, in the course of conversation, "Poor Dickens! I am sorry for him; I could have better spared a better mon!" "You amaze me," replied the other, "why, I saw him last week, in good health. For God's sake tell me all about it—when did he die?" "Die, mon!" roared the philosopher, "I never said he was dead; I meant that it was all over with him as a great author." "What do you mean?" inquired the visitor. "Why, I mean this, he has dined with a real live lord, and it's in the newspapers! I say again, I am truly sorry for poor Dickens!"

His most intimate companions are Mr. Macready, Forster, Rogers, Landon, Harley, and Tal-

fourd; his acquaintance, however, extends throughout the whole range of the literary circles.

Notwithstanding the attention he receives from a few of the nobility, such as Lords Carlisle, Denman, and Ashley, he is unpopular with the fashionable circles, and is asked as they would invite Tom Thumb, the Siamese Twins, or any other lusus naturæ, merely to increase the dramatic attractions of the evening; but the weakness of feeling flattered by the attentions of rank or wealth, is a common failing with most men, especially when they have sprung from a humble class in society, and where the mind is deficient in the highest qualities, or not fortified by great self-respect; of this latter requisite, Mr. Dickens has less than most men so widely renowned. To sum up his capabilities in a few words: as a man, he is good-tempered, vain, fickle, which makes him at times appear to be insincere: on the other hand, it must in justice be stated that he forgets with kindly facility an offence; but the impression on the minds of those who have known him longest is, that he is deficient in all those striking qualities of the heart which sanctify the memory of man. As an author, we have given our opinion of him, and stated our reasons. A few years will probably modify his position as compared with such writers as Carlyle, Browning, Tennyson, Barret, Bailey, and many other of his contemporaries. He will, however, always hold a commanding position in his own peculiar department of composition.

We must not forget to mention that, misled by his fame, Mr. Dickens tried his hand on dramatic composition, and wrote a farce, which was acted at the Lyceum. As might be expected, from his want of constructive power, it was unequivocally condemned; this settles the question as to the

author of Copperfield being a writer of the first class. It is a curious fact that all the first intellects of the age have been progressive; now with the writer before us, his first two works are unmistakeably his best.

In 1846 Mr. Dickens was persuaded by some friends to become the editor of a newspaper called the "Daily News," then about to be established as a rival to the "Times," on the liberal side of politics. On January 26th, of that year, the first number appeared, but after conducting it for three or four weeks the novelist found the pursuit distasteful, and retired from its management.

RICHARD HENRY HORNE.

THE career of Richard Henry Horne, who was born in London, 1803, partakes more of the adventurous times of Elizabeth than of Victoria; while other modern poets have looked on nature with the "mind's eye," and considered romantic adventure from an ideal point of view, Mr. Horne has beheld it face to face, and painted what he saw. The poetic spirit threw its inspiring mantle over Burns as he followed the plough, and turned up the fresh earth; but the author of "Orion" received his first impulses while roaming over the ocean, or in the burning plains of Mexico. Like the bards of old, he has been a sharer in "sieges and stratagems," and has fought in battles; we have seldom heard anything more comic than his vivid description of a sea-fight between a Miguelite and Pedroite frigate, and also the storming of St. Juan de Ulloa, in both of which highly ludicrous engagements he was present as a midshipman. We are, however, anticipating the course of his biography. His father dying early, his mother married again, and our young poet was, after some preparatory education, placed at Sandhurst College, to be trained for a military life; when his noviciate was completed he left the college, in the expectation of securing a

cadetship in the East India Company's service.—Being disappointed in this, he entered as a midshipman on board the Mexican Navy, then engaged in a struggle with Spain. In this service he remained till peace was restored between the belligerent countries, and returned to England by way of America. He is, therefore, one of the few English poets who have visited the United States, and seen the wonders of the new world: his account of his steaming up the Mississippi is one of the most interesting *viva voce* pieces of adventure we have ever heard; it is to be hoped he will give to the public a sketch of his interesting life. On his return home he found most of his small patrimony wasted by the ill conduct of his guardians, and he was, therefore, compelled to look around for some means of support. We may as well name here, that, since then, with the exception of a small annuity from the "Copper Mines Royal," of which company he is a director, he has lost all that remained of his patrimonial inheritance, by lending part to a brother who was engaged in business, and partly by resigning what he had left to a lady with whom, in early youth, he had formed a connexion, and from which the incompatibility of their tempers compelled him to sever: here his generosity to the woman he had once loved completed his financial ruin. It is impossible not to admire Mr. Horne in his private relations; being straightforward, earnest, and sincere: and though he too frequently forgets the solid benefits he has received under the smart of some little literary oversight, or supposed want of critical appreciation, he is a strictly honourable man, and a zealous friend.

Mr. Horne's productions in poetry are, "The Death of Marlowe," "Cosmo de Medecis," "The Death Fetch," "Gregory VII," "Orion," and

"Ballad Romances." In prose, his writings are very numerous, the chief being "Exposition of the False Medium;" he also contributed largely to, and edited the new "Spirit of the Age," a work which has been reprinted on this side of the Atlantic; owing to the want of poetical illustrations, the work was generally pronounced heavy, and much good and honest criticism consequently thrown away. He also was a large contributor to the "Church of England Quarterly," "The New Quarterly" and several magazines. The articles in the former, on "Albertus Magnus," "Poetical Contrasts," are by him, and in the latter review the papers on "Chinese Characteristics," "The Dramatic Mind of Europe," &c., are from his industrious pen. His finest work is undoubtedly his "Death of Marlowe." It is short and complete; a tragedy in one act is just what Mr. Horne is able to accomplish; here the closeness of his style and the highly wrought nature of his similes tell with admirable effect; but in a piece of five acts these grow wearisome to an extent which destroys all the interest in the progress and *denouement;* the plot of this one act is taken from the well known death of that great dramatist. The characters are few, but powerfully drawn, and well sustained, and the character of Cecelia, the courtezan, is conceived and executed with a grace which shows a fine poet: but the perversity of Mr. Horne has well nigh spoilt the whole effect of making Jaconot a monster beyond the necessity of the case: it is a great mistake in a dramatist when he wastes anything, and surely making a villain worse than the exigencies of the case requires, destroys the repose and truth of the whole as a work of art; which a tragedy ought to be, whether it be in one, three, or five acts. Mr. Horne's study of Shakspere ought

to have saved him from falling into this error, for he cannot have overlooked how that great master of the human heart put some redeeming traits even into the composition of his greatest villains. He knew there was the seed of goodness even in the soul of evil. This supererogative of wickedness in Marlowe's rival, lessens the sympathy we ought to feel for Cecelia, for allowing, fully, even for her unhappy position, we cannot reconcile how she could tolerate the love of so coarse a monster.

We ought to mention, in justice to Mr. Horne, that we have often contested this point with him, and that he has rigorously defended the truthfulness of Jaconot's character: maintaining that rough and brutal natures very often succeed in obtaining a singular power over women of really naturally superior and refined minds: whether this be the general part or not we shall not stop to inquire, remaining still of opinion that a dramatist is not bound to take a character because it has existed, and therefore is "an accomplished fact," but shows his still and psychological veracity by avoiding those exceptions, and selecting one more in unison with the common nature of man. With these preliminary remarks, we recommend this composition to the American public.

As Mr. Horne considers his last tragedy, "Gregory VII," the best, we shall test him as a dramatist by that production.

The life and character of that most ambitious of popes is one too well known to need any historical references: we shall content ourselves by stating, that Mr. Horne has added merely the episodical ingredient of love to the nature of the great occupant of St. Peter's chair, and introduced Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, in her own right, as the semi-religious paramour of Gregory.

Her attachment for the pontiff is thus introduced to the audience in the following scene with her husband, Godfrey, Duke of Bouillon.

"GODFREY. His mine is sprung, and into pestilent air
He has blown himself.
MATILDA. We must be calm, and wait.
GODF. Calm! is it possible?
MAT. 'Tis only just.
GODF. Seest not thine error yet? Seest not, Matilda,
This object whom thou'st long beheld with thoughts
Devout, that mingled in thine orisons,
Is fraught with worldliness; one who, beneath
The shaded haunts of sanctity, conceals
Passions like dragons, violent and foul.
MAT. He has, indeed,
Such strength of passion as assorts with greatness
Of thought and action; yet, my lord, believe,
Though he may err, as in this act he has,
In Hildebrand is nothing base or mean.
And let me tell thee, husband, I believe
There may be reason, when we shall know all,
In that which seemed so mad.
GODF. Matilda, cease!
Infatuated woman! cast away
The film that, like a cowl, doth blind thine eyes;
Dismiss this vicious abbot from thy prayers;
Confess not to him: of thy love I ask it;
Nay, of thy holiest faith. Oh, wouldst thou gaze
At heaven's clear sapphire through the gates of hell?
MAT. My lord! forbear these impious—
GODF. Forbear thou!
I will not listen to this vain defence
Of such a criminal. [EXIT GODFREY.
MAT. This headstrong hate
I fear will snap all ties."

Now comes a scene in which the countess makes an admission to Gregory which destroys materially her prestige with the audience. The reader must bear in mind that it is very necessary for the poet to preserve as much sympathy as possible for Matilda, not alone on account of the necessaries of this special drama, but on the broader principle that the mere fact of conjugal infidelity is a heavy drawback on the character, and consequently it becomes all the more indispensable, that no un-

necessary odium be heaped upon it:—on this principle the words we have italicised are highly undramatic:—indeed so totally at variance with dramatic instinct as to almost persuade us that Horne is not one.

[ENTER HILDEBRAND.]

"What hast thou done?
HIL. Well; very well.
MAT. Resolve me of all doubt!
HIL. 'Twas impulse from on high, not my design.
Daughter, they rolled before me like a sea;
Then paused to let me walk upon their necks,
As foamy as they were,—I was upheld
By the deputed fire that wings my soul.
The council has concluded as I wished;
And thus the mutinous churchmen are put down.
I left them when I saw 'twas working right;
For I can stand alone, therefore have friends.
MAT. Why didst thou smite the pontiff, oh, why didst?
HIL. Because his weak-souled loyalty to Henry
Smote like an axe against the See of Rome.
I heard Time's echoes through the world's forest ringing;
I saw the tree which should o'ertop them all,
Like to a sun-beam falling into night,
And therefore stood I forth and smote that man,
As I will take the axe from out his hand.
MAT. Father, enough: I do believe thy truth
Equals thy courage in this lofty cause.
I must lament thou hast an enemy
In Godfrey, who proclaims thee full of evil,
And worldliness and vice."

Having shown how Mr. Horne contrives to weaken the interest we ought to feel for Matilda, not alone by reason of the exigencies of the drama, but also that she had no surplus claim to them to spare, we now quote a few lines to demonstrate how proudly our author has laboured to destroy our sympathy with the hero of the drama. A good hero can afford to say or do few cruelties, but when the chief personage is already well known for an unscrupulous man, the character should be relieved as much as possible, in order to reconcile

humanity to him. We give the whole of the scene.

[ENTER HILDEBRAND.]

" HIL. Portentous changes wrestle in the air!
I see, methinks, a mighty shadow fall,
While solid pillars lift a solid throne,
Which in fixed radiance stands. Strong deeds awake,
And clamouring throng the portals of the hour.
Weak-minded Alexander, thou must die!
I placed thee on a tower, and thou didst offer
A king the pass-key to our wall of strength;
Therefore 'tis good thou diest. Plead not, my soul!
The wheels of destiny pass o'er his corse.
There's much to do. The time for me is ripe:
It was not wise till now that I should take
The sphere which long hath rolled before my grasp,
Swimming and heaving in the etherial space;
But, with contentious and eruptive fires,
Threatening precipitate sovereignty. Who's there?

[ENTER DAMIANUS.]

(ASIDE.) He has been listening at the door, dull fool!
(ALOUD.) There's much to do.
DAMI. I feel it in the air
With every respiration.
HIL. Why comest there
At such an hour?
DAMI. Lord Abbott I would ask
What should be done, touching Pope Alexander?
HIL. Nothing. He's very safe.
DAMI. Safe in the dark cell where your orders thrust him.
HIL. I know it.
DAMI. But what next, for he is old,
And needeth comfort in imprisonment.
HIL. Do nothing. Leave him.
DAMI. His cell is very damp, and cold dews trickle
Down his grey head and beard, as bowed he sits,
Counting his beads. Beseech you, good Lord Abbot,
Change his sad dwelling!
HIL. Let him take his shroud,
And finish it i' the ante-chamber!
DAMI. But, my lord,
How—how shall we answer this?
HIL. Answer it!
Who shall presume to gall and question us?
Who make us constantly responsible,—
Who'd force us answer, but this Alexander—
Therefore Death's scythe shall give him sweeping thanks.

DAMI. And for his service and his burial——
HIL. Let him have night and silence! A century hence,
When a few dust-filled bones perchance are found,
'T will shew that somebody died there. For the rest,
I know my 'answer,' let those ask who may:
Mention his name no more, for he has passed!
DAMI. My lord, good night:—a deep good night I pray!"
[EXEUNT AT OPPOSITE SIDES.

We have not space to follow the course of this otherwise finely conceived, and elaborately finished, drama to the end. It will amply repay a close perusal, but we fear its want of passion and action will prevent its ever being an acting play. It abounds in highly wrought and sounding passages, but it is terribly deficient in those striking situations which show a natural genius for dramatic composition.

Even the best parts of this drama are too loaded with a pompous imagery, not actually springing from the passionate impulse of the moment, but artificially produced from a foregone determination to say something very fine: let us take a few passages, "fatiguingly fine," as a critic once said of them.—

"Oh, for a bolt of lightning to strike down
And scatter all Rome's statuary in the street,
To sweep her gods to an impalpable dust,
Confused and lost in air! Let the dread hand
Of great avenging nature, in our cause
Heap this blind city in one funeral pyre;
Where treacherous Gregory may sit crowned with flames."

How feebly this sounds after Shakspere's—

"Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts,
Dash him to pieces."

We must, before we finish, give another instance of Mr. Horne's dislike to his hero: it is part of the speech Gregory makes to Matilda, upon her interceding in behalf of the emperor, who has been en-

joined by the haughty pontiff to stand barefoot on the stones.

"Get thee from my sight!
I'll have no purblind, short-breathed policies:
Up the high hill at one great bound I'll go,
And then direct the light seen from afar.
Away! What dost thou here with half resolves?
Retire, retire!—I waste myself upon you.

[GREGORY RESUMES HIS THRONE.]

MAT.—(STUNNED.) Some hand assist me!" [EXIT, BLINDLY.

We cannot resist offering to our readers an "eminent proof" of Mr. Horne's propensity to make his characters utter poetical musings, when they ought to be acting:—this contradiction, or anomaly, we have heard him defend, and quote the example of Hamlet—but here it is the peculiarity of Hamlet's character: it is, in short, his idiosyncracy, and the consequences of this mental defect lead to the catastrophe of the drama. It is a totally different affair when we find this the prevailing habit of all the characters, and evidences a great want of dramatic impulse: to return however to the cause of this remark. The emperor has just escaped out of his arch enemy's power, and is urged by his friends and followers to avenge the insults and indignities heaped so recently upon him. One would think that the impulses of human nature would have been too strong to allow Mr. Horne to pause midway, and compose these elaborate lines.

[EMPEROR—ABSTRACTEDLY.]

"Thou preternatural influence! thou pall,
From whose incumbent darkness o'er my head,
The dead-faced sufferers, and the gleaming ghosts
Start, and leap down with cries upon my soul!
Break up the substance of thy panoply
Of torment—Oh, retreat into the night!
And let the shape-throned whirlwind of thy spell,
In clouded silence, with no parting hints,
Shift and disperse! WHAT ARE ALL THESE?"

The reader will, indeed, feel inclined to echo the closing words of the emperor's speech and say "*what are all these?*"

Having shown what we consider as some of the defects of this play, we enter now upon the more agreeable task of calling attention to its numerous beauties. What can be finer than the few lines uttered by Gregory, after the dead body of his murdered enemy has been taken from his presence? If Mr. Horne would only write more in this style, he would be a poet the world would never willingly let die.

"So! his corpse is gone!
But it has left his silence in the hall,
As if himself were present, though unseen.
Would he were living, fierce in glittering arms!
I should not feel or fear him as I do,
Mute—pallid—motionless—standing out straight!
Horrible! horrible! I never thought before
That death was horrible."

The scene in which Hildebrand smites the feeble Pope Alexander, is told admirably:

[ENTER HURRIEDLY GUIDO, EBERARDUS, BRAZUTE, AND SEVERAL NOBLES.]

"GUI. Shame! shame!
Oh, frightful violence—profane and brutish—
It pinnacles all crimes, all thought outshoots,
Touching God's footstool with a sharp assault!
FAB. } What is't?—what is't?
TAN. }
CEN. Nay, gentlemen; explain!
GUI. Who shall set sorth the deed;
Who give a shaping language to its bulk!
Far as mere words can tell—stay, give me breath!
To the hushed multitude, Pope Alexander
Discoursing solemnly, and pouring forth
Paternal hopes, yet duteous love, for Henry,
Avowed he would not hold pontifical power,
Save with full sanction from the emperor's throne.
From his high place the holy man came down,
But while descending, Hildebrand, with eyes
Like to a demon, met him on the stairs,
And shouting "Dotard!" smote him in the face

With hand as heavy as a lion's paw,
And seemed prepared to rend him !"

Mr. Horne, as a delineator of a mad-woman, is unique; we cannot resist quoting part of a scene where Matilda, the religious paramour of Gregory, enters very mad:

"MAT. (APPROACHING GREG.) Oh, you are here!
Emperor of Germany, I know you well,
Though you disguise yourself like Gregory!
But what avails you that?—the gravest dwarf
Doth look most laughable in a great man's robes.
I come to say I shall return to him,
With all the Tuscan forces: they are not like
Godfrey's imaginary myrmidons;
But steel-shod cattle to tread empires down;
And thus his murder shall be well avenged.
Emperor, I trample thee in Gregory's name;
Gregory, the supreme ruler of the earth!
I dreamed he had become a little child.
Hush! hush! be silent—Oh, be silent I pray,
For nobody knows of this,———
They're coming;—they bring the perfect humanity,
With skeleton mortals and a full-fed doom."

Our space warns us that one more quotation must be our last. It is a worthy termination to a magnificent, though monotonous tragedy, somewhat deficient in that peculiar interest which engages the million, but full of fine thought, lofty purpose, and energetic resolve, which a little more tact might have converted into a stirring drama.

[GREGORY, MORTALLY WOUNDED, IS BORNE IN BY DAMIANUS AND MONKS; FOLLOWED BY BRAZUTE AND OTHER CARDINALS.]

"Rejoice, great line of kings: the serf-born breath
That sullied your enshrined memories,
Now hovers o'er the gulf! Set him down here,
And bid the clarions cease!
DAMI. Lay him down gently.
GRE. (*dying.*) I hear the roaring of the Vatican flames;
Its statues fall with Gregory—not its hopes.
Die, heart! die quickly!
BRAZ. Clement the Third, we name.
Duly by us elected Sovereign Pontiff!
GUI. 'Tis premature—the Emperor,
BRAZ. It is done.

VOICES. Vivat Sanctus Pater Clemens Tertius!
DAMI. Let not our voices drown his parting sigh;
Oh, be our silence an intense heart's prayer!
DISTANT VOICES.—Vivat Sanctus Pater Clemens Titus!
GRE (*faintly to Dami.*) We have not failed; my breath
fills all the place.
EMP. What hath he murmured, monk, into thy breast?
GRE. (*faintly.*) Approach, thou perfect hero, who hath
ruled
This day of swords! Approach me with thine ear
Stoop nearer. I wax faint.
EMP. (*stooping to listen*) What wouldst thou say?
GRE. (*raising himself.*) Kiss thou the dust from off thy
master's feet!"

Mr. Horne married, in 1847, Miss Foggo, the daughter of a respectable artist, and in a quiet cottage, near Finchly, avoids those envious perils which have been so fatal to men of poetical temperament. His chief enemy is a tremendous self-will, which leads him to consider ten thousand acts of kindness and obligation cancelled, should any word or deed come to light derogatory to his own self-importance. This is a grievous error, and lowers the standard of his heart as well as his head. If not corrected it will leave him a splenetic old man, stranded on the barren shores of misanthropy; let him, while he has sail or rudder left, steer clear of so desolate a shipwreck.

On the retirement of Mr. Fox, the Unitarian preacher, Mr. Horne for some time became the editor of the "Monthly Repository," and some of his best poems appeared in this magazine. We may instance "Delora" as one of the most successful.

His last prose undertaking was to edit the "New Spirit of the Age," a work which was planned by a friend of his, and at first intended merely to illustrate a few leading authors, whose original portraits were in the possession of the proprietor of the work in question. It was, how-

ever, too æsthetic for the masses, and much good criticism was thrown away.

Mr. Horne's next poetical undertaking was an epic poem called "Orion;" but the most original feature of this was the price at which it was published—one farthing. The author placed this valuation on it as a means of forcing a sale, and also as a practical sarcasm at the want of estimation into which the loftier species of poetry had fallen; this piece of ingenuity was, however, not rewarded with the full success he expected: it had merely a half effect, which, under all circumstances, was as much as could be expected. After exhausting two farthing editions, of five hundred copies each, the author ventured on an imitation of the old trick of the Sybils, and printed a third edition at one shilling, and a fourth at half-a-crown: but the charm was broken—the epic ceased to be a joke, and the sale stopped.

EXTRACTS FROM ORION.

THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF ORION.

"The scene in front two sloping mountains' sides
Display'd; in shadow one, and one in light.
The loftiest on its summit now sustained
The sun-beams, raying like a mighty wheel
Half seen, which left the forward surface dark
In its full breadth of shade; the coming sun
Hidden as yet behind: the other mount,
Slanting transverse, swept with an eastward face,
Catching the golden light. Now while the peal
Of the ascending chase told that the rout
Still midway rent the thickets, suddenly
Along the broad and sunny slope appeared
The shadow of a stag that fled across,
FOLLOWED BY A GIANT'S SHADOW WITH A SPEAR."

MORNING.

"O'er meadows green or solitary lawn
When birds appear earth's sole inhabitants,

The long, clear shadows of the morning differ
From those of eve, which are more soft and vague,
Suggestive of past days and mellow'd grief.
The lights of morning, even as her shades,
Are architectural, and pre-eminent
In quiet freshness, midst the pause that holds
Prelusive energies. All life awakes,
Morn comes at first with white, uncertain light:
Then takes a faint red, like an opening bud
Seen through gray mist; the mist clears off; the sky
Unfolds; grows ruddy; takes a crimson flush;
Puts forth bright sprigs of gold, which soon expanding
In saffron, thence pure golden shines the morn;
Uplifts its clear, bright fabric of white clouds,
All tinted, like a shell of polished pearl,
With varied glancings, violet gleam and blush
Embraces nature; and then passes on,
Leaving the sun to perfect his great work."

SUMMER NOON.

"There was a slumbrous silence in the air,
By noontide's sultry murmurs from without
Made more oblivious. Not a pipe was heard
From field or wood; but the grave beetle's drone
Passed near the entrance; once the cuckoo called
O'er distant meads, and once a horn began
Melodious plaint, then died away. A sound
Of murmurous music yet was in the breeze,
For silver gnats that harp on glassy strings,
And rise and fall in sparkling clouds, sustained
Their dizzy dances o'er the seething meads."

It is said, that one day when the author was sitting in Mr. Miller's, the publisher's shop, a boy came in, and shouted out in a nonchalant voice, "A penn'orth of epics," throwing a penny down on the counter. A satirical poet has also alluded to this work in those lines:

"When epics four a penny at the shops,
Brought down the price of taws and lollypops."

Orion, so strangely published, is, with the exception of "The Death of Marlowe," the most finished of Mr. Horne's lucubrations. Our readers will

observe that he has adopted the Greek names of the gods, instead of the Latin ones; these were supplied him by Dr. Schmitz, who revised the sheets as they passed through the press.

Mr. Horne's last production is a dramatic poem entitled "Judas Iscariot," a miracle play. In this he endeavours to revive the old idea that the apostate betrayed our Saviour in order to test his Divine nature, and that he destroyed himself out of disappointment at his having pinned his faith to an impostor. Mr. Horne is not answerable for the plot which he had found ready made to his hand, but he is responsible for the bad taste of the selection, and for the still greater shortcomings in the execution. He manages the hanging of Judas in the somewhat singular manner of his being strangled by rows of thorns, &c.

Mr. Horne in person is short and inelegant, inclined to corpulence; his head is, however, very fine, being almost perfectly bald, with the exception of a few ringlets which hang down in graceful tendrils on his shoulders. His complexion is fair, eyes light grey, the features somewhat small and finely chiselled; and altogether, the contour of his face bears a resemblance to Shakespere's head on a small scale; he is somewhat proud of this real or fancied likeness to the Sweet Swan of Avon.

A somewhat ludicrous tale is told of Horne's ringlets. When, through the friendship of Talfourd, he was appointed one of the Assistant Inspectors of Factories, he was warned by the prudent and worldly-minded lawyer that his ringlets might militate against his interests, when he was called before the Lords of the Council, as those sapient fellows might consider a wig indispensable to wisdom. After much beating about the bush, Talfourd

hinted at the Dalilah-like process of shearing the locks: not Belinda herself could have been more astonished at "the fact accomplished," than was shown now at the enormity proposed; a decided refusal was the poet-inspector's reply. When, however, the morning dawned, big with the fate of ringlets and of Horne, he, having weighed the grandeur of his tresses against the salary of his place, thought better of it, and, as he was about to enter the board-room, tucked the waving locks down the collar of his coat. He then went in, had his interview, and, on coming down the steps, with great dignity released his imprisoned darlings from their "durance vile." Horne was "himself again."

THOMAS CARLYLE.

It is easy to trace the progress of freedom by the steps of literature; the tone of *this* day's teaching will be visible on the morrow. Seneca uttered a truth weighty beyond the usual course of his thoughts when he said, "To-day is the scholar of yesterday." Let us not, therefore, forget this cheering fact; it might almost resolve itself into an algebraic form, that if the masses who were educated by their parents and clergy of the last generation, have achieved the vast revolutions which so loudly speak the advance of man, what may we not predicate from the children of the present age, when every author of note is a republican or radical? There is not a man of genius now but who belongs to that class. In England we may instance, in proof of our assertion, Carlyle, Dickens, Talfourd, Southwood Smith, Tennyson, Browning, Horne, Heraud, Thackeray, &c. In America they also write under the banner of liberalism. The writings of the authors of to-day are the "*Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin,*" on the walls of every palace, and the tyrant trembles as did Belshazzar of old, as he reads the inevitable sentence. What was the exception thirty years ago, is now the rule; then a liberal author was hunted down

as a wild beast, the scorn and dread of the aristocratic, the moneyed, and even of the middle classes. Every ministry thought it a bounden duty to prosecute, imprison, or transport. Now all is changed, and the result in twenty years hence will be the overthrow of every despotism in the world. Who can hesitate to admit that the author is the grand civilizer, the patriot, the true hero, the mental athlete; his voice is the trumpet march to victory; his song invites all to the struggle, and cheers them in the conflict, and his verse preserves and sanctifies them if they fall. He is the pillar of fire by night, the column of mist by day. He leads human nature to the promised land, and refreshes the fainting multitudes, during their wearisome progress, with waters in the wilderness. Every living heart, like the rock, owns the magic of his wand, and responds to its touch. Nature appears to the poets of our day, as she did in ancient times to the prophets.

We have thought it necessary to introduce Mr. Carlyle with these remarks, for he is pre-eminently one of the great teachers of the age; he is less of the mere author than any of his contemporaries; his object is to aid the development of his fellow-creatures, to urge them to cast aside the slavery of cant, and to "stand forth men, and not suits of clothes, with patent digesters placed inside them." It is somewhat to be regretted that his manner is deficient in that simplicity which renders the doctrines clear to the masses, but a little study soon enables the disciple to master the cypher of his style. It has sometimes occurred to us that the author of "Sartor Resartus" has somewhat *over Germanised* his mind as well as his manner; we all know how a writer is tempted to transfer the style of his favourite author into his own; more especially

when being in another language, the trace of imitation is destroyed or neutralized, and to this "hero worship" of Jean Paul Richter, perhaps, is attributable the peculiarities of Mr. Carlyle's prose. While this perversity, no doubt, interferes with his popularity in one direction, we have a strong suspicion it adds to it in another, for the charm of singularity is potent, and we have heard men of considerable eminence declare that Carlyle would lose half his attraction if he wrote in the common method; doubtless the worth of a thing is proportionable to the toil we have to achieve its possession, and there is a sort of half compliment implied to the reader where there is a difficulty or an obscurity in its expression. The probability is, judging from the simplicity and clearness of the greatest author of ancient and modern times, that an involved style is an evident confession of inability to complete the mental creation.

Some have not scrupled to avow boldly their belief, that in proportion as the *thought* is confused and imperfect, the expression is obscure and tortuous; there can be no doubt that a vast difference exists between the originality of a great writer, and the mannerism of a pretender; certainly it is natural to suppose that an author, who has truths for the million, would put them into dress best contemplated to achieve that object. On the other hand, it must be conceded it not unfrequently occurs that when a poet and original thinker appears, he brings with the bold thought a new phraseology, which is part and parcel of himself.

Thomas Carlyle was born in Annandale, and is the son of a respectable farmer, who was an elder in the Secession Church. In his youth he went to Edinburgh, where he became intimate with the

celebrated Edward Irving, for whom he cherished, to the last hour of his life, the greatest regard and admiration.

When Irving died in his darkened sunset, how general was the censure and scorn of the low-minded mob! Carlyle came out like a man, a real fiery-hearted man, and in Fraser's Magazine pronounced an oration over the grave of his departed friend. No flinching in this noble tribute to a great intellect and a fine heart who had gone down to the tomb; here also he rebukes the world with a severe dignity worthy an apostle. His intimacy with Irving is a point he is very fond of alluding to, and he never names him without some tribute to that profound and gifted man.

During his stay in Edinburgh, where he studied, he had many privations to endure, but his great heart went toiling on, supporting himself by teaching, and working for the booksellers. This is, however, a very common case with Scottish students, and there is scarcely a Scotchman of any eminence who has not at some time during his novitiate supported himself by drudgery.

He soon grew attached to German literature, and commenced a correspondence with Goethe, which continued with little intermission till the great poet's death. When he left Edinburgh he became a teacher at Aberdeen, where he remained some time. Here in this gloom of soul he laid the foundation of that severity, almost amounting to bitterness, which renders him one of the most emphatic writers of the age. You may always be sure Carlyle is in earnest; no indifference; he is at once in the thick of the fight, whatever the subject of battle, and the mailed fist of his argumentation is heard far off resounding. He has on this very account a sort of half admiration of men,

whose principles he detests. Give him earnestness and he will forgive much. We may offer as an instance Nicholas of Russia. He has repeatedly said that he was perhaps the only *man* in Europe: what he wishes to do, he does; what he thinks, he says; at all events, through all hazards, he is the uncompromising; as he truly said, "He is no *sham;* friend or foe you can depend on the autocrat." Truly, as Carlyle says, it is something now a days to know there is such a man. There is too much in our times of the smooth whiskerless acquaintance, who associate with you when the sky is fair, but who sneak off when danger or storm comes. The timidity of such oily insincerities is as bad as the basest premeditated treachery—the results are the same. What matters it to us if we fall by the withdrawing of the chair, or by a blow from the chair wielded by the false friend's arm: in fact, the blow is the best of the two. We can guard against the one, or wrest it from his grasp, but the other sets foresight at defiance; it produces also the worst possible moral effect; it spreads suspicion through the human ranks, and we therefore maintain, with the true hearted author of "Hero Worship," that one act of treachery (or timidity in defending a cause, or a friend) does more to degrade human nature than ten murders.

Shakspere's

> "There's a divinity that SHAPES our ends,
> ROUGH HEW them as we may,"

is applicable to Carlyle's sentences: let them be read in the true, the divine spirit, and his "rough hewn" periods become perfectly shaped, and convey their full meaning to the mind.

Many critics have said that Carlyle's language is German: this is an evident mistake; his style

is German in its outer form, but the words are eminently Saxon; they have a force and individuality quite refreshing after the inanities of Addison; of the latter's far trumpeted classical style it may truly be said, it was a worthy companion to that singular compound of "verse and water," which was nicknamed poetry, much about the same time. Tickell and Blackmore are in verse what Addison is in prose, writers of smooth and elegant commonplace.

Mr. Carlyle has resided for many years in the vicinity of London. His house is situated in the far-famed Cheyne Row, Chelsea, and looks immediately on the Thames. There, with his amiable wife, he has set up his tent, seldom visiting, but always glad to have a friend or so at his tea-table.

His conversation is the most peculiar of any man of the day. This affords us an opportunity of glancing at the colloquial peculiarities of the greatest intellects of England. Carlyle is, undoubtedly, the strongest and most suggestive—now profoundly jocose, or jocosely profound. This minute putting an old thing or fact into a new light, and dragging it from the obscurity of conventional hypocrisy, dusting the cobwebs off, and holding it up at once a fresh object, with a dawning sun upon it; now he startles you by shaking some drowsy old custom by the shoulders, and as he perceives it waking up in a state of astonishment, he completes the effect by bursting into a fit of good hearty Saxon laughter. All this is thrown off in a strong, abrupt manner, with Homeric compound words, provoking new combination of thoughts. Add to this an utterance unmistakeably Scotch. He has a rare manner of yoking the dissimilar together, and making them do good service in the double sense of co-operation and contrast. They seem to pull different ways,

and yet the Juggernaut car of his demonstration proceeds, crushing beneath the wheels of his Scotch dialect a host of crawling reptile superstitions and conventional "shams."

Next to Carlyle, Leigh Hunt is probably the most interesting conversationalist—but he wants his suggestive power: infinitely more amusing, he lacks the faculty of chaining the attention of his auditors. It is a perpetual flow of mental champagne, sparkling with anecdotes, refined jokes, witticisms, repartees, the peculiarities of celebrated men, celebrated streets, celebrated houses, celebrated mountains, celebrated mice; in short it is a brilliant group of heterogeneous recollections presided over by a genial appreciation—just as an assemblage of remarkable men are gathered together by a generous host whose tact enables him to extract the utmost possible amount of individuality out of them. We have now an anecdote of Byron—then of Shelley—illustrated by some well known passage in their works, the origin of which is developed—all this lively stream is given in a peculiar crisp voice, which makes the "*tout ensemble*" perfect. Dickens, on the other hand, depends more upon occasional shrewd observations, lightened by a ludicrous story: in addition to this, the author of Pickwick is a ready listener.

Mr. Horne is perhaps one of the most amusing companions; eminently graphic:—and his wanderings in Mexico, and other parts of America, are always worth listening to, even though heard before.

Browning's colloquial powers are limited—and their tendency is monotonous; nevertheless, there often comes out of that subtle brain a host of strange learning which makes the listener pause. It generally happens that in the midst of an

elaborate "olla podrida" he goes to the piano, which he plays with great precision and grace, and finishes the conversation by presenting some favourite sonata of Beethoven. We may as well name here that Leigh Hunt and Horne are also tasteful musicians, and sing with considerable taste and effect.

It was a curious study to glance round the room and let the eye rest upon each of these original men: Dickens, gaily dressed, actively engaged in either listening or talking, and doing both with an apparent interest so flattering to his antagonist—his large, dark restless eye roaming round the room for "future scenes"—his well made boots, shining like Luna, and then ever and anon the contracted eyebrow and the long hair thrown with a curious shake over the collar of his coat—a lady once said she saw he was the lion of the evening by his mane. While you are looking at him, you hear a pleasant hearty laugh from Leigh Hunt, who has made some cheerful pun, which he enjoys as much as though it had been said by another—there he sits with a sort of imaginary washing of his hands, which no doubt he learnt from Mrs. Siddons in the famous scene from Macbeth.

His hazel eye still retains the fire of youth, his manners their vivacity, and his youthfulness of spirit contrasts with the long grey hair parted on his forehead and hanging down his shoulders—for literary men, like Samson, seem to consider their strength resides in their unshorn locks. Leigh Hunt resembles one of the old noblesse dressed in black, his coat generally buttoned to his chin: his tall spare figure: his urbanity of manners—all make up the look of a noticeable man.

Earnestly talking with another, stands Browning, leaning on the mantle piece: his well made, neatly drest figure, of the small size, has a dapper

appearance: his sallow complexion garnished with coal-black whiskers, which grow under his chin; his hair however is of a moderate length, and forms an exception to the rule before named. He is doubtless pointing out some curious passage from his favourite poet Donne, or quoting with extreme unction a few lines from Kit Smart, the mad poet; possibly he may be explaining some peculiar dramatic effect of Alfieri, and urging upon the author of the "Blind Wife" the admirable method the great Italian poet pursued in writing and correcting his plays fourteen times before he trusted them into the printer's hand.

Another has joined this little group:—It is Horne, with his bald shining head, and little figure "*en bon point:*" down his shoulders hang those graceful light auburn locks, so peculiar to himself. His light grey eye is twinkling at some remark Browning has made upon the simplicity of "Sordello." Seated on the sofa, with one leg crossed over the other, and with his hand buried in his bosom, sits with a few straggling grey hairs on his forehead, dressed in tolerably well-worn black, his deep set eye, gray and abstracted, as though in some speculation lost! he rises, his figure is tall, broad and gaunt, his deep guttural voice seems to come from the depths of his heart, and the impressive tone he speaks in gives an emphasis even to the commonest of commonplace; he is reciting a passage from Milton; he has got the first edition in his hand, and is demonstrating to an attentive listener that the "blind old man" intended an emphasis to be laid on every word beginning with a capital, excepting at the commencement of each line; he slightly stoops, but it is a trifle for so old a man, and his venerable face seems to light up at the sound of Milton's verse, and to bring back

with them all the dreams of his youth, when wandering with Coleridge, Southey, and Lamb, they held high converse with the mighty dead.

We have only seen one portrait of the fine old poet that at all gives any idea of him: a friend of his was so pleased with it that he sent the artist a sonnet, which we must find space to quote:

"We die, and pass away; our very name
Goes into silence, as the eloquent air
Scatters our voices, while the wearied frame
Shrouded in darkness, pays the grave's stern claim,
With the blank eyes deep fixed in death's blind stare.
These sure were thoughts to plunge us in despair,
But that the artist and the sculptor came—
Then living music flows from buried lips,
And the dead form throws off the grave's eclipse!
Oh! blest magician that can fix for aye,
The fleeting image; here I seem to gaze
On Wordsworth's honoured face, for in the cells
Of those gray eyes, Thought, like a prophet, dwells,
And round those drooping lips Song like a murmur strays."

But a loud guffaw from a corner of the room brings us back to the author of "Sartor Resartus."

In a nobler spirit he writes thus:

"Highest of all Symbols are those wherein the Artist or Poet has risen into Prophet, and all men can recognise a present God, and worship the same: I mean religious Symbols. Various enough have been such religious Symbols, what we call *religions*; as men stood in this stage of culture or the other, and could, worse or better, body forth the Godlike: some Symbols with a transient intrinsic worth; many with only an extrinsic. If thou ask to what height man has carried it in this matter, look on our divinest Symbol: on Jesus of Nazareth, and his life and his biography, and what followed therefrom. Higher has the human thought not yet reached: this is Christianity and Christendom; a Symbol of quiet perennial, infinite character; whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest.

"But on the whole, as time adds much to the sacredness of Symbols, so likewise in his progress he at length defaces, or even desecrates them; and Symbols, like all terrestrial garments, wax old. Homer's Epos has not ceased to be true; yet it is no longer *our* Epos, but shines in the distance, if clearer and clearer, yet also smaller and smaller, like a receding star. It needs a scientific telescope, it needs to

be reinterpreted and artificially brought near us, before we can so much as know that it *was* a Sun. So likewise a day comes when the Runic Thor, with his Eddas must withdraw into dimness; and many an African Mumbo-Jumbo, and Indian Wau-Wau be utterly abolished. For all things, even celestial luminaries, much more atmospheric meteors, have their rise, their calumniation, their decline.

"Small is this which thou tellest me that the Royal Sceptre is but a piece of gilt-wood; that the Pyx has become a most foolish box, and truly, as Ancient Pistol thought, 'of little price.' A right conjuror might I name thee, couldst thou conjure back into these wooden tools the divine virtue they once held.

"Of this thing however be certain; wouldst thou plant for eternity, then plant into the deep infinite faculties of man, his fantasy and heart; wouldst thou plant for year and day, then plant into his shallow superficial faculties, his self-love and arithmetical understanding, what will grow there. A Hierarch, therefore, and Pontiff of the world will we call him, the poet and inspired maker; who, Prometheus-like, can shape new Symbols, and bring new fire from Heaven to fix it there. Such too will not always be wanting; neither perhaps now are. Meanwhile, as the average of matters goes, we account him legislator and wise who can so much as tell when a Symbol has grown old, and gently remove it.

"'When, as the last English coronation, that of George IV. was preparing,' concludes this wonderful professor, 'I read in their newspapers that the "Champion of England," he who must offer battle to the universe for his new king, had brought it so far that he could now "mount his horse with little assistance," I said to myself: Here also we have a Symbol well nigh superannuated. Alas, move whithersoever you may, are not the tatters and rags of superannuated worn-out Symbols (in this rag-fair of a world) dropping off every where, to hoodwink, to halter, to tether you: nay, if you shake them not aside, threatening to accumulate, and perhaps produce suffocation,'"

A reader might hunt a long while before he found any *system* of philosophy in Carlyle's writings. A few great principles lie at the bottom of all he has done. There is a strong hatred of everything conventional—a deep desire that more earnestness should be displayed in all we say, and all we do. He is a witness to the usurpation of the intellect in everything around us, to the neglect of the "still small voice" that dwells in the heart of man, which should temper and guide that almost irresistible power. This cunning faculty of the will is worshipped because it is powerful—because it commands the means of life with certainty—but

in doing this it tramples on hearts, and affections, and human ties, in a fearful manner. It is cleverness, tact, intelligence, knowledge, all in one mind, but *these only*, and without a *heart*. It was this same picture that caused that great master to exclaim, "What shall it profit a man if he *gain the whole world, and lose his own soul!*"

Carlyle's whole philosophy is a battle for the truth—a fight against shallowness, insincerity, dullness, and lying, wherever they appear; and he is as firm an upholder of simple dealing and straightforwardness, if it have but earnestness in it.—Sometimes we fancy he carries this admiration of mere earnestness to an extent not warranted even by his own philosophy. Witness his life of Cromwell, who is as much a hero in his eyes while singing a psalm after the slaughter of thousands of his countrymen, as he is when speaking a good bold speech in favour of his country's freedom.

Much of the merit of Carlyle's writings depends upon the fearless and unreserved manner in which the thought is spoken—what he says he says as one man *should* say it to another; *his language* is not meant to *conceal* his thonghts, but to blazon them, as it were. His own earnestness, too, in what he does, is another reason of his weight with thinking minds—he is a follower of the philosophic teachers—he is like Chaucer's "poor parson," who taught "Criste's Love," "but first he folowed it himselve." It matters little where he appears, whether as advocate, or whether as enemy. With this spirit he enters the field, and woe to him who is wanting in sincerity, humanity, or ability; see what scorn there is in some of his epithets; some of his compound nicknames absolutely are crushing. *Gigmanity* for *respectability*, and *gigmanity disgigged* for the sunken respectable. His sincerity is

so sincere, and the thought which a sincere look leads to is so sad, and at the same time so startling, that sometimes you feel quite appalled at the man's power in getting at and exhibiting to you the mysteries of life; this, too, by no greater stretch of reason than we all possess, if we did but use what we have. There is something of this in the following:—

"The high born (highest-born, for he came out of heaven) lies drowning in the despicablest puddles; the priceless gift of life, which he can have but *once*, for he waited a whole eternity to be born, and now he has a whole eternity waiting to see what he will do when born—this priceless gift we see strangled slowly out of him by innumerable packthreads; and there remains of the glorious possibility, which we fondly named man, nothing but an inanimate mass of foul loss and disappointment, which we wrap in shrouds, and bury under ground—surely with well-merited tears. To the thinker, here lies tragedy enough; the epitome and marrow of all tragedy whatsoever.' THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.

Carlyle would emancipate man—man inthralled—man in chains—the chains of custom and creeds; he would like to see the human soul working in the human body, and some respect paid to it also, instead of the disrespect, or rather the no respect it meets: he would be glad to see it acknowledged even: for what is man, generally, to his brother man, but a good machine who casts his ledger correctly, or who strikes a good blow, or is cunning in putting wheels together to make another machine not nearly so complex as himself.

Mr. Carlyle's writings are very numerous: the chief are "Past and Present," "Sartor Resartus," "Chartism," "History of the French Revolution," and "Hero-Worship;" the latter, a republication of some lectures he delivered in London. We well remember how he impressed one of the most intellectual audiences the queen of cities ever gathered into one room. Here he held up to the admiring eye Dante, Shakspere, Johnson, Mahomet, Rous-

seau, and others long past away; his powerful mind flashed a new light upon these withered antiquities. It seemed as though 'neath his spell the grave had given up its dead to be again visible, and clothed with those passions and conflicting elements which had formerly made them famous among their fellows. His lectures excited every listener to a self-activity, which enlarged the mind and braced its powers, and at once strengthened and extended the kingdom of thought.

CHARLES MACKAY.

CHARLES MACKAY, one of the most popular authors of the time, was born in Scotland about 1810, and after receiving a good general education, practised for the bar: here, however, his poetical temperament got the better of his legal prudence, and he rushed into the world of letters! Coming to London he got introduced to the editor of the Morning Chronicle, and was engaged as sub-editor of that leading whig journal for some years. In 1844 he went to Glasgow, and undertook the editing of the "Glasgow Argus," a paper of considerable reputation. He returned to London some short time ago, where he still remains. Few men have made more friends than the author of "The Salamandrine," and "Voices from the Crowd;" his manners being pleasant, and his conduct generous. He is about the middle height, hair inclined to a "dark golden," eyes dark, and of a ruddy happy countenance. He has contributed many of the most genial articles in "Chambers' Journal."

In "The Salamandrine" we have the etherialised love of a "*supernatural nature*" developed in the person of Amethysta.

Sir Gilbert, the hero, is gazing upon a fire: in the midst of the flame,

"In the fiercest of the heat
He sees a youth and maiden sweet,
Unscorched amid the fire they stand
And hold each other by the hand;
The harmless flames around them play,
In hues of purple, gold and gray;
They mount, they fall, they leap, they turn."
. . . . . .
Sir Gilbert gazed upon the flames,
But could not speak for fear:
Was he awake; was he asleep?
He saw the moon shine clear.
. . . . . .
Hark! 'twas a maiden's voice he heard:
He could distinguish every word?"

A conversation ensues; he learns from the tenor of it that they are brother and sister!

Sir Gilbert discovers also that the fair Salamandrine mourns over the mortality of her race, and envies the immortality of man.

"'O happy! happy man,'
(Thus the maiden sang:)
'At thy birth the heavens were glad,
And hosannas rang.
Make us sharers in thy gain,
Oh! take pity on our pain;
And to our perishing souls impart
The immortality of thine,
For which with bitter tears we ever yearn and pine.
The soldier felt his inmost heart
Warming with pity for their woe:
'Most fair; most melancholy things!'
* * * * *
Then came an answer to his thought,
Soft as a breeze amid the grass;
It was the maiden's voice that sang
And sighed again: 'Alas! alas!
We die; we die; we're banished from the sky:
For us no bliss in happy realms above,
Unless, man, thou'lt pity us and love.'"

In this "Salamandrine," Mr. Mackay had ample scope for his Rosicrusian learning, but the subject

was not so well suited to his poetical genius as it was to his acquired knowledge. It is full of fancy, but is very deficient in poetry, abounding in pretty descriptions and all the lighter graces of the muse. We are perpetually in doubt whether this and that passage are very nice verses, or whether they may not actually be called the mere frivolities of writing. This is a sure evidence of a poet's failure, although it may prove him to possess considerable fancy.

It is as a lyric poet of progress, as an utterer of "Voices from the Crowd," that we feel he is a true speaker of fine thoughts, and here we become aware that a brave, keen mind, and a fearless heart, are at work in man's behalf. He regards "old opinions" as "rags and tatters." The dignity of "daily work" he celebrates, instead of aristocratical arrogance and pomp.

"Who lags for dread of daily work,
And his appointed work would shirk,
Commits a folly and a crime,
A soulless slave,
A paltry knave,
A clog upon the wheels of time.
With work to do and store of health,
The man's unworthy to be free
Who will not give,
That he may live,
His daily toil for daily fee."

He then denounces the causes which render emigration necessary; in another "Voice" he triumphantly anticipates when wars shall cease and brotherhood prevail.

One of his pleasantest "Voices" is "On Railways"—

"No poetry in railways! foolish thought
Of a dull train—to no fine music wrought,
By mammon dazzled, though the people prize
The gold above, yet shall not we despise
The triumphs of our time, or fail to see
Of pregnant mind the fruitful prophecy,
Ushering the daylight of the world's new morn."

The poetry of Mr. Mackay is more adapted for the mass, who take up a book and put it down after an hour's pleasant reading; it does not appeal to either poet, critic or thinker. The thoughts are not original nor profound, but just what a well educated, earnest man of a fine temperament might be expected to feel under certain moods; in addition, there is nothing to offend the most fastidious tastes in morals or religion; for although his opinions are strongly expressed, they belong to the progressive, and not the destructive school of politics.

He has a keen sense of the future, and a firm faith in the ultimate destiny of man; nevertheless, there is too great a want of originality either in presenting a truth to the mind, and of power in rousing the heart, ever to put him with the Tennysons and Brownings. He has a lively fancy, a neat mode of expression, and a sharp eye in selecting topics generally pleasing to the million. While, however, we suspect that he will never achieve any great or original work, let us thank him cordially for what he has done in prose and verse.

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON.

Sir Bulwer Lytton has invented a kind of fifth order, which is neither fish, flesh, nor fowl; this consists of a melo-dramatic sketch filled up with elaborate dialogues, and abounding in poetical conceits and inflated sentiments. The most successful instance of this kind is, "The Lady of Lyons." There are many reasons why that play should be popular: it appeals only to the outer and *ad captandum* range.

Another great element in the success of Bulwer is the felicitous manner in which he tricks out a common-place sentiment, and hangs a glittering sound about it, which deceives the masses into the belief of its being poetry; the tinsel is so well laid on that at a little distance it has really the look of pure gold; it deceived the critics at first; what wonder then, if the crowd were deluded; but a sure test of poetry is this: if you can read it time after time, and derive fresh delight from every perusal, you may be sure it is poetry; if on a second or third time it stales, the conclusion is certain that it is only verse, however sprightly or sounding. There is, however, one exception to this in the writings of Pope. Although deficient in what we call "Genius," there is a

wonderful pleasure derived from the reperusal of his works. This springs from the point, finish, and wit, which sparkle in every line he has written. Pope and "Hudibras" abound in significant couplets; they are full of epigrams. Pope might almost be called the Poet of Epigrams. Now, although Bulwer in his New Timon has imitated the suavity of Pope's metre, he has entirely missed the condensed meaning and brilliant sarcasm. Singular as it may appear, the old secluded man has a far profounder knowledge of fashionable life than the courtly author of "Money," notwithstanding he is one of the "*haut ton*," and an elegant baronet. Pope's knowledge of fashionable life is deeper than the other's; it goes into the whole nature of man, modified by dandyism, and all the disturbing elements of dissipated life. Bulwer forgets the man, and paints only the conventional phase of high breeding.

This is even more apparent in his dramas than in his other writings; but even in his chief productions, "Pelham" and the best of his novels, the predominant idea is the artificial and not the natural. The man is entirely lost in the modification; it is in this that Dickens shines so far superior to most of his contemporary novelists; Nature is paramount in all his works, with the now and then exceptions of that class of characters where the author of Pickwick is allowed even by his greatest admirers to fail. Bulwer also fails in the impression that is left on the reader's mind; although infinitely superior to Dickens in the faculty of constructiveness, he yet falls short of giving that conviction; we know that it can be mathematically demonstrated, but there the matter ends: and as Hudibras says,

"A man convinced against his will,
Is of the same opinion still."

The predominant power, therefore, in Bulwer's work, is art in its artificial sense; falling short of that art which obliterates the marks of its existence, he displays the carpentry of his trade. The garment is not one piece so admirably woven that it produces the idea of unity; but it is several pieces sown together, and the stitches and joinings are visible. On the other hand, Sheridan Knowles is, to a great extent, a play wright, and not a dramatist, yet he has little art in its artistic sense. When art gives a grace to Nature it has done its work.

"Music resembles poetry—in each
Are nameless graces, which no *art* can teach,
And which a master's hand alone can reach."

That is very true so far as it goes; no art can endow with *genius*, but the artistic sense of beauty enables *genius* to achieve its highest triumphs. Skill would never have enabled Raphael to produce his masterpieces without genius, while all his *genius* would have been lost had he lacked the Divine workman's power of rendering it intelligible to the world.

The difference between nature and artifice, (we use this word to distinguish it from *art*,) is too apparent to need any elaborate exposition. A short specimen from Bulwer will suffice.

"MELNOTTE. Nay, dearest, nay, if thou wouldst have me paint
The home to which could love fulfil its prayers,
This hand would lead thee, listen! A deep vale
Shut out by Alpine hills from the rude world,
Near a clear lake, margined by fruits of gold
And whispering myrtles; glassing softest skies
As cloudless, save with rare and roseate shadows,
As I would have thy fate.
PAULINE. My own dear love,
MELNOTTE. A palace lifting to eternal summer

Its marble walls, from out a glossy bower
Of coolest foliage, musical with birds,
Whose songs should syllable thy name! At noon
We sit beneath the arching vines, and wonder
Why earth could be unhappy, while the Heavens
Still left us youth and love! We'd have no friends
That were not lovers; no ambition, save
To excel them all in love; we'd read no books
That were not tales of love—that we might smile
To think how poorl y eloquence of words
Translates the poetry of hearts like ours!
And when the night came, amidst the breathless Heavens
We'd guess what star should be our home when love
Becomes immortal; while the perfumed light
Stole through the mists of alabaster lamps,
And every air was heavy with the sighs
Of orange groves and music from sweet lutes,
And murmurs of low fountains that gush forth
I' the midst of roses!—Dost thou like the picture?

PAULINE. Oh! as the bee upon the flower, I hang
Upon the honey of thy eloquent tongue!
Am I not blest? And if I love too wildly,
Who would not love thee, like Pauline?

MELNOTTE. (*bitterly.*)—Oh, false one!
It is the *prince* thou lovest, not the *man*;
If in the stead of luxury, pomp, and power,
I had painted poverty, and toil and care.
Thou had'st found no honey on my tongue;—Pauline.
That is not love.

PAULINE. Thou wrong'st me, cruel prince!
'Tis true I might not at the first been won,
Save through the weakness of a flattered pride;
But *now*,—Oh! trust me,—could'st thou fall from power
And sink —

MELNOTTE. As low as that poor gardener's son
Who dared to lift his eyes to thee?

PAULINE. Even then,
Methinks thou would'st be only made more dear
By the sweet thought that I could prove how deep
Is woman's love! We are like the insects, caught
By the poor glittering of a garish flame!
But oh, the wings once scorched,—the brightest star
Lures us no more; and by the fatal light
We cling till death!

MELNOTTE. Angel!
(ASIDE.) O conscience! conscience!
It must not be!—her love hath grown a torture
Worse than her hate. I will at once to Beauseant,
And——ha! he comes.——Sweet love, one moment leave me.
I have business with these gentlemen—I—I

Will forthwith join you.
PAULINE. Do not tarry long!" [EXIT INTO HOUSE, L. S. E.

We can feel no hesitation in deciding on the merits of such writing as this.

Of a different grade, but of the same kind, is the following extract from another dramatist of the playwright school. Bourcicault is however far lower in the scale, and has no spark of that temperament which enables the other to write very elegant verses.

"MEDDLE. (To MAX.) I have something very particular to communicate.
MAX. Can't listen at present. [EXIT, L.
MED. (To DAZZLE AND YOUNG COURTLY.) I can afford you information, which I—
DAZ. Oh, don't, brother!
YOUNG C. Go to the devil! [EXEUNT, L.
MED. Now, I have no hesitation in saying that is the height of ingratitude.—Oh—Mr. Cool—can you oblige me?
[PRESENTS HIS ACCOUNT.
COOL. Why, what is all this?
MED. Small account *versus* you—to giving information concerning the last census of the population of Oldborough and vicinity, six and eight pence.
COOL. Oh, you mean to make me pay for this, do you?
MED. Unconditionally.
COOL. Well, I have no objection—the charge is fair—but remember, I am a servant on board wages,—will you throw in a little advice gratis—if I give you the money?
MED. Ahem! I will.
COOL. A fellow has insulted me. I want to abuse him—what terms are actionable?
MED. You may call him anything you please, providing there are no witnesses.
COOL. Oh, may I? [LOOKS ROUND.] Then, you rascally, pettifogging scoundrel!
MED. Hallo!
COOL. You mean—dirty—disgrace to your profession.
MED. Libel—slander—
COOL. Ay, but where are your witnesses?
MED. Give me the costs—six and eight pence.
COOL. I deny that you gave me information at all.
MED. You do!
COOL. Yes, where are your witnesses? [EXIT, L.
MED. Ah—damme!" [EXIT, L.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

MANKIND gives but a churlish welcome to poetry; even the present age, with all its affected indignation at the apathy of past generations—with the warnings of former persecutions and neglects—with the old distich ringing from the voice of antiquity—

> "Seven cities now contend for Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread"

with Chatterton, starved into desperation and insulted by the cold apathy of Walpole—all these speaking loudly to the enlightened nineteenth century—still the world reacts the old drama and justifies the past. Abundant beyond all example, excellent in point of abstraction, generated in the highest regions of the cultivated mind, and appealing to the deepest feelings of heart and soul, Song pours a cataract of majestic waters, and baptises from the opened window of Heaven the whole human race—yet the world is careless of the presence, and only now and then vouchsafes a hearing.

Perhaps the world drama acting about us, and within us, is in its practical aspect too great and stirring for speculative poetry. At all events the public, like a limping cur, lags painfully behind

the great poet, statesman or philosopher, yelping and not applauding.

Tardy recognition insults the genius which it starves and then crowns.

The millionaire and the soldier have preoccupied the pedestals of every statue, and the poet is often his own public.

The present age has been fertile in religious poetry of an extraordinary character. Mr. Heraud's "Judgment of the Flood," and "Descent into Hell,"—Mr. Browning's "Paracelsus," Goethe's "Faust," and Mr. Bailey's "Festus," are all works of a kindred spirit for speculative daring, dauntless imagination, and profound and mysterious feeling: with theological dogmas it is perilous to touch in poetry, yet of all objects they are the most attractive to the greatest poetical minds. The fascination of the subject becomes dangerous; the brightness of the glory allures, and the soul would rush in, and be consumed; but some merciful repelling power prevents that self-sacrifice to which the supremely beautiful allures.

Hard it is, however, to escape without a scorched or wounded wing, but, as the lightning consecrates what it shatters, even so the divine fire hallows what it sears. Mr. Bailey's poem of "Festus" is audacious in its piety, not avoiding the loftiest mysteries, because destruction waits upon the rash intruder.

There is, however, a wide difference between the heretical in opinion and the heretical in character. Coleridge well observes, "We may know *what* is heresy, but *not who* is the heretic!" So in "Festus," much of the most beautiful parts of the poem are "*heretical.*" The poet was barely twenty when he finished it: yet he displays the vigour and the thought of the man. Strict theo-

logical truth will no doubt overthrow the work, as it will do the theories of Dante and Shelley, involving them in the confusion and ruin of the Babel they have raised; but let the full amount of human weakness be confessed, and not insulted.

Genius may be a barren—an abortive aspiration, but it is in the seeking, and not in the finding, that exercise is implied and strength acquired.

The subject of "Festus" is the purifying process of evil, worked out by love of God and love of man. The love of God more infinite than sin—the other finite as defect.

To the second edition he has prefixed a sort of apology, or defence of his subject. We extract a few lines:

> "Poetry is itself a thing of God;
> He made his prophets poets, and the more
> We feel of poesie do we become
> Like God in Love and power—UNDER *makers*.
> All great lays, equals to the minds of men,
> Deal more or less with the divine, and have
> Forced some good of mind or soul in man,
> The mind is this world's; but the soul is God's!
> The wise man joins them here all in his power."

Such, then, is his conception of his mission. He next tells us that fiction is higher than fact, but he would have every work of fiction crowned with hearty holiness:

> "As a gold cross the master dome, and show
> Like that instoniment of Divinity,
> That the whole building doth belong to God."

Next he ventures on the hypothesis, "that all are of the race of God, and have in themselves good;" declaring that his theme is of a soul being saved:

> "'Tis the bard's aim to show the mind-muse world,
> Without—within—how the soul stands with God,
> And the unseen realities about us,
> It is a view of life spiritual
> And earthy."

A view, which requires faith in writer and reader. It is here the poet describes himself first as a hot, young, un-world-school'd heart, that has had its own way in life. Secondly, as the "world man, in whose heart one passion stands for all." The most indulged—and thus he has intersphered the universal and the individual. Again:

> "And though these scenes may seem to careless eyes
> Irregular and rough and unconverted,
> Like to the stones at Stonehenge, though convolved
> And in primeval mystery, still in use,
> A meaning and a purpose may be marked
> Among them of a temple reared to God,
> The meaning always dwelling in the word
> In secret sanctity, like a golden toy
> 'Mid beauty's orbed bosom—scenes of earth
> And heaven are mixed, as flesh and soul in man."

Mr. Bailey thus gives us the outer shell of his *ism*—

> "Free will is but necessity in play—
> The clattering of the golden reins which guide
> The thunder-footed coursers of the sun,
> The ship which goes to sea informed with fire,
> Obeying only its own iron force,
> Reckless of adverse tide—breeze dead, or weak
> As infant's parting breath—too faint to stir
> The feather held before it—is as much
> The appointed thrall of all the elements,
> As the white boxwood bark which woos the wind,
> And when it dies desists."

> "The arrow knoweth not its end and aim,
> And I keep rushing—ruining along,
> Like a great river rich in dead men's souls.
> For if I knew, I might rejoice, and that
> To me by nature is forbidden—I know
> Nor joy nor sorrow—but a changeless tone
> Of sadness, like the night wind is the strain
> Of what I have of feeling."

All great spirits are unconscious of the work they do. The earth puts forth the poetry of the season without an effort, and genius partakes of the blindness of nature. As the mind becomes more and more conscious of its operations, disease is at

work; even as the health is going, when we become aware of digestion, and the physical processes. Pure health is the genius of the body, unconscious of the working of the wonderful machine within—the heart's pulse should be the only recognisable fact of life.

One great merit in the author of "Festus" is the force with which he closes many of his fine illustrations.

> "Who can mistake great thoughts?
> They seize upon the mind; arrest, and search,
> And shake it; bow the tall soul as by wind:
> Rush over it like rivers over reeds,
> Which quaver in the current: turn us cold,
> And pale, and voiceless; leaving in the brain
> A rocking and a ringing,—glorious,
> But momentary; madness might it last,
> And close the soul with Heaven as with a seal."

Sometimes he has glimpses of the happiest tenderness.

> "When he hath had
> A letter from his lady dear, he bless'd
> The paper that her hand had travell'd over,
> And her eye look'd on, and would think he saw
> Gleams of that light she lavish'd from her eyes,
> Wandering amid the words of love she'd traced
> Like glowworms among beds of flowers. He seem'd
> To bear with being but because she loved him;
> She was the sheath wherein his soul had rest,
> As hath a sword from war."

His definition of a poet is also worthy of admiration.

> "The bard must have a kind, courageous heart,
> And natural chivalry to aid the weak.
> He must believe the best of every thing;
> Love all below, and worship all above.
> All animals are living hieroglyphs.
> The dashing dog, and stealthy-stepping cat,
> Hawk, bull, and all that breathe, mean something more
> To the true eye than their shapes show; for all
> Were made in love, and made to be beloved.
> Thus must he think as to earth's lower life

Who seeks to win the world to thought and love,
As doth the bard whose habit is all kindness
To every thing."

As a specimen of his metaphysical powers we quote.

" Faith is a higher faculty than reason,
Though of the brightest power of revelation,
As the snow-peaked mountain rises o'er
The lightning, and applies itself to heaven,
We know in daytime there are stars about us
Just as at night, and name them what, and where
By sight of science; so by faith we know,
Although we may not see them till our night,
That spirits are about us, and believe,
That to a spirit's eye all heaven may be
As full of angels as a beam of light
Of motes. As spiritual, it shows all
Classes of life, perhaps above our kind,
Known to tradition, reason, or God's word.
As earthly, it embodies most the life
Of youth; its powers, its aims, its deeds, its failings;
And as a sketch of world life, it begins
And ends, and rightly, in heaven, and with God;
While heaven is also in the midst thereof.
God, or all good, the evil of the world,
And man, wherein are both, are each display'd;
The mortal is the model of all men,
The foibles, follies, trials, sufferings
Of a young, hot, un-world-school'd heart, that has
Had its own way in life, and wherein all
May see some likeness of their own, 'tis these
Attract, unite, and, sunlike, concentrate
The ever-moving system of our feeling;
Like life, too, as a whole, it has a moral,
And, as in life, each scene too has its moral,
A scene for every year of his young life,
Shining upon it, like the quiet moon,
Illustrating the obscure, unequal earth:
And though these scenes may seem to careless eyes
Irregular and rough and unconnected,
Like to the stones at Stonehenge; still a use,
A meaning, and a purpose may be mark'd
Among them of a temple rear'd to God,—
It has a plan, no plot; and life has none."

Our last specimen is a fine extract on "Truth and sorrow."

" Night brings out stars as sorrow shows us truths;
Though many, yet they help not; bright they light not.
They are too late to serve us; and sad things
Are aye too true. We never see the stars
Till we can see naught but them. So with truth,
And yet if one would look down a deep well,
Even at noon, we might see these same stars,
Far fairer than the blinding blue: the truth
Stars in the water like a dark bright eye,
But there are other eyes men better love
Than Truth's, for when we have her she is so cold
And proud, we know not what to do with her. . . .
Sometimes the thought comes swiftening over us,
Like a small bird winging the still blue air,
And then again at other times it rises
Slow, like a cloud which scales the skies all breathless,
And just o'erhead lets itself down on us.
Sometimes we feel the wish across the mind
Rush, like a rocket roaring up the sky,
That we should join with God and give the world
The go-by; but the world meantime turns round,
And peeps us in the face; the wanton world;
We feel it gently pressing down our arm,
The arm we raised to do for Truth such wonders;
We feel it softly bearing on our side;
We feel it touch and thrill us through the body;
And we are fools, and there's an end of us."

A modern critic has so admirably summed up the peculiarities of Mr. Bailey's genius that we give it in his own words:

"There burns in the elements of certain natures, in the secret wells of their being, the deep sources where dwelleth the soul, a yearning towards some vaster region than the world which surrounds them, and an aspiration that would cleave its crystalline walls and soar away towards illimitable heavens, unknown ecstasies, and the eternal mysteries of Divinity. They feel this yearning, this aspiration, communicating itself to the very temperature and current of their blood; it stings them to the quick of inward being; it breaks out in drops upon the forehead, and rills down this poor inadequate corporeal frame. They have mighty thoughts and deep; the deep thoughts often cross each other, and re-cross in their tumultuous lights and shades, till the man is vanquished by the over-forces of his own mind: they see mighty phantasies and shapes; and the vision and the image rule over the man. Does he dream? No, he wakes; he has awakened to more things than his fellows. Is he mad, or of intellect unsound? Not so; for he sees clearly and knows that his mystery is but some excess in the common mystery of all life, and that he is but a troubled human creature; a frame-work troubled by some rebound-

ing and imprisoned spirit within, that seeks for freedom in the illimitable air and in the illimitable light, not as a mere wild voyage to regions where he would be altogether strange and confounded, but as though by a sense of birth-right in these intolerable desires. But time moves on—the wheels of the years pass over the head and face turned star-ward,—and the man finds that he will assuredly be, some day, old. He is but where he was when he first commenced this upward-looking, these aspirations to infinity. His thoughts now slowly recoil and revolve inwardly, and his visions gather closer round him. He seeks a sublime result for that within, which is denied to him from without. He places the images of his mind in order, even as a man before the death of his mortality arraigneth his house: and finally he is no longer vanquished by his thoughts, but fixes and rules over the vision and the dream. Here then he finds some solace for his yearnings; he no longer seeks to disperse himself, but to collect; no longer to revel in the arms of bright and unattainable desires, but to build. And the condition of this man's mind is that of creative passion.

"But to the store-house of the world, and to the things of worth for man's largest use and benefit, his soul's sake and body's sake, of what value is this creative passion? Can it take us up into the blessed air beside it, or help us to ride with it triumphant upon the triumphant winds? Or can it come down to us on earth, and if so, with what benefit to those who need help? How shall we perceive and feel it? How know it, how take it to heart and use it, as an incentive to hope, a refuge for sorrow, or an influence to elevate, and a medium to bring good tidings to mankind? Of what value to us shall be a palace of mighty voices, and echoes from mightier worlds, if we have no fair entrance porch, or if, having entered, we cannot distinguish the passages and step flights from the pillars and the walls, nor the right shape of anything, nor the clear interpretation of any voice or echo?

"Out of these wild imaginations, these ungoverned and formless phantasies, these outrages to common sense, which heated brains call genius or inspiration, we must seek to free ourselves. Should we not call in the aid of calm reason? Must we not command all these passionate emotions and imaginings by erecting a glacier in the midst, at the summit of which, Sound Sense shall sit upon his judgment throne?

"There sits Sound Sense upon his throne! He is at the same altitude as those fantastic dreams and fiery emotions which he is to govern. Yet a little while he sits; not haughtily, but with a sober pride. And behold!—his throne is sinking—it surely is sinking!—the crowned perfection is sinking lower and lower—the glacier is dissolving at the base—the passions are cruelly hot—the summit of his glacier has now dropt flat—his grave long face gapes wide, and out of that widening dismay a gray mist issues, amidst which that very miscalculating presumption is diffused and lost.

"Are we again upon earth? We are safely there, though the descending mist is there also. Nay, but sound sense is a good thing

when upon earth. Let us all be reconciled. For out of the midst we now see a man emerge—an actual piece of humanity. He is a working man and may help us in this matter.

"He hath a rough beard, and a strong, well-knit supple body; a large organic forehead, and a steady eye. In one hand he holds a chisel, in the other a lump of clay. A modeller and a mason, a designer and a builder is this working man. He would speak to us. Shall we hear him? Or shall he be dumb, and go on with his own work? Will the spirit of the age listen to an unknown, unlaurelled labourer? Well,—let him say what he thinks.

"'The first thing for the making of a house is the definite impulse to have a house made. The second thing is to have imagination to conceive of the design. And the third thing is to have a good workman's hand.'

"All this is common, plain-spoken stuff which every body knew before. Why should a man who makes things, presume to tell us how things are made? But let him proceed for the chance of something better.

"'The definite impulse is a passion for that thing; the imagination is the power to think the shape; and the hand is the power to make the shape of the thought. You must listen or depart. For now I will go on. The passion of the heart commands the passion of the brain, when the heart is of the right strength as meant by God for a natural, true man; and in those heart-felt emotions doth God's voice speak — the only inspiration of genius, because a revelation from the Infinite Maker to the finite maker who devoutly conceives these things, and aspires to make them manifest to his brothers of the earth. If a man have no passion he can have no true impulse to create anything. If he have passion, what he designs will then be in accordance and proportion with what he imagines; and lastly, what he imagines can only receive due form and be intelligible to fitting eyes, by mastery of hand.

"'This shapeless lump of clay, so unsightly, so cold and unsuggestive, is the type of all substance whereon no work has been done. Breathe fire into it—give to it a soul, and it shall have high capacities; set an artist's hand to work upon it, and it may have angel's form. All the great imaginings, all the splendid visions that spring up in the mind, or can be created by voluntary power, will exercise no good influence in the world, nor have a long date, unless they be wrought upon a clear design, and are built up into a suitable structure. Nay, thoughts, themselves, howsoever lofty or profound, must have intelligible form. The spirit of philosophy and of art, may comprehend the abstractions, and the germinating ideas as they exist in the work-places of the brain; but even these practised spirits understand the things better when they have acquired some definite shape, visible within, if not without; whilst for the use and benefit of mankind at large no labour is available that hath not intelligible form.

"'As generations advance in civilization and refinement, a polish comes over the surface of nature, so that artist that works with a light hand, shall find his tool's edge turned, and his labours produce

no effect. In these days the people need power. They talk of knowledge, but must first be made to feel the truth, and desire it. Among the relics of Ancient Egypt there is a colossal granite first; sole memory of a forgotten god. Four thousand years have those granite fingers been held close. They did their work—and were locked up. It was that power which reared the pyramids—which gave them their structure, their form, and their eternity. They could not have lasted as rude shapeless heaps. They could not have endured the elements; man could not have borne the sight of them. Imagine that mighty fragment of a limb to open out into a hand! A good change has come among some nations, and will gradually develope itself through all nations, the change of feeling and conviction in the estimate of power. True power is now seen to arise from the nobler passions of the heart and of the intellect. Use, then, that mighty open hand with moral aim, and build for truth a lofty fabric.

"'Nothing will now be received which has not some distinct principle, a clear design, a shapely structure. Character, passions, thought, action and event, must all be within a circle and citadel of their own, bounded by no hard line of horizon, and opening large portals on all sides to the influences and sympathies of the outer world. The only artist-work that does good in its day, or that reaches posterity, is the work of a soul that gives form. But without the impassioned life of that soul, the best-reasoned form and structure are but cold vanities, which leave man's untired nature just where they found it, and therefore are of no service on earth.'"

"Festus" Mr. Bailey published ten years ago; he then began adding and altering, till, when it appeared three years afterwards, it was like another work; the thin volume had grown thick, every line had undergone the refining crucible of the author's brain, and was modified by the greater maturity of his mind. Two other editions followed, and the last is nearly three times as long as when it first appeared. As he grows, it grows; it seemed as though he meant to devote himself to the improvement and expansion of "Festus," this solitary child of his imagination. [The "Angel-World" has recently appeared, and has received a varying welcome. Some regard it as a symbolic poem of the highest character and beauty.] Mr. Bailey is a young barrister, is happily married, and being of independent means, devotes himself to his muse. He is about thirty-four years old.

MRS. JAMESON.

No work purporting to give an account of the British Living Authors would be complete without Mrs. Jameson. This lady is something more than a name in English Literature—she is an influence—an influence, too, of the best and most lasting kind, an humanising influence. This character is always slow in gathering round it a halo sufficiently bright to make it stand out on the walls of time; but it has a warmth and geniality that suffuses itself widely, and softens all it warms. Mrs. Jameson has done for Art what Leigh Hunt has done for Literature—she has been its exponent. And as this she has done her duty bravely and well. She seems to have felt it to be her mission, and her mission it has become. We do not pretend to any chronological accuracy when we say the greater part of her life has been devoted to this aim. Accident made her an author, she says, and having once taken up the pen, she wields it to this day. Her works are many and various, and they all, more or less, bear upon art. They are as follows:

Memoirs of Female Sovereigns, &c.—Diary of an Ennuyee.—Characteristics of Women.—Sketches at Home and Abroad.—Memoirs and Essays on various Subjects.—Hand-Book to Public Picture

Galleries in and near London.—History of the Early Italian Painters.—Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art.—Loves of the Poets. Social life in Germany.—Beauties of the Court of Charles II.—Companion to Private Picture Galleries.

She thus expounds some of her aims : "It is not by exposing folly and scorning fools, that we make other people wiser, or ourselves happier. But to soften the heart by images and examples of the kindly and generous affections—to show how the human soul is disciplined and perfected by suffering —to prove how much of possible good may exist in things evil and perverted—how much hope there is for those who despair—how much comfort for those whom a heartless world has taught to contemn both others and themselves, and to put barriers to the hard, cold, selfish, mocking, and levelling spirit of the day."

This aim, as noble as it is high, she has successfully worked out in many of her works. In her "Characteristics of Women," in her "Lives of the Old Painters," in her "Legends of Christian Art." In the latter, her pencil, or graver, has assisted her in her design ; and she has shown her appreciation of, by her excellence, at least one branch of art.

Mrs. Jameson is perhaps best known by her "Characteristics of Women," a work, we are sorry to say, now inaccessible to the youth of England, being there entirely out of print. And here we cannot help regretting that a work like this should ever be out of the market—that any moment of time should be when a good book like this should be unattainable. And we hope that if ever these sheets meet her eye, she will take our advice, and forthwith hand a copy over to Mr. Knight, or Messrs. Chambers, and get them to produce an

edition at a price within the reach of every working man.

The authors of England, in future, if they wish their views to be understood by their own generation; if they have the welfare of those who live about them at heart, must produce their works so as to be accessible to every working man. The reason why a writer like Eugene Sue, or Dumas, is so popular, is because any of their works may be had for a shilling or two, and not because they are liked better than such an author as Mrs. Jameson. Publishers have begun to see this, and they will yet see it to an extent they never yet dreamed of. Authors, we believe, will profit by the low-priced system more than the high one. Publishers can always print a handsomer edition for the rich folks who like grand libraries; but let not the poor be starved while the rich are fed. Who knows what thoughts are shut out from the poor man or the poor woman, that might have had a beneficial influence upon their lives, by a high price! It is true that now a Bible may be bought for a shilling, and that Shakspere may be had for a half crown; but who can tell what progress we might have made had it always been so! To authors, we say—if you think your thought is good, that it will benefit your fellow-creatures, publish it at such a price as all may command it. Never fear the result. Nay, we are so far Utopian, as to believe that if it were *possible* to distribute thought in the form of literature, gratis, it would pay *in its results*, *better* than the trade which is now made of it. Literature has become a necessary of life; there is a wider acknowledgment that people have souls as well as bodies, and that each must be fed—that *each* must have its *proper* nourishment. Let not then the food for the mind be so costly as to put it out of the power of

three-fourths of the nations to partake of it!—A light tax pays for water, one of the elements necessary to our bodily existence. A light tax pays for our communication one with another—and why should not a light tax pay for the thought which is written and spoken, and which is so equally necessary!

Mrs. Jameson's "Characteristics of Women," should be in the hands of every one who possesses the works of our immortal bard; it is provocative of thought, and helps the reader to understand Shakspere better than he otherwise would do, by his own unassisted study. We might say it is one of the best commentaries that we know—better than Schlegel—a compliment to Hazlitt, though sometimes holding views antagonistic to his. Yet in the main, they agree very well—better than Ulrici, who is very wordy, and wishes to tie the poet down to his theory, on all sides. A companion to Coleridge, but more sustained than the poet-critic, and infinitely superior to every other expositor except Goethe, whose analysis of Hamlet in the Wilhelm Meister is worthy of his fame. The secret of this excellence of Mrs. Jameson's book we take to be the fact, that it is a woman—a very woman, who undertakes the task—none so well able as those to approve or condemn, as one who, being of a like nature, has in herself had the same feelings excited in her own heart during her life—who as lover, wife, mother and friend, has in turn acted on all these parts in real history, and has not gone to other commentators for her criticism.

Another work of Mrs. Jameson's, "The Loves of the Poets," deserves as high praise, and is valuable for the same excellence, for the same reason. We have not the volumes by us, (for this book,

too, is out of print in both countries,) but we well recollect reading it with the greatest pleasure.

The course of true love never yet ran smooth, and the "Loves of the Poets" is a perpetual commentary on this line. We recollect only a few of the instances, but these will suggest others. Petrarch and Laura—Dante and Beatrice—Tasso and the Princess—Swift and Stella—Burns and his loves, for he had many—but chiefest his Mary and Clorinda; these, too, are matters of fact—Romances of Real Life, and naturally enough when a true woman has aught to say on such a subject, all the world listens with interest. We don't know any work we would put into a lady's hand instead of the trashy fictions that now abound, sooner than one of these books of Mrs. Jameson's.

Of Mrs. Jameson's more purely artistic works, of which her last, "The Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art," is the title, we have no room for remark here, further than that she has produced a work remarkable alike for its purity, its truth, and beauty. The two volumes of which it consists, are a perfect treasure for the artist, the poet, and the amateur. We see she announces another volume in continuation of these, entitled, "Legends of the Monastic Orders," &c. Her little book on the early Italian Painters, consisting of short biographies with wood-cut portraits and copies of some of their works, is a little gem. We would particularly notice that part devoted to the sculptors who executed the gates of Pisa, for its vividness and force;—we speak from memory on the subject. We have given Mrs. Jameson the credit of being "a very woman," and our readers will not wonder when we say also, that she is a modest woman; and we use the term in its widest sense.

Capable as she is of understanding art, both in painting and literature, she does not take upon herself any airs because she *can* appreciate both. On the contrary, we find her to be more of an admirer than a critic; we find her constant to her aim, which we have quoted, rather to hold up to our view the good and the beautiful for our example, than the evil and the ugly for our scorn. In her essay on "Woman's Mission and Woman's Position," she tells this pretty little story. "There was once a Spanish lady, a certain Maria d'Escobar, living at Lima, who had a few grains of wheat which she had brought from Estramadura. She planted them in her garden, and of the slender harvest she distributed to others, until that which had been counted in grains was counted in sheaves; and that which had been counted in sheaves was counted in fields; and thence came all the corn which is now found in Peru." She likens these few grains of wheat to her own single and unassisted efforts to do good, and hopes that although few and weak now, they may yet bear fruit an hundred fold. We think we may give her the encouragement of all well-wishing people; we may promise her what whatsoever she has done in behalf of poor suffering humanity, will not die. Seed of this kind has a wonderful vitality, and though sown on a stony soil, some wind of heaven catches it up sooner or later, and deposits it on a more favourable spot, where it quickens and bears fruit. Is not the thought which Shakspere uttered and shaped—living, spreading, and vivifying to this day? Are there not older thoughts than his still treasured in people's minds, and though narrated long ago at the Olympic games, or preached by the sea of Galilee, yet do they not, even now, to

this day, rule the Christian world? We do not wholly believe,

> "The evil that men do lives after them;
> The good is often interred with their bones."

This essay of hers on "Woman's Position," &c., must have done good to some one, we hope to many a one; and while it is in print to be read, must continue to do good. That on "Governesses and Employers," must also have a beneficial effect on the classes to whom it is addressed. From what we have said, it will be seen Mrs. Jameson's genius is eminently practical; it would bring the flowers of art and genius to glorify our common household lives, and render them more sweet by the beatification. She would have the poet's thought lend courage and endurance to the labourer at his toil, or gently soothe him when at rest, or stir him into activity when disposed to be idle; she would have the painter's idea made, as it is visible, to his bodily eye, dwell in his mind and furnish him with a continual picture for hope, for persistence, for reward. She knows and would teach with Keats,

> "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,"

and the labour of her life has been that "the thing of beau ty" should be seen. She has tried to lend her eyes to those who will avail themselves of her sight; she has acted the part of Love, which Shakspere says,

> "Lends a precious seeing to the eye."

There are many points of resemblance between her and Hazlitt; they are both (would to heaven we could say with truth—they *are!* but we must be allowed the figure) lovers of Shakspere; both lovers of art; both expounders of art; both excellent as critics; both in some measure artists;

both followers of literature as a profession, and here we believe our parallel ends.

Mrs. Jameson is still alive; we do not know her age, nor where she was born, but we have seen and spoken with her; and any one else may see her who is in the habit of keeping up with things in London; for wherever there is a good cause to be argued, an eloquent speaker to be heard, a sight worth seeing, there you may see Mrs. Jameson. Aye, and in that homely-looking figure you may be sure there beats one of the truest hearts that ever beat in woman's bosom.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

Mr. Jerrold is the son of a country manager, and was very early introduced on the "Thespian boards." Somewhere about his twelfth year growing tired of mimic grandeur, he entered himself as sailor boy in the coasting trade, where he remained some time: a very short apprenticeship to the wonders and hardships of the ocean brought him back to the theatrical life, which seemed not so bad after storms and salt beef. His good genius here tempted him to write a short drama, which was performed with great success: he then by degrees grew into favour, and coming to London, became the eminent author he is. Let it not be supposed by sonnet-writing young men, that he achieved this distinction easily; no one leap into the seat of honour was his; but a painful, heart-breaking toiling up that hill which always reminds us of the labour of Sisyphus: how often when we believe we have rolled the stone to the top, does it slip from us, and roll down thundering to the base! So with Jerrold; dread was his fight, but his bold heart held out, and he triumphed. His greatest first success was the drama of "The Rent Day." This was so true a picture, that all felt it go to the heart, and the author was installed a master of

smiles and tears on the spot. To this succeeded many a soul-stirring piece of dramatic life, all calculated to fill the house, and render the writer popular with audience and manager. A curious rencounter happened to Jerrold on the first night of "The Rent Day." When he was a midshipman on board a man-of-war, he met in the same capacity a lad named Clarkson Stanfield. Sixteen years after, these two sailor boys met on the boards of Drury Lane, one the great scene painter, and the other a successful dramatist. Here, however, he might have remained to the end of the chapter, merely considered as a prolific writer of farces, two-act comedies, and domestic melodramas; fortunately, however, "Punch" was started, and after a few numbers Jerrold became one of its leading spirits. It is unnecessary to relate how rapidly this world-wide celebrated publication rose in public estimation. This very work, however, suggests a moral. The brothers Mayhew, Tomlins, Lemon, Grattan, and a few others, planned the work, and raising somewhere about £40 amongst them, started the first number: three or four months, however, brought them to an end of their resources, and as they were about to abandon the undertaking in despair, Bradbury and Evans became the proprietors for a mere trifle, taking the liabilities upon themselves. Its after success it is unnecessary to revert to; it is well known all over the world. In this Jerrold first became the "observed writer," and every paper he wrote was eagerly perused. A circulation of seventy thousand copies soon made the chief writer one of the most popular authors of the time.

"The Story of a Feather" was first published here, and gave ample scope for the peculiarities of his style and thought. We know very many cri-

tics of great acumen who prefer Jerrold to Dickens; but while we allow that he is a more caustic, sweeping writer, we miss that broad geniality which renders the other so acceptable to all classes. There are curious resemblances, and still stronger contrasts between Dickens and Jerrold: their hatred of oppression is the same; so are their democratic tendencies; and whenever they can expose conventional humbug, they do it unsparingly; but here the likeness ends. Their manner and method of doing these are so totally distinct as to lead us at times to doubt whether the end they have in view is identical. Jerrold is biting, sarcastic, and fierce; there is no sneering banter, as in Thackeray; all is bold, uncompromising, and savage. On the other hand, Dickens is passionate and vituperative: he assaults fearlessly, and carries on an open war. Jerrold flies at his enemy like a tiger, and never lets go while there is life in him; while Dickens contents himself by giving him a sound drubbing. Jerrold is most in earnest, but Dickens is more effective. There is a candour and fair play about him which we miss in Jerrold; the latter will hear nothing in defence of his foe, and consequently punishes him vindictively. This has been one great cause of Jerrold's tales not having the popularity they deserve; we allude especially to "St. Giles and St. James," which is admirably written and full of the deepest lessons of life.

Shortly after the establishment of "Punch" he commenced a monthly review, called the "Illuminated Magazine;" in this first appeared his "Clover Nook," one of the best written of his works. Here, however, he was not sufficiently explicit as to what he meant, and for want of a story more in accordance with human nature, the truth-

fulness and good sense of these papers were lost. After a year or so he discontinued this publication, and started another called "Douglass Jerrold's Shilling Magazine." In this first appeared the tale already referred to, of "St. Giles and St. James."

In July 1846, he commenced his weekly newspaper, which he edited till the commencement of the present year; he then sold it, and now devotes himself principally to "Punch." He resides at Putney, and amuses his leisure hours with the amateur accompaniments of a farm.

As a writer, Jerrold will never stand higher than he does at present. He is essentially of the day; his allusions are temporary, his affections local; what he does, he does earnestly, but not comprehensively. There is a vengeful personality about him, which leaves the class untouched, while he annihilates the offender. In reading Dickens, you feel more angry with the class than with the individual; with Jerrold you intense your wrath on the culprit.

In scenes of distress the latter is more bitterly, squalidly true than the other; he makes the reader feel wretched; instead of rousing his sympathies for the sufferers, he turns from the picture and feels no inclination to look on it again. This is evidently an error on the writer's part; his object is to procure its amelioration, and not shirking the evil.

This pervades most of his writings, even to his comedies, which, although abounding in brilliant wit, and sarcastic retort, are deficient in that strong appeal to the hearts of a miscellaneous collection of people. Nothing is more admirably adapted for a literary club, or an intellectual drawing-room of well-educated persons, than "Time Works Won-

Wonders," "The Bubbles of the Day," &c. but they are lost upon the broad sympathies of a play-house pit. The critics laugh and admire, but the many yawn ; and the upshot is, that after a dozen nights of languid sufferance, another fine play of brilliant writing goes to the Capulets.

The following extract from the "Chronicles of Clovernook" will illustrate our meaning.

"With growing reverence for the Sage, we attended the Hermit of Bellyfully back to his cell. 'In half an hour,' said he, graciously smiling, 'it will be dinner time. Half an hour,' he repeated with musical emphasis, as he passed into his chamber. Having profitably employed the time with cold water, we then, refreshed yet hungry, sought our host. The hermit awaited us. He had put aside his cloak of the morning, and was again wrapped in his old damask gown. He perceived that we observed the change. 'My custom, sir,' he said, 'I never yet could dine in full dress. The digestive organs, sir, abominate close buttoning; and do their work sulkily, grumblingly. No, sir; a man in full dress may chew and swallow, but he never dines. The stomach cannot honestly perform its functions in state.' We smiled; whereupon the hermit with a grave, sly look, asked, "Will you answer me this question?" We bowed affirmatively. 'Do you think it in the power of mortal man to give a fair, wise, learned judgment upon any dish or sauce soever, the said man being, at the time of tasting, in tight boots? Sir, it is impossible. The judicial organ is too delicate, too exquisitely nerved, to vindicate its sweet prerogative, unless the whole man, morally and bodily, be in a state of deep repose. And, therefore, can there be a greater wrong committed upon the cook, than the common injury of dining to music? It is abominable. Once—I well remember it—I chewed to the clangor, and crash, and thunder of a military band. Well, sir, the dinner was excellent—admirable as a dinner; but I have no more judgment than a beast if I had any other taste in my mouth save the brass of the trumpets, and the tough parchment of the drum-heads. Silence, profound and solemn, is due to the first hour of dining. One minute before that time the finest jest is but a presumptuous impertinence. In my encyclopædia of the kitchen I have treated of these things—philosophically and at large. For the present"—

The meaning here is not sufficiently apparent to strike the reader at the first perusal. The great effect is consequently lost. With writers like Carlyle or Browning, this is not to be strongly condemned, but we do not expect to meet with these difficulties in a novelist.

There is a great tendency in Jerrold to ride his Pegasus to death. Notwithstanding the popularity of the "Caudle Lectures," this was very apparent, as they dragged their slow length along. They are, however, his most popular work; for although they only exhibit human nature in one confined phase, there is a minuteness of detail, and an ingenuity of inventing grievances, which will always render them an amusing picture of married misery. What can be more naturally absurd than the following morsel; as we read it, we feel it must have happened to every one, married or single.

LECTURE VI.

"'Ah! that's the third umbrella gone since Christmas. What were you to do! Why let him go home in the rain, to be sure. I'm very certain there was nothing about *him* that could spoil. Take cold, indeed! He doesn't look like one of the sort to take cold. Besides, he'd have better taken cold than take our only umbrella. Do you hear the rain, Mr. Caudle? I say, do you hear the rain? And as I'm alive, if it isn't Saint Swithin's day! Do you hear it against the windows? Nonsense; you don't impose upon me. You cannot be asleep with such a shower as that! Do you hear it, I say? Oh, you *do* hear it! Well, that's a pretty flood, I think, to last for six weeks; and no stirring all the time out of the house. Pooh! don't think me a fool, Mr. Caudle. Don't insult me. He return the umbrella! Anybody would think you were born yesterday. As if anybody ever *did* return an umbrella! There—do you hear it? Worse and worse! Cats and dogs, and for six weeks—! always six weeks. And no umbrella!

"'But I know why you lent the umbrella. Oh, yes; I know very well. I was going out to tea at dear mother's to morrow,—you knew that, and you did it on purpose. Don't tell me; you hate me to go there, and take every mean advantage to hinder me. But don't you think it, Mr. Caudle No, sir; if it comes down in buckets'-full, I'll go all the more. No: and I won't have a cab! Where do you think the money's to come from? You've got nice high notions at that club of yours! A cab, indeed! Cost me sixteen pence at least—sixteen pence! two-and-eight pence, for there's back again! Cabs, indeed! I should like to know who's to pay for 'em! I can't pay for 'em; and I'm sure you can't, if you go on as you do; throwing away your property, and beggaring your children—buying umbrellas!

"'Here,' says Caudle in his MS., 'I fell asleep; and dreamt that the sky was turned into green calico, with whalebone ribs; that, in fact, the whole world revolved under a tremendous umbrella!"

The conclusion of this is capital: the fact of the last annoyance influencing the dream, and the startling exaggeration of the effect are worthy of Rabelais. In the next extract we all feel it is so true to the nature of the Caudle class, that it is difficult to believe we do not actually learn it. It does not require a man to be married to feel the power of writing true to nature. We may as well name here, that it was reported by the friends of the amiable Laman Blanchard that he wrote the first three Caudle Lectures, and that when he destroyed himself, Jerrold continued them. Internal evidence we think is against this conclusion.

LECTURE VII.

"'Pancakes, indeed! Pray, Mr. Caudle,—no, it's no use your saying fine words to me to let you go to sleep; I shan't—pray do you know the price of eggs just now? There's not an egg you can trust to under seven and eight a shilling; well, you've only just to reckon up how many eggs—don't lie there swearing at the eggs, in that manner, Mr. Caudle; unless you expect the bed to open under you. You call yourself a respectable tradesman, I suppose! Ha! I only wish people knew you as well as I do! Swearing at eggs, indeed! But I'm tired of this usage, Mr. Caudle; quite tired of it; and I don't care how soon it's ended.

"'I'm sure I do nothing but work and labour, and think how to make the most of everything; and this is how I'm rewarded. I should like to see anybody whose joints go further than mine. But if I was to throw away your money into the street, or lay it out in fine feathers on myself, I should be better thought of. The woman who studies her husband and her family is always made a drudge of. It's your fine fal-lal wives who've the best time of it.

"'What's the use of your lying groaning there in that manner? That won't make me hold my tongue, I can tell you. You think to have it all your own way—but you won't, Mr. Caudle! You can insult my dinner; look like a demon, I may say, at a wholesome piece of cold mutton—ha! the thousands of far better creatures than you are who'd been thankful for that mutton!—and I'm never to speak! But you are mistaken—I will! Your usage of me, Mr. Caudle, is infamous—unworthy of a man. I only wish people knew you for what you are; but they shall, some day.'"

The following exhibition of the manœuvreing of a woman's curiosity is so admirably done, that, long as it is, we must quote it. The mixture of

provocation—wheedling—defiance—threatening—ending in vituperation, is admirable, and shows a complete knowledge of that peculiar phase of the human heart. It seems as though the author, like a musician, was exercising himself with the gamut of the human heart. To be sure it is not the noblest nor the pleasantest performance, but its truthfulness is startling.

LECTURE VIII.

"'Now, Mr. Caudle—Mr. Caudle, I say: oh! you can't be asleep already, I know. Now, what I mean to say is this; there's no use, none at all, in our having any disturbance about the matter; but, at last my mind's made up, Mr. Caudle; I shall leave you. Either I know all you've been doing to-night, or to morrow morning I quit the house. No, no; there's an end of the marriage-state, I think—an end of all confidence between man and wife—if a husband's to have secrets and keep 'em all to himself. Pretty secrets they must be, when his own wife can't know 'em. Not fit for any decent person to know, I'm sure, if that's the case. Now, Caudle, don't let us quarrel; there's a good soul, tell me what 's it all about? A pack of nonsense, I dare say; still—not that I care much about it—still, I *should* like to know. There 's a dear. Eh? Oh, don't tell me, there's nothing in it; I know better. I'm not a fool, Mr. Caudle; I know there's a good deal in it. Now, Caudle; just tell me a little bit of it. I'm sure I'd tell you anything. You know I would. Well?

"'And you're not going to let me know the secret, eh? You mean to say,—you're not? Now, Caudle, you know it's a hard matter to put me in a passion—not that I care about the secret itself: no, I wouldn't give a button to know it, for it's all nonsense, I'm sure. It isn't the secret I care about: it's the slight, Mr. Caudle; it's the studied insult that a man pays to his wife, when he thinks of going through the world keeping something to himself which he won't let her know. Man and wife one, indeed! I should like to know how that can be when a man's a mason—when he keeps a secret that sets him and his wife apart? Ha, you men make the laws, and so you take good care to have all the best of 'em to yourselves: otherwise a woman ought to be allowed a divorce when a man becomes a mason. When he's got a sort of a corner cupboard in his heart—a secret place in his mind—that his poor wife isn't allowed to rummage!

"'Was there ever such a man! A man, indeed! A brute!—yes, Mr. Caudle, an unfeeling, brutal creature, when you might oblige me, and you won't. I'm sure I don't object to your being a mason, not at all, Caudle; I dare say it 's a very good thing; I dare say it is—it's only your making a secret of it that vexes me. But you'll tell

me—you'll tell your own Margaret? You won't! You're a wretch, Mr. Caudle.'"

There is also a great moral contained in these lectures—notwithstanding their apparent absurdity. Mrs. Caudle is evidently not a bad woman—she is a good and affectionate mother—and a faithful and frugal wife, yet the indulgence of a peculiarity has made her a bye-word to the world. These Lectures are very suggestive to all people: here we have her, merely to gratify a morbid curiosity, using all her influence to induce her husband to betray his confidence; nay, even break his oath, by divulging the Freemason's Ceremonies.

The next extract is of another quality, and shows him in another light. Jerrold is successful very frequently in isolated pieces of writing, but he wants that general humanity and geniality of purpose indispensable to a wider appreciation.

"'And is the land far distant?" we asked.

"' Some hundred leagues, no more, from Clovernook. I was brought up there; understand me, brought up, after the fashion of the Turveytopians. The truth is, when I had arrived at man's estate, I found myself in possession of a bit of nearly every vice that blackens the sons of Adam. I will not run over the list, but to save your time and your breath will merely desire you to think me at that time knowing in all the rascally accomplishments generally shared among a crowd of sinners. And yet, though wild and lawless, and hotly pursuing all sorts of mad delights, I never felt a touch of happiness. My pleasure was at best delirium, that left me spent and heavy-hearted. It was in one of those moods, when the whole world about me was, to my moral vision, coloured like so much brown paper; that walking at the base of a high mountain, it suddenly opened before me. Sir,' said the hermit, with a grave look that rebuked our gaze of incredulity, 'I say the mountain opened. A narrow passage, adown which the sun shone with intense brightness, and from which I heard beautiful sounds, as of distant music, was before me. Without a thought I entered it; when having run a few paces, I turned round and—the marrow froze in my bones—I saw the mountain had closed again behind me. I was trapped, swallowed, a miserable lump of breathing mortality, in the bowels of the earth. Great was the anguish of my heart; yet, strangely enough, light, like sunlight, streamed down the long passage before me, and the sounds of the music became louder and louder. By degrees they carried peace and fortitude into

my soul, and I began to walk rapidly forward. As I walked, the passage became wider, and at length ended in an open country; where, save that the grass, the flowers, the trees, and all things about me, were of gigantic proportions, all in form were the same as the things of the world I had left. I walked until I saw, what at first appeared to me huge rocks. Continuing to approach them, I discovered them to be houses. My heart drooped within me, for I feared that I was in a land of giants. As the thought fell upon me, I turned round and almost swooned to the earth with fear. A giantess of nine-and-thirty feet three inches high—as I afterwards discovered—stood before me. Instantly I believed I was destined to be eaten alive. Though constitutionally gallant towards the sex, I was yet so wayward, that I would rather have fallen into the jaws of a tigress or any other female beast, than have formed the meal of the giantess before me. She saw my terror, and a smile broke upon her broad-good-humoured face, like a sunbeam on a rose-garden. A few strides brought her to me. I fell upon my knees, and lifted up my hands imploringly to her. Never did man drop at the foot of woman in more earnestness of soul. Never could he pray more fervently to be taken in marriage, than did I supplicate not to be chewed alive. The giantess, with a laugh that almost stunned me, bent over me; chucked me under the chin: playfully nipped the end of my nose; indented the tip of her fore-finger in both my cheeks, and shrilly crying *kluk-kluk-kluk*, which answers to our homely *catchy, catchy*, took me in her arms like a raw, red-faced, hour-old baby.'"

There is no humour in Jerrold. It is either wit, sarcasm, or banter. Even the latter is fierce and personal. We miss that raciness which pervades Fielding, Smollett, and Dickens. We feel as we read, that a caustic intellect is in utterance, not human beings in the full play of their natures.

"'And the Turveytopians, you say, sir, had their God of Laughter?'

"'And, from what I could gather, he held a most exalted place in their Pantheon. Sweet, too, especially sweet, was one of their customs of sacrifice. It was this. A man always dedicated his first joke, whatever it may have been, to the God of Laughter. There was a fine spirit of gratitude in the practice, a sweet acknowledgment of the honied uses of mirth in this our daily draught of life, otherwise cold, and flatulent, and bitter. This first offering was always a matter of great solemnity. The maker of the joke, whether man or maid, was taken in pompous procession to the shrine of the god. And there, the joke—beautifully worked in letters of gold upon some rich-coloured silk or velvet—was given in to the *flamen*, who read it to the assembled people, who roared approving laughter. The joker was then taken back in triumph to his house, and feasting and sports for nine days marked this his first act of citizenship; for I should tell you

that no jokeless man could claim any civil rights. Hence, when the man began to joke, he was considered fit for the gravest offices of human government; and not till then!'

"'What! no civil rights? Had he no vote—if indeed there were votes in Turveytop—for his representative in the Senate?—for—'

"'Sir,' replied the hermit, gravely, 'he had no voice in any thing; not even in the making of a beadle. The man without a joke in Turveytop was a wretch, an outcast; indeed, to give you the strongest, the truest comparison, he was what your man in England is without a guinea.'

'Miserable wretch!" we cried. 'And what became of these creatures?'

"'As I learned, the jokeless did all the foul and menial work. Miserable men, indeed! I have heard of a country in which the social dignity and moral intelligence of the man was computed by the soap he was wont to outlay upon his anatomy. He might be too poor to buy the soap; never mind that; it was a terrible thing, and stung the penniless offender like a nettle to call him "the unwashed!' Now, in Turveytop, it amounted to the same degree of ignominy to call a man the jokeless! Some of these might be in tatters and starving; well, they would ask charity, and how? They would say nothing of rags and hunger, but stopping the rich, they would despairingly slap the forehead, and in a hollow voice cry "No joke!" thus, in those days of Turveytop, jokes gave dignity to the highest offices of the state. Senators and magistrates thought of nothing but making a joke of their functions and reputation. They had their great reward not only in the admiration of the people, but in the highest degree of mental expression and physical beauty which their genius, constantly exercised, inevitably awarded them.'

"'Have jokes such benign power upon their makers?' we asked.

"'Unquestionably,' answered the hermit, startled at the question. 'Take a sulky fellow, with a brow ever wrinkled at the laughing hours, let them laugh ever so melodiously—who looks with a death's head at the pleasant fruits of the earth heaped upon his table—who leaves his house for business as an ogre leaves his cave for food—who returns home joyless and grim to his silent wife and creeping children,—take such a man, and, if possible, teach him to joke. Why, sir, 'twould be like turning a mandril into an Apollo. A hearty jest kills an ugly face. The divine nature of man irradiates and ennobles what at first sight seems wholly animal. What a mighty joker was Socrates! Yes, joker, sir; and rightly have the sculptors imagined that knotty countenance, sublimed and sweetened by the laughing spirit within! Now, the jokeless of Turveytop—as it was related to me—became physically forlorn: the sympathy of mind and flesh was so active. Hence, they were drudges, scavengers, bone-grubbers, pickers up of old rags and iron, bearers of burdens, outcasts, miserable creatures; the jokers all the while sitting high in place, their cheeks greasy with the marrow of the earth, their eyes twinkling with its nectar.'"

We offer one more convincing proof that Mr. Jerrold cannot be humorous, in the full sense of the word. The idea is palpable, his endeavour is plain, but the spirit is wanting. We dwell the more on this point, because a great error is often made by writers in claiming faculties for our author which he does not possess. He surely has too many requisites of a great writer to render it necessary to endow him with ideal powers.

"'Right: to wander is a besetting sin of mine. Keep me now to the story. Well, sir, the two armies were about to fight, when the God of Joking—whose shrine had been sadly despised and neglected in preparation for the war —resolved to put an end to the wickedness, and so to bring the Turveytopians back again to jests and reason. Whereupon, as the story runs, the God Jocus repaired to a high hill near the battle-field, and seating himself cross-legged on its summit, called his thousands of servants about him, giving them due orders for their goodly work. The god surveyed the hosts below him with a wan smile, and then clapping his hands to his sides, he laughed a laugh of thunder. On this the trumpets brayed once, and once only, and the armies engaged. In a moment the god saw that his sprites—there were immortal thousands, though born of human brains—had done his wise behest. There was no smoke—no fire. The great guns were dumb—the muskets undischarged; for be it known to you, sir, that the Turveytopians had at the time all the weapons since invented in our miniature world. Then you might have seen the soldiers charge, and their brittle bayonets break harmless against the bellies of the foes: then would some seize their weapons, and with the butt-end strike the enemy in the teeth. And the enemy stood and licked their lips. Wherefore, you will ask? I will tell you. The musket-stock was no longer walnut-wood; but, by the benignity of the great God Jocus, a thing of savoury sausage-meat, calling up the spirit of enjoyment in the heart of man as it smote his nostril In this way, sir, all things were changed. Here you would see a soldier take a cartridge from his box, and with bloody and sepulchral looks bite the cartridge-end. At that moment the face changed to sweetness and content; for, the cartridge bitten, a delicious cordial flowed into the mouth of the biter, and winding about his stony heart, melted it into human jelly. Here you would see a grenadier sucking a bayonet, as a nursling sucks a lollilop; and wherefore?—The great God Jocus had turned the deadly weapon into sugar-candy. In another place you might behold the small drums turned into pots of jelly, and the litter drummer-boys eating therefrom, and painting their downy faces with raspberry and currant of more than martial red. Big drums took the shape and flavour of rounds of beef; and in a thought the kettles were buffaloes' dried humps. The pioneers' caps became wine-coolers, and their aprons napkins of damask. Grey headed officers swallowed

their own swords, turned into macaroni. A cymbal player was seen to devour his cymbals, suddenly changed into ratafia paste. What had been gunpowder was eaten by the handful as small saccharine comfits; cartridge bullets were candied plums, and gave great pleasure both to horse and foot. Well, sir; at first there was vast astonishment; then a low murmur of delight ran through either host; then there was a mighty smacking of lips; and then the opposing armies laughed a tremendous laugh, and embraced. On this a solemn cachinnation escaped the great God Jocus, who, uncrossing his legs, vanished. The news flew among the women of Turveytop, who, coming and bringing their children to the field, made merry with the army. A banquet was resolved upon; it was but rightful thanksgiving to the benevolent Jocus, whose noble practical jest had saved the blood of Turveytop; and more, had provided, yea, in the very engines of war, the wherewithal to comfort the bowels and rejoice the heart of man. The substance of dried meats was found in gun carriages; delicious cheeses were in the wheels; and pikes and halberds were nought more deadly than attenuated sausage, pungent and aromatic. The great guns, too—charged as it was thought with agony and death for thousands—contained nothing more mischievous than ruby wine. The cannon shot, turned to corks, were now withdrawn; and the armies ate and drank, and laughed and sang, and danced, and gave hearty thanks to the great God Jocus.' "

One of the sweetest passages in his writings is a short passage about villages.

" At this time the declining sun flamed goldenly through the casement. We looked, doubtless, yearningly towards it, for the hermit rising, said, with solemn voice—'Let us abroad, and behold God Almighty in the heavens.' Then taking his staff, he passed into the garden, and silently we followed him.

" It was a glorious time. The air fell upon the heart like balm; the sky, gold and vermilion-flecked, hung, a celestial tent, above mortal man; and the fancy-quickened ear heard sweet, low music from the heart of earth, rejoicing in that hour of gladness.

" 'Evenings such as this,' said the hermit, after a pause, 'seem to me the very holiday time of death: an hour in which the slayer, throned in glory, smiles benevolently down on man. Here, on earth, he gets hard names among us for the unseemliness of his looks, and the cruelty of his doings: but in an hour like this, death seems to to me loving and radiant,—a great bounty, spreading an immortal feast, and shewing the glad dwelling-place he leads men to.'

" 'It would be great happiness could we always think so. For so considered, death is, indeed, a solemn beneficence—a smiling liberator, turning a dungeon door upon immortal day. But when death, with slow and torturing device, hovers about his groaning prey; when, like a despot, cunning in his malice, he makes disease and madness his dallying serfs'——

" 'Merciful God!' cried the hermit, 'spare me that final terror! Let me not be whipped and scourged by long, long suffering to death

—be dragged, a shrieking victim, downward to the grave; but let my last hour be solemn, tranquil, that so, with open, unblenched eyes, I may look at coming death, and feel upon my cheek his kiss of peace!'

"Thus spoke the hermit, with passionate fervour. His mind seemed solemnly uplifted. We turned aside from him, following one of the many garden paths. After some minutes, the hermit came up with us. He was again the cheerful, light hearted anchorite. 'What say you,' said he, 'to pass an hour or so at The Gratis?'

"'Where shall we meet the villagers of Clovernook?'

"'Some of them, at least,' said the hermit. "I have not been there these three weeks. This way: we shall have time to stroll around; there are some ruins (for Clovernook has its antiquities) I shall be glad to show you.' The hermit led the way from the garden, and with a few strides we found ourselves in a delicious green lane. 'This,' said he of Bellyfulle, 'is called Velvet-path, and leads eastwardly to the village. What do you pause at?' asked the hermit, as we suddenly stopped, listening to sheep-bells that sounded at various distances, and in various notes, through the balmy air.

"'The sheep-bells. How beautifully toned,' we said. 'Of all rustic sounds, our favourite music.'

"'To me,' said the hermit, 'the sheep-bell sounds of childhood; yea, of babyhood. In the world without us, it hath often been to me a solace and a sweetness. I had seen little of the green earth—knew, alas! how little of its softening loveliness, its beautiful records of God's tenderness to man in herbs and flowers, that in their beauty seem sown by angel hands for man's delight. Of these things I had little seen or known; I was so early built up in the bricks of a city: otherwise, sir, harsh thoughts and foolish sneers, evil and folly begotten in a too-early, sordid strife with man, perhaps, had not defiled me. The sheep-bell was the one remembrance, the one thought still dwelling in my brain, and with its sometime music calling up a scene of rustic Sabbath quietude. Swelling meads in their soft greenness; hedge-rows, and their sparkling flowers; a row of chestnut trees in blossoming glory; a park; a flock of nibbling sheep—a child, the mute yet happy wonderer at all.'

"'And the scene charmed by the simple sheep-bell?'

"'Even now,' said the hermit, 'it is in certain moods my best music. Many an evening have I seated myself on that mossy cushion, at the foot of yonder beech-tree, and leaning back with folded hands and closed eyes, have let my brain drink and drink its stilling sounds: and I have gone off into day-dreams, heaven knows where. I have been in the holy east; have heard the flocks of the Patriarchs, and seen Rebecca at the well.'"

It is very seldom that he indulges in this pastoral vein, which is much to be regretted, as there are few writers capable of more fully informing their readers with all the charms of rustic nature.

When Jerrold selects a piece of this description, he is far truer to nature than most writers: he does not, certainly, paint a pig-sty so minutely as some, nor is he so wonderful at a duck as others; but for the pleasantest parts of a village, commend us to the author of Clovernook: mark how he gives a light to primrose, even though in a dingy shop.

"'Pugwash had another unprofitable weakness. He was fond of what he called Nature, though in his dim, close shop, he could give her but a stifling welcome. Nevertheless, he had the earliest primroses on his counter,—"they threw," he said, "such a nice light about the place." A sly, knavish customer presented Isaac with a pot of polyanthuses, and, won by the flowery gift, Pugwash gave the donor ruinous credit; the man with wallflowers regularly stopped at Isaac's shop, and for only sixpence, Pugwash would tell his wife he had made the place a paradise. "If we can't go to nature, Sally, isn't it a pleasant thing to be able to bring nature to us?" Whereupon Mrs. Pugwash would declare, that a man with at least three children to provide for had no need to talk of nature.'"

It may, perhaps, interest the public to know that this fine piece of "real life tragedy" was written while Jerrold had an execution in his house; when it was finished he took it to Yates, who was then lessee of the Adelphi, and asked him to give him thirty pounds for it; the manager declined to read it, but told the dramatist to take it to Mr. Reeve, the celebrated comedian, and that he would be guided by his opinion.

The indignant author rejected the offer with contempt, and hastily left the unfeeling lessee. It was then submitted to the Manager of Drury Lane, who, after reading it, gave Jerrold two hundred pounds for the drama.

Many of the sentiments in this piece are "extracts from life;" we remember one instance especially—when Martin asks for assistance from one who is under deep obligations to him, the latter says, "He has lost so much money by lending that he has made a rule to lend no more—and

indeed most of his means are out on venture." This heartless maxim is a literal extract from a letter from T. P. Cooke, the famous delineator of sailor life, in reply to an application from Jerrold for a loan of ten pounds. To understand the full ingratitude of this refusal the reader must bear in mind that at this very time the actor was receiving sixty pounds a week for performing in "Black Eyed Susan," one of Jerrold's own plays; but we give an extract from the scene. A curious volume might be written, showing the origin of every dramatist's experience.

"MAR. I have been to Harry Wilson. The same Harry Wilson to whom my grandfather lent good guineas to begin the world.

RACH. You asked him to lend you the money for a time?

MAR. I stammered it out somehow.

RACH. And did he?

MAR. D—— him!

RACH. Oh, Martin!

MAR. I thought I was talking to a brother. I told him all, Rachel!—And he heard me with a smile on his face, and said he was sorry.

RACH. Then he could not assist us?

MAR. No. His money was laid out in ventures—he had lost by lending—but he was very sorry?

RACH. And he offered nothing?

MAR. When I told him we had not a guinea—not a home that we could call ours—not a certain meal—the tears came into my eyes, and I felt like a thief whilst I said all this,—well, he wouldn't lend me a farthing; but, kind soul! he bade me take a glass of wine, and hope for better days! I took the wine, and pouring it upon the floor, wished that my blood might be so poured out of my heart, if ever again I stood beneath his roof, and so I left him.

RACH. And your other friend?

MAR. No: I asked no other. One denial was enough.

RACH. Then every hope is gone!"

Our readers must, we think agree with us in the truth of that glimpse of real life. We now call their attention to another part, where he carries *reality* to its height; it is a scene from "The Rent-Day."

[ENTER CRUMBS AT THE DOOR—CROSSES OVER BEHIND.]

"CRUMBS. This is a disagreeable business.

TOBY. I should know that by your looking so pleased.

CRUM. I want my due.

TOBY. You'll have it some day. I wish the law allowed me to give it you now.

BEAN. Come, come, Master Crumbs, have compassion.

TOBY. Compassion! tell him to have three heads.

RACH. Do not anger him. [To CRUMBS.] Good sir, give us time: but a short time: have mercy.— Kneel, children, kneel! [CHILDREN ARE ABOUT TO KNEEL, WHEN MARTIN STARTS UP.]

MAR. Stand, if you're of my blood. They are the children of an honest man, and must not kneel before a villain.

CRUM. Mighty well. You owe a twelvemonth's rent, and instead of money, you give blustering words. Rent-day passes lightly with you.

MAR. Lightly. [To BEANSTALK.] Farmer, as I am a man, I have lived a whole year in torment. Day has been all misery to me, and bed no bed. Still, as rent day would come, I have lain awake whole nights, and every night more dreadful than the past. Then I've tried to think no more, but dug my head into my pillow, and fixed my fingers tightly in my hair, and tried to stun myself to sleep; but all would not do: there appeared a something hanging over me: heavy and stifling it seemed, and my blood would run hot and cold; and so I've lain and watched, and prayed the daylight in. The next night worse; for it brought the time still nearer. And when at last the rent-day came, and I without one groat, I've crossed yon door, not with an English farmer's tread, but with a thief's pace, crawling to the gallows. This is to pass rent-day lightly.

CRUM. Why not give up the farm? Why not leave the house?

MAR. Why not? My father's father grew grey under this roof. And sooner should these beams fall and knock my brains out than I would quit them. Here I was born, and here I will die. If you would take me through yon door, Master Crumbs, I tell you it must be heels foremost. Leave the house! I almost love it as a living thing.

CRUM. All very fine. For my part, I can't see why one house shouldn't be as good as another.

MAR. Likely you cannot. But I have crawled a little child upon this floor: the very door-step is worn with my feet. I have seen my mother, father, die here! I—I tell you, here I first saw the light, and here I'll close my eyes.

RACH. Dear Martin, be calm.

CRUM. You'll not oppose the law?

MAR. I know not that. I tell you, don't provoke me. [TAKING THE ARM CHAIR.] Here I sit in my grandfather's chair: the chair of that old man, who, for forty years paid rent and tithe to the last guinea. Here I sit. And I warn you, put not a hand upon a stick or thread.

CRUM. [CROSSES BEHIND, CALLING AT DOOR. Come in, friends.]

[ENTER BULLFROG AND BURLY AT DOOR.]

MAR. I warn you back.

BURLY. [SHOWING A PAPER.] What say you to our warrant, Master Heywood?

MAR. I tell you not to tempt me. I cannot trust myself, for I am desperate. Leave the farm!

CRUM. [TO BULL. AND BUR.] You know your duties. [EXIT.

BULL. [WHO HAS BEEN LOOKING OVER GOODS.] Business is business. [TAKES OUT PEN, INK AND BOOK.] One bedstead.

MAR. Let me come at them.

TOBY. Nay, nay, brother.

RACH. Husband.

CHILDREN. Father. [THEY ALL HANG ABOUT MARTIN, KEEPING HIM FROM ATTACKING BURLY AND BULLFROG.]

MAR. [AFTER A STRUGGLE, SINKS INTO THE CHAIR.] Rachael; my poor babes; take all, take all.

BUL. [MAKING OUT INVENTORY.] One bedstead.

BEAN. AND NEIGHBOURS [WHO HAVE ENTERED AND COME DOWN, SOME REMAINING BEHIND.] Shame, shame.

TOBY. Blood-suckers.

BUL. One toasting-fork, one bird-cage, one baby's rattle.

MAR. God help us! God help us!"

In person Jerrold is very small and spare; stoops, with his head in his shoulders—hair grey, and pushed back, as though he had dragged it through a gooseberry-bush instead of a comb, while his sharp features, shaggy eye-brows, from 'neath which stare two earnest eyes—sharp voice and biting manners, are in perfect keeping with his writings, and altogether make up the embodied idea of a man of indomitable self-will and reliance, ever ready for the conflict of opinions, in which he gives and receives unflinchingly the hardest of blows. We have recorded some of his gentlest sayings in this volume, and regret that the tone of many others that we remember are too personal to admit of repetition. He is very sweeping in his remarks, and unsparing in his conversation, frequently in the irritation of the minute, wounding without scruple the feelings of his companions.

We remember, on one occasion, he stopped Mr. Macready in the midst of a patronising speech by

one of his homespun remarks. Mr. Jerrold, meeting the great tragedian, asked him if it was true that he had taken Drury Lane Theatre. The other replied it was, and that he hoped to be able to benefit Mr. Jerrold by bringing forward his pieces. This being said in somewhat of a patronizing tone, annoyed the dramatist, who replied sharply, "Come, come, Mr. Macready, none of your d——d *grim* patronage to me, if you please."

This is, however, a very mild specimen of his *retorts courteous*.

Some years ago his genial [?] mode of living brought on a severe illness, which many thought would incapacitate him for all future exertion, but a fortunate resolve to adopt the *water* cure did for him more than even his medical advisers hoped.

In 1846 he joined a few friends in getting up some private theatricals, which met with much success; they were first projected for the benefit of Miss Kelly, and a large sum was collected: the first play was "Every Man in His Humour," and all agreed that never was it better played than by these distinguished amateurs. The chief parts were represented by Dickens, Jerrold, Foster, Mark Lemon, Dudley Costello, and others of the contributors to "Punch." The *Kitely* of Foster, and the *Bobadil* of Charles Dickens were especially well done. Shortly afterwards they were persuaded to repeat these performances for the benefit of the Sanatorium, and since then they have been exhibited at Manchester. The anxiety to see so many celebrated authors was excessive, and as much as five guineas were given for a ticket, the original cost of which was only one guinea. Prince Albert, the Dukes of Cambridge and Sutherland, and a host of fashionables were there, no doubt to the great delight of this band of Radicals, who had

spent so many hours in satirising the Prince Consort, in his abortive attempt to invent a hat.

The great secret of the success of "Punch" is the political character it has assumed, otherwise it must long ago have perished; nothing is so annoying and wearisome as a companion who is determined to be funny; but when you make the chief topics of conversation politics, with the follies and fashions of the day, and treat these in a facetious manner, you appeal at once to a world of ready and patient listeners.

JOHN FORSTER.

It seldom occurs that the editor of an influential periodical produces, after his appointment, any work of eminence :—it is a very common thing for a distinguished author to be placed at the head of a Review, but few men achieve any greatness afterwards. It seems as though the unceasing critical necessities of his position deprived him of that directness of purpose, and energy of will, requisite for the conception and execution of a great work. This remark has been suggested by the contrary effect produced upon the accomplished author of the "Life of Goldsmith," who was comparatively unknown to the world of letters till he became literary editor of the "Examiner." Since then he has published three valuable works which give him a claim to be admitted into the British Authors.

Mr. Forster is descended from a respectable family of Berwick on Tweed, and after receiving a classical education, was entered of the Inner Temple. His predispositions were however to a more attractive profession, and he devoted more attention to the "dulce" than the "utile." Possibly this might have been the effect of necessity, as we seldom find barristers neglect their briefs

when they can get any: it is a pleasant legal fiction to believe that some lawyers are so fond of poetry as to rise above the superior fascinations of a fee.

When Forster emerged from the anomalous position of a briefless barrister we find him engaged on the "Examiner," where his criticisms are held in much repute. When Mr. Dickens retired from the editing of the "Daily News," he undertook to conduct that paper, but after some time, we believe, abandoned it. Previous to this, Messrs. Chapman and Hall placed the Foreign Quarterly Review under his care, and he remained at the head of this entertaining periodical till it was finally incorporated with the "London and Westminster."

When Dr. Lardner projected his "Encyclopedia of British Literature," Mr. Forster promised his support, and contributed to that valuable collection "The Lives of British Statesmen." This established his reputation, and few prose writers have been more strikingly successful on their first appearance than was the author of these admirable biographies.

We shall pass these over with this general commendation, and conclude our hasty sketch of their talented author by a few remarks on his last and greatest work, "The Life of Oliver Goldsmith."

It is somewhat singular that having occasion to remark on Mr. W. Irving's false position in American literature, in order to bring the absurdity to the test of a mathematical problem, we compared him with Goldsmith, and we trust completely exposed the fallacy of considering the author of "The Sketch Book" as anything beyond an agreeable essayist, and a very successful imitator of the level style of Addison and Pope.

The piracy of American publishers has been a favourite topic for indignant vituperation, but Mr.

Irving has just given to the world so glaring an instance of unscrupulous appropriation of the labours of another, that it is utterly impossible to avoid arraigning the offender, however respectable his general station in literature may be.

That we may allow Mr. Irving the full advantage of stating his own case, we quote part of his preface. He thus commences :

"In the course of a revised edition of my works I have come to a biographical sketch of Goldsmith, published several years since. It was written hastily, as introductory to a selection from his writings, and though the facts contained in it were collected from various sources, I was chiefly indebted for them to the voluminous work of Mr. James Prior, who had collected and collated the most minute particulars of the poet's history with unwearied research and scrupulous fidelity, 'but had rendered them, as I thought, in a form too cumbrous and overlaid with details and disquisition, and matters uninteresting to the general reader.'"

Mr. Irving, therefore, says he was induced by this cumbrous collection to undertake the revisal of his own "hastily written sketch." One would naturally have thought that had any one anticipated him he would, with the true gentlemanly instinct, have abandoned the field—but Mr. Irving's genius is essentially imitative, and he appropriates, as a matter of course.

"When I was *about of late* to revise my biographical sketch, preparatory to publication, *a volume was put into my hands* (sweet little twaddler, 'put into his hands,' as though he were fed with 'spoon meat,') recently given to the public by Mr. John Forster, of the Inner Temple, who likewise availing himself of the labours of the indefatigable Prior, and a few more lights, since coloured, has produced a biography of the poet, executed with a spirit, a feeling, a grace, and an eloquence that leaves nothing to be desired. Indeed, it would have been presumption in me to undertake the subject after it had been thus felicitously treated, did I not stand committed by my previous sketch. That sketch now appeared too meagre and insufficient to satisfy public demand, yet it had to take its place in the second series of my works unless something more satisfactory could be substituted.

"Under these circumstances, I have again taken up the subject, and gone into it with more fulness than formerly, omitting none of the facts, which I considered illustrative of the life and character of

the poet, and giving them in as graphic a style as I could command. Still the hurried manner in which I have had to do this, amidst the pressure of other claims on my attention, and with the press *dogging at my heels*, has prevented me from giving some parts of the subject the thorough handling I could have wished.

"Those who would like to see it treated still more at large, with the addition of critical disquisition, and the advantage of collateral facts, would do well to refer themselves to Mr. Prior's circumstantial volumes, or to the elegant and discursive pages of Mr. Forster.

"For my own part, I can only regret my short comings, in which to me is a labour of love, for it is a tribute of gratitude to the memory of an author whose writings were the delight of my childhood, and have been a source of enjoyment to me throughout life, and to whom, of all others, I may address the beautiful apostrophe of Dante to Virgil:—

'Tu se' lo mio maestro, e 'l mio autore:
Te se' solo colui, da cu' io tolsi
Lo bello stile, che m' ha fatto onore.'

"SUNNYSIDE, AUGUST 1, 1849. W. I.

Thus finishes one of the most unique specimens of appropriation it has ever been our bad fortune to meet with: we say *bad* fortune, for proceedings like these, (though taken,) and the cry of inferior authors, have a tendency in the eye of the indiscriminating public to lower the whole republic of letters.

We cannot admit that the intention to reprint a hasty outline of a poet's life renders it incumbent upon the writer of the flimsy sketch to pillage the superior labours of another. What could be said of the man who, having promised himself or family to build a wooden shed, stripped the well furnished house of another to remedy his own poverty? It would have been far better for Mr. Irving's reputation had he not published this attempt to defend his plagiarism: the plain truth of the whole matter is this:—Mr. Irving had prepared a *hasty sketch* of Goldsmith, with which he intended to swell out this republication (*usque ad nauseam*) of his desultory writings. He acknowledges he derived the materials for this *hastily written sketch* from Prior,

Just as the *hastily written life* was on the point of being sent to the printer, somebody "put into his hand" Mr. Forster's volume, "executed with a spirit, a feeling, a grace, and an eloquence, that leaves nothing to be desired." The temptation to Mr. Irving was irresistible, he coolly copied into his own book "the feeling, grace and eloquence" of this rival biographer, and struts about in peacock's feathers, like Oliver himself in his peach coat: he may truly write,

"In se lo mio maestro,"

The chief thing to be admired in this is the apparently unconscious innocence of Mr. Irving during this singular confession of one of the most glaring trespasses upon the rights of a brother author we ever remember.

So far, however, as Goldsmith is concerned, Forster's life will ever bear Mr. Irving out of the field, and will very probably remain, for years to come, as the biography *par excellence* of that fine hearted genius.

As specimens of genial feeling, hearty appreciation, and felicitous style, we select a few passages from this volume which contrast unmistakeably with the faded piracy, tame sentimentalism, and common-place suavity of Mr. Irving's book.

"A year and a half after he had entered college, at the commencement of 1747, his father suddenly died. The scanty sums required for his support had been often intercepted, but this stopped them altogether. It may have been the least and most trifling loss connected with that sorrow: but 'squalid poverty,' relieved by occasional gifts, according to his small means, from uncle Contarine, by petty loans from Bryanton and Beatty, or by desperate pawning of his books of study, was Goldsmith's lot thenceforward. Yet even in the depths of that despair, arose the consciousness of faculties reserved for better fortune than continual contempt and failure. He would write Street-Ballads to save himself from actual starving; sell them at the Rein

Deer Repository in Mountrath Court for five shillings a piece; and then steal out of the college at night to hear them sung.

"Happy night! worth all the dreary days! Hidden by some dusky wall, or creeping within darkling shadows of the ill-lighted streets, watched, and waited, this poor neglected sizer, for the only effort of his life which had not wholly failed. Few and dull, perhaps, the beggar's audience at first; more thronging, eager and delighted, when he shouted the newly-gotten ware. Cracked enough his ballad-singing tones, I dare say; but harsh, discordant, loud or low, the sweetest music that this earth affords fell with them on the ear of Goldsmith. Gentle faces pleased old men stopping by the way, young lads venturing a purchase with their last remaining farthing: why here was a World in little, with its Fame at the sizer's feet! 'The greater world will be listening one day,' perhaps he muttered, as he turned with a lighter heart to his dull home.

"It is said to have been a rare occurrence when the five shillings of the Rein Deer Repository reached home along with him. It was the most likely, when he was at his utmost need, to stop with some beggar on the road who might seem to him more destitute even than himself. Nor this only. The money gone: often, for the naked shivering wretch, had he slipped off a portion of the scanty clothes he wore, to patch a misery he could not otherwise relieve. To one starving creature with five crying children, he gave at one time the blankets off his bed, and crept himself into the ticking for shelter from the cold.

"It is not meant to insist on these things as examples of conduct, 'Sensibility is not Benevolence;' nor will this kind of agonized sympathy with distress, even when graced by an active self-denial, supply the solid duties or satisfactions of life. There are distresses, vast and remote, with which it behoves us still more to sympathise than with those, less really terrible, which only more attract us by intruding on our senses; and the conscience is too apt to discharge itself of the greater duty by instant and easy attention to the less. So much it is right to interpose when such anecdotes are told. To Goldsmith, all circumstances considered, they are honourable; and it is well to recollect them when the 'neglected opportunities' of his youth are spoken of. Doubtless there were better things to be done, by a man of stronger purpose But the nature of men is not different from that of other living creatures. It gives the temper and disposition, but not the nurture and the culture. These Goldsmith never rightly had, except in such sort as he could himself provide; and now assuredly, he had not found them in his college. 'That strong steady disposition which at once makes men great,' he avowed himself deficient in; but were other dispositions not worth the caring for? his imagination was too warm to relish the cold 'logic of Burgersdicius,' or the dreary subtleties of 'Smiglesius:' but with nothing less cold or dreary might a warm imagination have been cherished? When, at the house of Burke, he talked these matters over in after years with Edmond Malone, he said that, though he made no figure in mathematics, he could have turned an ode of Horace with any of

them. His tutor, Mr. Theaker Wilder, would as soon have had him turn a lathe.

* * * * *

"Goldsmith looked into his heart and wrote. From that great city in which his hard-spent life had been diversified with so much care and toil, he travelled back to the memory of lives more simply passed, of more cheerful labour, of less anxious care, of homely affections, and of humble joys, for which the world and all its successes offer nothing in exchange.

* * * * *

"That hope is idle for him. Sweet Auburn is no more. But though he finds the scene deserted, for us he re-peoples it anew, builds up again its ruined haunts, and revives its pure enjoyments; from the glare of crowded cities, their exciting struggles and palling pleasures, carries us back to the season of natural pastimes and unsophisticated desires! adjures us all to remember, in our several smaller worlds, the vast world of humanity that breathes beyond; shows us that there is nothing too humble for the loftiest and most affecting associations; and that where human joys and interests have been, their memory is sacred for ever!

* * * * *

"With darker shadows from the terrible and stony truths that are written in the streets of cities, the picture is afterwards completed; and here, too, the poet painted from his heart. His own experience, the suffering for which his heart had always bled, the misery his scanty purse was always ready to relieve, are in his contrast of the pleasures of the great, with innocence and health too often murdered to obtain them. Some of his 'distinguished friends' objected to these views, but he let them stand. They would have 'objected' to what was not uncommon with himself, abandoning his rest at night to give relief to the destitute. They thought the parish should have done what a yet more distinguished friend, Samuel Johnson, once did, and which will probably be remembered when all he wrote or said shall have passed away: his picking up a wretched ruined girl, who lay exhausted on the pavement; taking her upon his back, carrying her to his house, and placing her in his bed; not harshly upbraiding her; taking care of her, with all tenderness, for a long time; and endeavouring on her restoration to health to put her in a virtuous way of living.

Mr. Forster has turned his fortieth year, lives a comfortable bachelor's life in Chambers, 46, Lincoln's Inn; is much in request with his literary friends, and is the chosen associate and adviser of Dickens and Macready. He is a fine critic; and

if somewhat too fond of admiring prevailing celebrities, let it be borne in mind that the immortal John Smith, junior, in his famous work, says, "Let us regard with a bland benignity that admiration which, approximating to enthusiasm, somewhat officiously, like the departing light of eve, clings to the wheels of the descending day-god."

JOHN WESTLAND MARSTON.

Mr. Marston, the son of a clergyman, was born in 1819, and is descended from a respectable family in Lincolnshire.

In his twenty-first year he came to London, resolved to try his success in the world of letters: after writing for several of the second class magazines, he finished his tragedy of "The Patrician's Daughter," and introduced himself to Mr. Dickens, who fortunately became interested in the play. Struck with the novelty of "a coat-and-breeches tragedy," the good-tempered novelist recommended Macready to produce it, and after some little hesitation this distinguished actor took himself the chief character, Mordaunt.

This piece having been performed several times in America, renders any lengthened critique unnecessary, we shall, therefore, content ourselves by stating that it is too deficient in interest ever to be any thing more than endured: the hero is a singular compound of ill-manners, ill-breeding, ill-feeling, and brutality: the morbid action of a wounded conceit is too petty to interest us in the hero, even if otherwise a good and tolerably great man, but when, added to this, he is a narrow-souled parvenu, the dignity of tragic action is lost, and the whole

interest destroyed. The scope and progress of the piece is too limited, and the want of comprehensiveness in plan, and force in execution, render this one of the least satisfactory of acting plays: besides these grave organic defects, there are continual errors of treatment, fatal to all vitality.

The only dramatic effect is where Mordaunt rejects the hand of Mabel, a piece of absurd, unnecessary, and totally unnatural brutality. That scene alone shows that Mr. Marston is only melodramatic, and not dramatic:—for the true poet produces his greatest effects, not by outraging the sympathies, but by vindicating them; and no writer, who has any knowledge of the human heart, will produce a scenic effect at the suicidal cost of destroying the audience's interest in his hero.

The petty spite of Mordaunt (whom Mr. Marston makes a sort of Byron and Canning together) becomes perfectly ludicrous. Would the commonest Titmarsh in creation, merely to resent the rejection of his offer for a lady of rank's hand, descend to the meanness, by his perseverance of overcoming the haughty father's objection, and then at the very altar, rejecting the lady, to soothe his wounded "*l'amour propre.*" A clever low born demagogue, who adds the somewhat anomalous accomplishment of writing verses, manages to get into Parliament; here he makes an eloquent speech which elevates him into a temporary position of importance. The minister invites him to stay during a parliamentary recess at his country seat, a sort of sop to the mushroom politician patriot, who from the dramatist's account seems to be the victim of conceit and inflated arrogance. Here he becomes enamoured of the earl's daughter, who pretty unmistakeably evidences to the parvenu that she returns his affection. Surely in a man

of any mind or heart this would have created a feeling of gratitude and unselfish love. He proposes for the lady's hand, and is very naturally rejected by the father of the lady. The magnanimous gallant vows vengeance, and devotes all his energies to become a very great man, which by the way is no very difficult thing to accomplish in a second rate play:—an inferior dramatist is always detected by this sort of writing; like a harlequin, he has the faculty of changing a commonplace fellow into a hero, by the mere touch of his pen ;—but this "hey presto" kind of proceeding is fatal to all dramatic excellence, and proclaims indeed the fact that the author is not, and never will be, a dramatist. Mordaunt having become Premier, renews his offer for the lady's hand, and is accepted. The day of their nuptials is appointed; all are met to celebrate the ceremony, when the bridegroom elect gets up, and makes a speech, ending all by rejecting the lady in the sight of all, and thus immolates his victim on the shrine of his own absurd wounded vanity.

He does this under the ridiculous idea that he is vindicating the insulted dignity of man, saying

> "For when convention dares to tread down man,
> Man shall arise in turn and tread down it."

By no means "a *palpable hit!*" The magnanimous hero having thus insulted and degraded the woman he ought to have delighted to honour, rushes out, and the act ends.

The play concludes by the lady putting herself into a galloping consumption, and thinking to save her life, the broken-hearted aristocratical father humbles himself so far as to go to the house of the magnanimous hero, and beg him to marry his daughter, as a sort of last resort of physic and last

hope of the doctors: as Mordaunt is about to promise he will be the dose of ipecacuanha in order to cure the lady, the patient herself rushes in, and after some highly absurd dialogue, dies in Mordaunt's arms, who forthwith calls himself a brute; the only bit of truth and common sense he utters in the whole play, but which the audience have been saying for him all the time; and falling at the old earl's feet, says, "Father," whereupon the earl says, "My son," and the curtain falls.

We should have passed this play over altogether, had it not been performed both in England and America with some applause by the unthinking mob. Mr. Marston evidently thinks that a startling absurdity is a striking effect; consequently, his heroes are invariably stage-struck cockneys—a sort of cross-breed between the milliner and the costermonger, combining the spurious shabby gentility of the one animal, with the brutality of the other. What can show more of the man-milliner than Mordaunt's conduct before he made the offer of marriage to Mabel's father?—and what more of the costermonger than his behaviour after his refusal? We cannot forbear involuntarily exclaiming, "Give us Shakspere and Bowery bh'oyism in preference to Marston and the fifth Avenue. Or, to put it into its simplest elements, let us have human nature before codfish aristocracy. God makes the one, but tailors and milliners the other." It will be seen that this play consists of three situations; namely, the refusal of Mordaunt's first offer; his rejection of the lady in his turn; and, thirdly, Mabel rushing into her lover's house to die. Let us realise this absurdity by inquiring for an instant into the possibility of an English aristocrat forgetting, not alone conventional dignity, but human nature, so far as to implore a man who had

so grossly insulted his daughter; and fancy Mabel, so forgetful of female propriety as to rush to this man's house, merely to have the pleasure of dying in his best drawing-room. But, enough of this: Mr. Marston's best performance is undoubtedly his dramatic poem, "Gerald," for, although even here the sentiment is sickly, there are many sweet passages—not enough, certainly, to prove the poet, but sufficient to demonstrate the elegant versifier. There is a certain family resemblance between Mordaunt and Gerald; both young men of plebeian extraction, with a decided tendency to versifying; both dissatisfied with their position in life; they alike pine for the countenance and society of men of rank—unerring signs of an inferior nature; and both are exposed to the insolence of the class they wish to force themselves upon.

Mr. Marston's last play of "Strathmore" is free from this objection; but the construction of the plot is very involved; and the most effective scene in the play is copied from Racine, even to the very word "die," which forms the climax of the effect. In all these plays there is a total want of that truthfulness and simplicity which appeals to the human heart, and receives the heart's response.—The dialogues of most modern plays are composed of talking at each other, a rhetorical display; and not an interchange of antagonism,—a striving of two discordant natures for the mastery, which is the dramatic result. This is our idea of tragic dialogue. Comedy, of course, depends on an elegant fencing, an interchange of thrusts and parries, a brilliant combat of wits; not a deliberate hacking of one party at the other for a certain number of lines, and then a standing still for the other to have his "hack away" in return.

It is unpleasant to be compelled to speak so un-

favourably of men of talent and cultivated taste; but so long as we confound these with men of genius, so long will the judgment of the many be of a low standard. The mind must not be educated into a false mediocrity, or the world will soon become a mob of mental dwarfs. Besides, it is the height of injustice to the man of real genius, and of still greater to those who pin their faith to a book.

The false prophets of literature must be driven from the temple ere true religion can be preached to the multitude. Our space forbids our carrying out this subject to the extent we should wish; we must therefore return to Mr. Marston, and say a few words on the man.

In 1842 Mr. Marston married a lady considerably older than himself, but clothed in the magical garment of "a small property." They live in Camden Town, near London, and are much attached to each other.

Their acquaintance was the result of a correspondence on literary matters,—very dangerous weapons in a young lady's hands. In person Mr. Marston is tall and slenderly made, with an inclination to stoop; he has a slight impediment in his speech, and altogether gives little outward evidence of the author.

FINIS.

J. S. Pratt, Stokesley, Yorkshire.

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