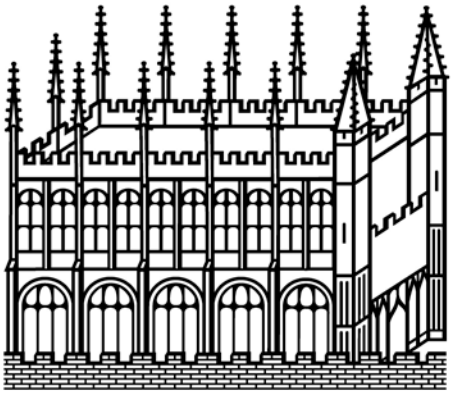

LIFE & WRITINGS OF OPPIAN.

To W. C. Bonaparte Wyse
with the Author's
best respects
Oct. 18

AN

ESSAY

ON

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

OPPIAN,

WITH AN ANALYSIS

OF THE

CYNEGETICS.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HAMILTON DRUMMOND,
D. D. M. R. I. A.

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1820.

POLITE LITERATURE.

AN

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THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

OPPIAN.

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D. D. M. R. I. A.

Oppianum Cilicem admirabilem illum et nunquam satis laudatum poetam.
Tan. Faber, Epist. LXIV

Read, April 26, 1819.

IN this country and in England, the name of Oppian is seldom mentioned, and but very little known; yet he has not been destitute of admirers, since first he recited his poems to a Roman audience, and won the approbation of the emperor, to whom they were particularly addressed. He has been quoted by the best writers of natural history, and justly praised for the elegance and truth of many of his descriptions. Among the Halieutic and Cynegetic poets, he deservedly holds the highest rank. His works may be considered as a valuable repository of the knowledge of the ancients on the subjects of hunting and fishing. I have, therefore, proposed to write an essay on the life and writings of this poet, hoping that such a

theme, not being foreign to the literary department of the Academy, will be received with their wonted candour and indulgence. Should it prove the means of making him more known to my countrymen, I shall be well compensated for my labour, and have the satisfaction of reflecting, that the gratitude due to his memory, for the pleasure which I have received from his writings, may thus be discharged.

To two writers, one of them an anonymous grammarian, the other Constantinus Manasses, who lived at Constantinople in the twelfth century, we are chiefly indebted for the history of Oppian.* They have recorded few particulars, indeed, of his life, but these few are equally honourable to his character as a man, and success as a poet. He was born probably in the last year † of the reign of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, in Anazarba, a city of Cilicia. If he derived no honour from being the native of a country which had acquired and merited the double reproach of being greatly addicted to piracy and falsehood,‡ he might enjoy the nobler praise of reflecting a lustre on the land of his birth by his genius and virtues. Democritus was a glory to Thrace, and Anacharsis to Scythia. But Cilicia was not, like those countries, unknown to the Muses, and a stranger to refinement. On the contrary, it ranked high among the provinces of Asia Minor, that land of poets and philosophers, for the cultivation of the fine arts.

* Vide *Belin de Ballu.* Prolegomena in Opp. p. III. † Idem.

‡ The alarming lengths to which the Cilicians had carried their piracies, in the time of Pompey the great, are well known to the classical reader. The other part of their character became proverbial, λογος παλαιος, μη ραδιως αληθευειν τους Κιλικας. The τρια καππα κακιστα enigmatically expressed the infamy attached to the names of the Cappadocians, Cretans and Cilicians. "Augustinus, in grammaticis, indicat fuisse tortum in Corn. Syllam, Corn. Cinnam et Corn. Lentulum, Creditumque est in libris Sybillinis horum nomina tribus hisce literis fuisse designata." ERASMI Adagia, p. 309.

Tarsus, its capital, though less frequented by strangers than Athens and Alexandria, claimed a superiority over both those cities, and every other seat of learning, for successful application to the study of philosophy and the sciences. * It could boast of numerous distinguished philosophers both of the Stoic and Academic sects, and also poets, among whom Diogenes and Dionysides are worthy of mention, the one for the inspired facility with which his verses flowed on any given subject—and the other as forming one of the stars which composed the poetic constellation of the Pleiades in the court of Ptolemy. It had also the honour of producing the apostle Paul; Nestor the tutor of Marcellus, the son of Octavia; †—Athenodorus the eloquent and philosophic friend of Augustus;—and Hermogenes the sophist, who wrote a treatise on rhetoric at the age of fifteen, ‡ and acquired such reputation that M. A. Antoninus listened with pleasure to his discourses, and rewarded his genius with magnificent presents. That the other cities of the province were imbued with the same taste for letters as the capital, would be no unreasonable supposition, though we had no direct proof of its reality; for there is a contagion in literary improvement which is impatient to be diffused; and it seldom happens that one region is in a state of great mental activity without producing a corresponding action and meritorious emulation in others. Such was ac-

* Τοσαυτη δε τοις ενθαδε ανδρασι σπουδη προς την φιλοσοφιαν, και την αλλην εγκυκλιον απασαν παιδειαν γεγονεν, ωστ' υπερβεβλησθαι, και Αθηνας, και Αλεξανδρειαν, και ει τινα αλλον τοπον δυνατον υπαρχειν εν ω σχολοι και διατριβαι των φιλοσοφων, και των λογων γεγονασι Strabo. lib. xiv.

† Idem.

‡ This Hermogenes was a striking proof of what has often been remarked of the precocity of genius, that it outgrows its strength, and decays as rapidly as it flourishes. At the age of twenty-five his memory was gone, and though he lived till an advanced age he soon relapsed into second childhood and became the contempt of those to whom he had once been an object of envy or admiration. "Hermogenes in peuritia senex, in senectute puer."

tually the case in Cilicia. From Mallos, a city of this province, had sprung Crates, the cotemporary of Aristarchus. Like this critic he was a learned commentator on Homer, and was the first to introduce into Rome the study of grammar, when he appeared in that city as ambassador from Attalus the second, king of Pergamus. The small town of Laertes gave birth to Diogenes the celebrated biographer. Soli or Pompeiopolis contends with Tarsus for the honor of Chrysippus and Aratus, the author of the "Phenomena." Anazarba could boast of Asclepiades and Dioscorides, the former distinguished as the author of several compositions, particularly a treatise on rivers,* the latter by his knowledge of medicine and botany.

The geographical features of the country from which the first impressions are taken, have commonly a lasting influence on the poet's genius. They are sometimes its exciting cause, and the true source of its inspirations. The scenes which delighted in childhood store his mind with images, and become the original of his poetic descriptions. In this respect Oppian was fortunate. Cilicia, in addition to the inspiring influences of an Asiatic climate, enjoyed many advantages favourable to the excitement and cultivation of poetic taste. One of its two divisions, known by the appellation of Trachæa, the rough and stony, was characterised by lofty and precipitous mountains, adorned with romantic scenery, and abounding with the noblest quarry for the hunter. Its other division, the Campestrian, spread into extensive plains, whose fertility rendered it the most opulent of the Roman provinces. Its principal rivers were the Cydnus and Pyramus. The former flowed through Tarsus, and was remarkable for the crystalline purity of its waters, and the wooded magnificence of its banks. Its tempting beauty and cool-

*Περι ποταμων. Vide Voss. de Hist. Græca.

ness had nearly proved fatal to Alexander the Great. The Pyramus which flowed past the city of Oppian, was of a more sublime description. As issuing from the defiles of Mount Taurus, it rushes through a rocky and tortuous channel to the sea, with a noise, says the scholiast who describes it, loud as thunder, it may have presented to the poet a lively picture of the inundation which he depicts so strongly, when speaking of the Orontes. Cilicia had, moreover, been the scene of many events so renowned both in real and mythological history, that they could scarcely fail to excite the emotions of a young and susceptible mind. Some of its cities had suffered from the ravages of the Greeks, in their famous expedition to Troy; and one of the female Cilician captives had given rise to the fatal contention on which the Iliad is founded. It had sent warriors to the siege of that city, and given Andromache a wife to Hector. One of its rocky passes had witnessed a mighty struggle between the armies of the East and West for the empire of the world. After the defeat of Crassus it beeame a frontier barrier of the Romans against the Parthian incursions. It may have derived some glory from being the province of the great master of Roman eloquence; and if, agreeably to the observation of Strabo, the names of places sacred to the Muses, are ample evidence that in such places poetry has been cultivated with success, Cilicia may claim no small share of poetical renown. It contained the famous saffron-bearing mountain Corycus: and the more famous Corycian cave, a favourite haunt of the Nine. Mallos was built by Mopsus, the son of Apollo and the nymph Manto, daughter of the prophet Tiresias. Another prophet equally renowned, Calchas,

Καλχας Θεσορίδης οἰωνοπολων ὀχ' αριστος

was said to have carried on a contest, in this country, with Mopsus,

for the palm of divination, or of power,* and to have died of chagrin at being defeated. The city of Soli had the reputation of being built by the great legislator Solon. The son of Jupiter and Danäe was the founder of Tarsus. The Muse's horse, Pegasus, had dropped one of his foot-wings on the spot where it stood. From this circumstance the city was said to derive its name; and in the days of mythological belief, it might have been supposed to derive some portion of the Muses' inspiration.

With these advantages of soil and climate, united to their historical and fabulous associations, Oppian enjoyed the undivided affection of a father capable of giving a proper direction to his pursuits. Agesilaus was a man of the highest rank among the citizens of Anazarba, devoted entirely to letters, and living more as a philosopher than a man of the world. In voluntary seclusion from the intrigues of courts and the bustle of the forum, he spent his days in the instruction of his son, and sought happiness where it has its only permanent residence, in the bosom of domestic affection. His plan of education was liberal and expanded. It embraced music, geometry, grammar, and the whole circle of the sciences. His wife Zenodote shared the duty and the pleasure of the task; and subsequent circumstances lead us to infer, that they found in their pupil all the docility and all the affection which can flatter the hopes and secure the love of a parent.

While they were engaged in this delightful vocation, their country became the theatre of war. Severus was contending with Niger for universal sovereignty, and they were perhaps but little aware how much their future fortunes would be affected

* Τον θανατον δε τυ Καλχαντος ενταυθα παραδιδοασιν, αλλοι τε και Σοφοκλης. Ου μονον δε την περι της μαντικης εριν μεμυθευκασιν, αλλα και της αρχης.

Strabo, lib. xiv.

by the result. A battle at the famous strait where Darius had been vanquished by Alexander, decided the contest. The fortune of Severus prevailed, and Niger met an irretrievable defeat. Several of the provinces, by espousing the cause of the latter, had provoked the resentment of the conqueror. " His unforgiving temper," to use the words of Gibbon, " stimulated by avarice, indulged a spirit of revenge where there was no room for apprehension. The most considerable of the provincials, who without any dislike to the fortunate candidate, had obeyed the governor under whose authority they were accidentally placed, were punished by death, exile, and especially by confiscation of their estates. Many cities of the east were stript of their ancient honors, and obliged to pay into the treasury of Severus four times the amount of the sums contributed by them for the service of Niger." Among the suffering cities, it is probable, Anazarba was included, and Agesilaus might have incurred the usurper's resentment either by supineness in his cause, or by imputed attachment, to that of his rival. When the citizens of Anazarba waited on the victor to offer the usual congratulations, Agesilaus was not in the number. Hoping, perhaps, to escape notice, or deeming himself out of the reach of malignant suspicion, he continued in the retirement of study, and lost the favourable opportunity of recommending himself to the imperial patronage. The jealous and tyrannical mind of Severus construed this neglect into a proof of intended disrespect or avowed disaffection, and avenged it, by ordering him into immediate exile to Melita, an island in the Adriatic sea.

Oppian, his son, and it may be presumed his wife, went the voluntary companions of his banishment. Happily they had resources in themselves against the malignity of their destiny, and proved

experimentally the truth of Cicero's eulogy on the love of letters. Those studies which amused them in prosperity became the consolation of their misfortune. A mind imbued with a taste for literature finds solace in its own contemplations, and learns, in the acquisition of mental treasures, to forget the evils and deprivations it has suffered from the world. If to this taste be joined a love of nature, it becomes still more independent. Nothing, indeed, can be better calculated than a fondness for natural history, to recreate the mind and body, and preserve both in a state of healthful activity. It presents an ever-varying and inexhaustible fund of pleasure; and, while it inspires the most sublime sentiments of the wisdom and benevolence of the Deity, teaches man to be resigned to his lot. Who has read the volume of nature with success, and not become more virtuous and more happy?

Prior to his exile, Oppian must have laid the foundation of his future fame. Though the Halieutics were first made public at Rome, it is likely that the Cynegetics first occupied his attention, and that, though he did not finish, he composed the greater part of them, while he had an opportunity, in Cilicia, of acquiring experimental knowledge of the subject. His situation now, in an island surrounded by all the finny tribes of the Adriatic, was peculiarly favourable to his icthyological studies. Here he might collect many facts both from the experience of the fishermen of the island and his own. In the poetical colouring and arrangement of these facts he found an uncloying feast, and instead of blaming the cruelty of the emperor, bewailing his condition with unmanly tears, or complaining of the injustice of fortune,*

* Ovid seems to have found only an image of his misfortunes in those objects which would have diverted a mind devoted to the study of natural history;

as Ovid had done in similar circumstances, he bore it with cheerful magnanimity as a philosopher. Not that he did not cherish an anxious wish of returning to his native country, that instinctive love of home which he has so beautifully described as adhering to the deer species, when taken from their native haunts.

Ἐξοχα δ' αυ τοδε φυλον ἑον δομον αμφαγαπαζει
Ηθαλεας τ' ευνας φιλιον τε ναπαισι μελαθρον·
Ει δε τε μιν στεπτησι πεδησαντες βροχιδεσσιν
Αγρευτηρες ἀγοιεν επ' ἀλλης αυτικα χωρης,
Τηλοθι δ' εν βησσησιν ελευθερον ἀυθι λιποιεν,
Ρεια ποτι γλυκερον δομον ηλυθεν, ἠχι ναιεσκεν,
Ουδ' ετλη ξεινος τις επ' αλλοδαποισιν αλασθαι.
Ουκ αρα τοι μενοισι φιλη πατρη μεροπεσσι·
Και βαλιων δε ποθος τις ενεστακται φρησι θηρων.

Κυν. B. l. 306.

What wond'rous instinct bids the deer repair
To well-known forests, and his wonted lair?
Should hunters snare him in their tortuous toil,
And lead him captive to a foreign soil,
How soon, when freed among its wilds to stray,
Back to his lov'd retreats he speeds his way!

Estur ut occulta vitiata teredine navis,
Æquoreos scopulos ut cavat unda salis,
Sic mea perpetuos curarum pectora morsus,
Fine quibus nullo conficiantur, habent.

It must, however, be allowed that the cases are not exactly parallel. Oppian was young, and full of hope and expectation. Ovid was now advanced in years, he had experienced the pleasures of a court, and hope had ceased to flatter.

In the strange scene the exile loaths to roam,
So dear his native haunts, so sweet is home!
For not to man is love of home confined;
It rules as strongly in the savage kind.

Many great and learned men, when in exile or prison, have prepared their way to future fame and fortune, planned the enterprize which led to victory, or pursued the meditations which rendered their names immortal. Had not Seneca and Boethius been banished, neither of them, especially the latter, had written on the consolations of philosophy. The loss of his Mantuan estate led Virgil to the Court of Augustus; and poverty was the parent of those verses which secured to Horace the patronage of Mæcenas. But Oppian had a higher and more amiable incentive to stimulate his muse, than the desire of riches, or the favour of courts. He wished to be the means of restoring his father to his native country; and as the genius of poets had been successfully employed before, even under greater difficulties, he did not despair of accomplishing his wishes, by an exertion of poetic talent accompanied by some seasonable compliments to the imperial family. The characters too, both of the emperor and his wife Julia Domna, may have flattered his hopes. Severus, notwithstanding his cruelty and avarice, was a lover of learning, and exhibited striking proofs of his willingness to encourage its cultivators. He listened with pleasure to the discourses of Hermocrates, and honoured Arria, a lady of distinction, with his particular friendship, because she applied herself to the study of philosophy and the reading of Plato. According to Spartian, Aurelius Victor, and Eutropius, he had himself studied philosophy, and excelled in various branches of polite literature. Though the declaration of Dion were true, that he evinced

more inclination than ability to learn the liberal arts, his own want of talents did not render him less an encourager of those who possessed them. As to his wife Julia Domna, Gibbon says, that "she had applied herself to letters and philosophy with some success, and the most splendid reputation. She was the patroness of every art, and the friend of every man of genius." She sought by acts of liberality to mitigate the odium of dishonouring her husband's bed; and though abandoned to the indulgence of her licentious passions, she did not forget what she owed to her country and the advancement of learning. She procured the rights of Roman citizens for Emessa, the city of her birth. She induced Philostratus to undertake the life of Apollonius; and by her continued generosity to the literati, secured the fame of which she was solicitous.

Of such a woman, a young and accomplished poet might reasonably expect the countenance. And if we take into the account that her sister Julia Mæsa was married to Julius Avitus, a native of Apamea, a city familiar to Oppian, may it not be fairly conjectured, especially as he had given proofs of his poetical talent prior to his exile, that his name was not unknown to the Roman court before he appeared there in person, and that he had some reason for indulging the hope of being received and heard with candour and liberality?

That a taste for literature and the fine arts continued to be cultivated at Rome, and patronized by the reigning families long after the Augustan age, is evident to every reader of history. A taste for them became the fashion, and those who had it not, affected to have it. But the splendor of the age when Cicero spoke, and Virgil and Ovid sang, has attracted most eyes so forcibly, that they have been dazzled by its brilliancy, almost into blindness to all succeeding excellence. The honor bestowed on the past, weakens

the attention due to the present. If the old poets, Ennius and Lucilius, in the days of Horace, were the great themes of panegyric, no wonder if, in after times, the writers of the Augustan age should be thought to have so concentrated in themselves all the rays of eloquence and poetry, as to leave nothing to their successors but darkness and despair. But, though it be granted that they far surpassed their followers, it cannot be concluded that a taste for literature was not more general in succeeding times, and that some real genius was not always starting up, among the tribes of sophists and poetasters, to vindicate the honor of true taste, and prevent a total declension into barbarism.

Eloquence in Rome being so indispensible to success in civil, and frequently, in military employments, proved a very important part of education, and its culture necessarily involved that of other branches of literature. Hence it happened, for a long series of years, that the emperors themselves were often renowned, not only for their proficiency in oratory and poetry, but for their patronage of men of letters, in which they seem to have made Augustus their model, and wisely considered it as a necessary part of the imperial character. Tiberius, that monster of debauchery, was fond of the liberal arts, and, though he is perstringed by Juvenal for the verbosity of his style, he was no mean orator in his vernacular tongue, which he spoke with great fluency. He also wrote lyric verses, and shewed his esteem for genius by erecting statues of the poets Euphorion, Rhianus, and Parthenius. Even the atrocious Caligula shewed himself willing to render a service to history, by allowing the books of Titus Labienus, Cremutius Cordus, and Cassius Severus, which had been prohibited in the reign of Tiberius, to be freely perused. The very vanity which led him to display his eloquence in the senate, in behalf of friend or foe, as the

cause of either best suited the exhibition of his powers, and his institution of the famous rhetorical competitions at Lyons, though followed by such ludicrous results, shew that the interests of literature were not forgotten. He pleaded causes after he had obtained the honor of a triumph, and composed comedies in Greek which were extant in the time of Suetonius. His successor Claudian, according to Seneca, was an encourager of learning as well as a writer. He wrote two histories, one of the Tyrrhenians in twenty books, the other of the Carthaginians in eight; and added three letters to the Roman alphabet, one of which is only conjectural, the other two, the Æolic digamma and the anti-sigma are well known. Though Nero thought it the acmé of glory to be hailed as the best harper in the world, he did not disdain the praise of eloquence. While he was yet a youth he pleaded the causes of the Ilians, the Rhodians, and the people of Bononia, with such ability, that he gained their respective suits. His cruelty in putting Seneca and Lucan to death, is no proof of his hostility to philosophy and poetry. He might punish the indiscretion of an artist, without any wish to exterminate the art. Galba was well versed in the sciences, and had made civil law his particular study. Vespasian, the only one of all the emperors whose moral character, as Tacitus observes, was meliorated by the possession of power, promoted both the fine arts and the mechanical, more than any of his predecessors. He invited the most celebrated poets to Rome, and gave annual salaries, payable out of the public treasury, to the Greek and Latin professors of rhetoric. His son, the virtuous Titus, was both an orator and a poet, and could speak on any subject with fluency and learning, without premeditation. If Domitian did not feel, he pretended, a love for letters, and is said to have succeeded so well in composition, that he was the admiration both, of Pliny and Quin-

tilian. The translation of Aratus which has reached our time, is, in the opinion of Vossius, undoubtedly the work of this emperor. His subsequent tyranny, indeed, frustrated the hopes which these promises gave, and his banishment of the philosophers merited the keen reprobation which it has received from the philosophic pen of Tacitus. Nerva, who succeeded, was also a poet. His elegant verses had gained him the friendship of Nero, and the honor of having his statue erected in the palace of that tyrant. Though Trajan was prevented, by having spent his younger years in a camp, from obtaining the renown of a scholar, the encouragement which he gave to learning, appears in the great number of eminent writers who flourished in his reign, among whom the names of Juvenal, Tacitus, and the younger Pliny, are the most distinguished. Adrian, at the age of fifteen, had made such proficiency in the study of Greek, that he was named the young Grecian. Gifted with a memory capacious and retentive almost beyond credibility, a memory which could repeat a whole volume after a single perusal, and name every soldier in the Roman army, he excelled at once in every branch of literature, science, and the fine arts. He united the lighter pursuits of painting and music to the study of physic, botany, and mineralogy; the grammarian's accuracy to the orator's vehemence, and the enthusiasm of the poet to the patience of the mathematician. He gave a welcome reception in his court to all who had signalized themselves in these pursuits; and often found amusement in disputing with the philosophers, and challenging the poets in extemporaneous verses, which he poured forth with the fluency of an improvisatore. He also wrote a Greek poem entitled the Alexandriad, and several other works both in prose and verse. Florus, Suetonius, and Arian the disciple of Epictetus, adorned his reign. Antoninus Pius was frugal of the treasury, and deemed it a

shame that the property of the public should be devoured by useless vermin: accordingly, he suppressed among other salaries which had been too lightly bestowed, that of Mesodemus, a lyric poet, who had obtained a pension from Adrian, for some elegiac lines on the death of his favourite Antinous. But he was, notwithstanding, a generous patron of learned men, particularly of those engaged in the education of youth, and gave them, through all the provinces, the most liberal support. The name of M. Aurelius speaks a volume. At the age of twelve he ranked among the philosophers, wore their habit, and practised their austerities. In oratory, philosophy, and a knowledge of civil law, he had no equal. The encouragement which he gave to literature degenerated into indiscriminate liberality. For, though many deserving men enjoyed his bounty, others partook of it who had no recommendation but their beards. Celsus, Lucian, Apuleius, Polyænus, Pausanias, probably Au. Gellius, and the two Sexti, the stoic and the empiric, were among the writers of this period. Even Commodus, the most execrable savage that ever disgraced a throne, was the patron of Julius Pollux, who had been one of his preceptors, and inscribed to him the work entitled "Onomasticon." Mention has already been made of Severus.*

From the cursory review which has thus been taken of the literary taste of the Roman emperors, from the time of Augustus to that of Severus, an interval of about two hundred years, of the encouragement which they gave to letters, and the number of eminent writers who lived during this period, it will appear, that literature has no great reason to complain of its interests being neglected by those whose influence could promote them best; or that the great efforts of the Augustan age had exhausted the human

* For more on this subject see the Universal History, vols. xiv. xv.

mind, and left it effete.* The investigation might be followed to a much later period, with a similar result. But this may suffice to show that Oppian did not appear in a barbarous age, nor among a people unimbued with taste, or incapable of appreciating poetical excellence.

No reason has been assigned for Oppian's selection of fishing, as a subject favourable to the design he had formed of recommending himself to the imperial family at Rome. It is not to be doubted, however, that it was congenial to his own taste, and that of the age. He gives it the epithet of "ερατεινην," beloved; and his works contain abundant evidence that they could be composed by no one who was not passionately addicted to the pleasures which they describe. The Romans were exceedingly fond of aquatic excursions, and the representation of naval engagements on their lakes. To these Lucretius alludes in the beginning of his second book;

Fervere quom videas classem, lateque vagari.

Augustus dug a lake near the Tiber, and Domitian built a theatre, for these entertainments. But Claudius, to give them a higher zest, at the draining of the Fucine lake, had a real battle between two fleets, the one of Rhodes, the other of Sicily, each consisting of twelve vessels of three banks of oars, whose crews were composed of condemned malefactors, to the number of 19,000. The signal was given by a silver triton, raised by mechanism out of the lake. The conflict was bloody, and the majority of the combatants perished.— Caligula delighted to sail along the coast of Campania, in gallies of cedar magnificently appointed. Tigillinus gave a splendid feast

* The French Encyclopedie, in the article Age, having spoken of Horace, Ovid, Cicero, &c. adds "Fatiguè d'avoir donnè le jour a tant d'hommes immortels, la nature se repose pendant plusieurs siecles!" This is in the true Gallic style.

to Nero on the lake Agrippa, in a large vessel towed by others of inferior size, embellished with ornaments of gold and ivory. The feast, to harmonize with the scene, consisted entirely of wild animals. Fishing formed a part of these amusements; and the emperors did not disdain to handle the implements of the art. Eutropius numbers it among Nero's luxurious vices, that he fished with golden nets, drawn by purple ropes.* A passage, near the commencement of the first Halieutic, shews that the family of Severus sometimes enjoyed this recreation. The imposition practised by Pythias, the goldsmith of Syracuse, on Canus, the Roman knight, as related in the third book of Cicero's Offices, shews how much a good fishing coast enhanced the value of a country residence, in the estimation of the Romans. And the fourth satire of Horace's second book, if we had no other documents, would show how well they appreciated the various excellencies of fishes, as articles of luxury. Their fish-ponds were supported at immense expence, and sometimes sold for the most exorbitant sums. Nor were they contented with having one sense gratified at the cost of this part of the animal creation. They had certain fishes, particularly the mullet, brought to table alive in vases, that they might feast their eyes with the change of colours exhibited in their dying agonies.†

Hunting was followed, as an amusement, less by the Romans, than the Greeks. It is classed by Sallust, in his philosophising mood, with agriculture, among servile employments. But he speaks

* Retibus aureis piscaretur quæ blateis funibus extrahebat, EUTROP. lib. vii. c. 14.

† Mullum expirantem versicolori quadam et numerosa varietate spectari, proceres gulæ narrant, rubentium squamarum multiplici mutatione pallescentem, utique si vitro spectetur inclusus. C. Plin. Nat. Hist. Liber. ix. c. 17.

of it as a necessary means of subsistence, not as the recreation of the wealthy and powerful. With these it has ever been a favourite sport, and among the Romans, a high degree of eclat was attached to success in it, as we may infer from the artifice of Gargilius, (in Horace) who bought a boar, and had it carried on a mule through the forum, that he might enjoy the reputation of having killed it in the chace.

> Gargilius qui mane, plagas, venabula, servos,
> Differtum transire forum populumque jubebat,
> Unus ut e multis, populo spectante, referret
> Emptum mulus aprum.

Independently then of their general interests, as embracing a knowledge of animated nature, it may be inferred that the subjects of fishing and hunting had peculiar attractions for a Roman ear. Taste, like dress and equipage, has its changes and revolutions. If georgics were a favourite topic, in the days of Virgil, field sports may not have been less so, in the days of Oppian. Ovid,* if the disjointed fragment ascribed to him be his, had written on Halieutics; and Gratius Faliscus, his cotemporary, on hunting. The writings of Seneca, Pliny, and Athenæus who devoted a considerable portion of his work to icthyology and the writers on that subject, had awakened public attention. Add to this that the games of the Circus,† and the frequent exhibition of

* Ennius too, at a much earlier period, had written on fishes See L. Apuleii Apologia. Q. Ennius Ἡδυπαθητικοις quæ versibus scripsit, innumerabilia piscium enumerat.

† Every species of wild beast was exhibited at these games;

> Quodcunque tremendum est
> Dentibus, aut insigne jubis, aut nobile cornu,
> Aut rigidum setis, capitur; decus omne timorque
> Sylvarum, non caute latent, non mole resistunt.
>
> CLAUDIAN.

wild beasts and birds collected from every region of the empire, necessarily introduced some knowledge of natural history to the Romans, and rendered every thing connected with it interesting.

The adaptation of such subjects as fishing and hunting to poetry, not being the business of the present inquiry, let it suffice to observe that the success of Oppian justified his choice. The most unpromising subject, in the creative hands of a poet, assumes a character of which a dull imagination is unable to form any conception. He covers the naked rock with verdure, and renders the most sterile soil prolific.

The Halieutics being completed, Oppian repaired to Rome, and, according to the custom of the age, announced their public recital, in the temple of Apollo. This was a mode of giving rapid publicity to every new composition, and, under proper management, it might have been attended with the most beneficial results. But, as it afforded too much room for party spirit and intrigue, it may have sometimes tended to repress the spirit of true genius, by unmerited reprehension; and to exalt the mediocrity which could condescend to bribe applause, into an elevation which nothing but solid learning and the most brilliant talents could long support. Oppian, however, was fortunate in having a candid audience. Severus and his family honoured him with their presence, and the poet had

Some were collected merely for curiosity, as Crocodiles, and various species of beasts and birds; but the more ferocious kinds were for the combat.—See Kennet's Ants.

J. Cæsar opposed 20 elephants to 500 men on foot. Twenty more with turrets on their backs, and 60 men to defend each turret, engaged with 500 foot and as many horse. Titus, at the dedication of the Colisæum gave 5000 wild beasts to be slain. (Eutrop.) M. Antoninus was said to have 100 lions in the exhibition of the games, after a victory. (Eutrop. lib. viii. c. 14.)

Vitellius, at one supper, had 2000 fishes and 7000 birds.

taken the proper precaution, according to the precepts of the Rhetoricians, to secure their benevolent attention, by his complimentary exordium. The event exceeded his expectations. The emperor expressed such gratification, that he proposed to give him whatsoever remuneration he chose to ask. The object of Oppian was now attained, and he immediately asked the restoration of his father. The piety of the request was pleasing to the emperor; and he not only granted it, but ordered that he should receive a stater for each of his verses; a gratuity equally honourable to the generosity of the prince, and the merits of the poet.

The verses of Oppian, on account of their eminent success and splendid reward, received the epithet of golden; as those of Pythagoras had been honored by a similar title, for the superior praise of their excellent morality. Accordin to Suidas, he was gifted with twenty thousand staters,* from which it is inferred that his verses must have amounted to the same number, though little more than a fourth part of them now remains. The Palatine manuscript of his anonymous biographer, as quoted by Belin de Belu, says that he was so enriched by the emperor's liberality, that he transcribed his poems in letters of gold.

Thus did Oppian, in the highly meritorious performance of a filial duty, find himself suddenly advanced to a high elevation of fame and fortune. He returned in triumph with his parents to Anazarba, honored as the best of poets, and most exemplary of sons. The indubitable proofs of genius which he had given, justify

* A golden stater was equivalent to 16*s.* 4*d.* of our money. Two myriads, or 20.000 of them would be above £16,000, a sum far exceeding what Octavia gave to Virgil. That Oppian should receive such an enormous sum is scarcely to be credited. It is not thus that poets are remunerated. But it is by no means necessary to suppose that all his poems had a share in the munificence of the emperor.

the supposition, that, had he lived till his powers acquired full vigour and maturity, he might have contested the palm of superiority with the most renowned poets of antiquity. But he did not long survive to enjoy his good fortune, or accomplish his poetical projects. He died a victim to the plague, about the thirtieth year of his age, to the inexpressible regret of his parents and countrymen. The latter shewed their grief for his loss, and honor for his memory, by erecting his statue, and engraving on its base the following inscription:

ΟΠΠΙΑΝΟΣ κλεος ειλον αϊδιον, αλλα με μοιρης
Βασκανος εξηρπαξε μιτος, κρυερος τ' Αϊδας με
Και νεον οντα κατεσχε τον ἐυεπιης ὑποφητην·
Ει δε πολυν με χρονον ζωον* μιμνειν φθονος αινος
Ειασεν, οὐκ ἀν τις μοι ισον γερας ελλαχε φωτων.

OPPIAN.

On me the Muse had deathless fame bestowed,
But Fate, too soon life's thread asunder tore;
Stern Pluto dragged me to his dark abode,
While yet in youth I wooed the Muse's lore:
My life, till age, had Fate malignant spared,
No poet e'er had brighter glories shared.

* "ζωον abest a Cod. Sylb. qui duos ultimos versus sic legit."

Ει δε πολυν με χρονον μιμνειν φθονος αινος ειασεν
Ουκ αν μοι τις ισον κλεος ελλαχεν εν χθονι Φωτῶν.

The muse of Oppian was employed on three subjects, fishing, hunting, and fowling. His poem on the first, consisting of five books, has come down to us entire. The last book of the Cynegetics has been lost. The Hixeutics, containing two books, have been partially preserved in a Latin translation by Gesner,* in whose days the original was said to be kept in an Italian library. Other works have been attributed to Oppian, and we have his own words to show that he wrote dithyrambics. He also informs us that he intended to exercise his genius on a more exalted theme, of which he is thought to give a specimen in his description of the Orontes.

Some writers seem to be of opinion that Oppian was a generic name of such poets as wrote on marine subjects,† and they endeavour to support it by etymology. Certain it is, that a poet of this name furnished Martial with the subject of a satiric epigram. Schneider, a learned German editor of Oppian, strenuously maintains, that the author of the Cynegetics, and the author of the Halieutics, were two different persons, the former a native of Apamea, a city of Syria, who lived in the reign of Severus and Caracalla, and wrote in a style altogether inelegant. The latter, he affirms, flou-

* Ego nullum ex scriptoribus nondum publicatis hactenus consequutus, præter Græcam paraphrasin in Oppiani Ixeutica, id est de aucupio libellos, quos quidem Latinos feci, et passim huic de avibus volumine inserui. Con. Gesner.

† Thus we have "the Lake poets" of our own days. "Non omittendum hic videtur qualem nominis Grammatici seu Scholiastæ Oppiano attribuant, qua de re hæc verba reperi in antiquo Cod. M. S. Frederici Sylburgii mei· Οππιανος ετυμολογειται απο οπτω τω βλεπω και τω αλος, ἡ θαλασσα, γινεται Οπτιαλος, και τροπῃ τῶ τ εἰς π, και τω λ εἰς ν, Οππιανος, ὁ τας θαλασσιας αγρας επιτηρων. Sive igitur hinc nomen Oppiano impositum sit, sive aliunde, concinna est hæc etymologia; dummodo sciamus, hoc idem nomen aliis etiam ante hunc poetam fuisse, ut ex Martiali docebo."

Esset, Castrice, cum mali coloris,
Versus scribere cœpit Oppianus.

Lib. vii. 3.

rished in the reign of M. A. Antoninus, the philosopher;—that he was a citizen of Anazarba, the genuine Oppian, whose poem on fishing is as much distinguished by its Grecian purity and sweetness, as the other by its latinized Greek, and its frequent deviations from the authorized principles of composition. He endeavours to support the hypothesis by internal evidence, and the testimonies of Suidas, Eusebius, Hieronymus, and Athenæus; with what success remains to be considered.

Belin de Belu, a Frenchman who published an excellent edition of the Cynegetics in 1786, in his preface, has vigorously opposed the German editor; yet Schneider, in a late edition of Oppian, has returned to the contest. According to the German, Suidas affirms that, in the reign of M. Antoninus, Oppian brought his talents into notice, "ingenium extulisse." But, replies Belu, this is saying more than the text of Suidas authorizes, though it were even granted that he means M. Antoninus, the philosopher, and not M. Antoninus, who was named Caracalla.* His words are, γεγονως επι Μαρκυ Αντωνινυ βασιλεως, and they notify only the time of the poet's birth which might have taken place about the conclusion of the former emperor's reign. For from his death till that of Severus,

* Hallucinatio nata est ex nomine Antonini; non enim Antoninus philosophus est, cui dicata sunt Halieutica, sed Antoninus Caracalla, cui, vivo adhuc Severo patre, divinum illud epos Oppianus obtulit. Scaliger.

With much reason is Gibbon surprised to find the Caracalla of Roman history, in the Caracul of Macpherson's Ossian. "In the Caledonian war," says he, "the son of Severus was known only by the appellation of Antoninus; and it may seem strange, that the Highland bard should describe him by a nickname, invented four years afterwards, scarcely used by the Romans till after the death of that emperor, and seldom employed by the most ancient historians."

was an interval of little more than thirty years, about the same space of time that Oppian lived.* Now, since Oppian, immediately on obtaining his father's restoration, returned to Anazarba where he died; the time of his death seems, with much probabilty, to have happened soon after that of Severus, or in the first year of the reign of Caracalla, and consequently his birth may have taken place under Antoninus the philosopher.

The testimony of Eusebius appears more pointed. His words are Επι Μαρκε Αντωνινε Οππιανος την Αλιευτικην συνεγραψατο But all their force as an argument in favour of Schneider is lost, unless it be proved that they apply to the philosophic emperor, and not to Caracalla. Belu maintains, with Scaliger, that it is of the latter only they are to be understood. The work of Hieronymus in which Oppian is mentioned, being a translation from Eusebius, adds nothing to the argument.

The evidence of Athenæus is considered by Schneider, as decisive in his favour. Athenæus is generally supposed to have written in the time of Commodus, for he speaks of that emperor as his cotemporary ὁ καθ' ἡμας, and of having seen him driving in a chariot armed with the club of Hercules. Again, he mentions Oppian as having lived a short time before him, τον ολιγῳ προ ἡμων γενομενον Οππιανον Κιλικα. Hence the inference that our poet must have flourished before the reign of Caracalla or Severus. Belu replies that the phrase, καθ' ἡμας, cannot apply to a cotemporary, but to a person defunct; and that Commodus must have been dead when it was written. The passage ολιγῳ προ ημων, he thinks, is an

* Belu's chronology does not correspond with Gibbon's and Wotton's. According to him M. A. Antoninus died A. D. 182, and Caracalla began to reign A. D. 212; whereas it is more accurately ascertained that the former event took place March 17, A. D. 180, and that Severus died February 4, 211.

interpolation of the writer who abridged the two first books of the Deipnosophists of Athenæus, as Justin abridged the history of Trogus Pompeius. But what necessity for this supposition? Athenæus might have seen Commodus, as he declared he did, and lived till the reign of Caracalla, and after the death of Oppian. In this there is nothing at all inconsistent or improbable. Though he is supposed by Suidas to have flourished in the time of M. Aurelius, the very passage under consideration, proves that he also flourished under Commodus, and Vossius adds, Pertinax and Severus. A work of such various and extensive erudition as the Deipnosophists, and it is only one of his works, may well be allowed to require and occupy the labours of a long life.*

The hypothesis of Schneider is not supported by the testimony of any ancient writer, nor do any of the biographers of Oppian appear to suspect the two poems commonly ascribed to him, to be the composition of different pens. Eusebius speaks of only one Oppian, a Cilician; Sozomen of one who was rewarded by Severus; and Manasses, with the anonymous biographer, of one who wrote on fishing and hunting. Schneider, notwithstanding, thinks he has found internal evidence sufficient to prove that the author of the Cynegetics was not of Anazarba, but Apamea. Unfortunately for his cause, the principal passage on which he rests is acknowledged to be corrupt. It occurs in the second book of the Cynegetics, where the poet is speaking of the Orontes, and the inundation of the Apamean plains.

* Athenæus himself shews, beyond all question, that he long survived the reign of Caracalla; and, therefore, might well speak of Oppian, as having lived some time before him. In the XV book, 23d c. of the Deipnosophists, he mentions the death of Ulpian, the friend and minister of Alexander Severus; an event which did not happen till A. D. 228—sixteen or seventeen years after Oppian's death.

Vid. Animad. in Athenæum. Tom. prim. Argentorati, 1801.

Αυτος δ' εν μεσατοισι επαιγιζων πεδιοισιν
Αιεν αεξομενος, και τειχεος εγγυς οδευων
Χερσον ομυ και νησον, ἐμην πολιν, ὑδατι χευων.

He considers this text as erroneous, because it consists of participles without a verb,* and to rectify it, changes χευων, in the last line, into χευει.† Belu agrees that the reading is wrong, but says, the error lies in the pronoun ἐμην which should be the verb εϵη. This, he maintains, was the original text ; but the ϵ in old manuscripts, particularly those of the twelfth centary, having a resemblance to η, the carelessness of some transcriber wrote it in that form ; and the ν being afterwards added, to suit the concord, gave a new country to the poet of Anazarba.

Another passage quoted by Schneider to assist his argument, is from the second book, where the poet having spoken of the temple of Memnon in the vicinity of Apamea, says,

Αλλα τα μεν, κατα κοσμον, αεισομεν ευρεα καλλη
Πατρης ἡμετερης, ερατη Πιμπληιδι μολπη·

Here, says the critic, is the writer's own confession that Apamea is his country. Belu to remove the difficulty, instead of ἡμετερης reads ὑμετερης, and supposes the poet to be addressing Julia and her son Antoninus Bassianus ; to which Schneider objects, because the poem commences with an address to Antoninus alone. But not to give so much importance to a single word, surely a poet might be allowed, without any great violation of propriety,

* "Judicans et quidem recte, locutionem, quæ solis constat participiis, subsistere non posse" Belu-Prologomena p. xv.

† Schneider has farther judiciously rectified the passage, by changing επαιγιζων into επαιγιζην.

to call that country his own which lies contiguous to the land which is so in reality, especially when he is a great distance from both. If a native of Middlesex, when removed to some remote climate, chanced to speak of the romantic beauties of Cumberland or Wales, and in the warmth of poetical inspiration, called it his own country, must a critic infer that he was a native of either of these regions? As distance diminishes the appearance of the shores we leave, it seems to increase the comprehension of the patriotic sentiment; and it is not the individual spot where we first drew breath, but the province, the island, or the whole kingdom, that is embraced in the endearing appellation of country.*

The Halieutics contain, in themselves, abundant proof that their author solicited the regard of two imperial patrons. Were it clearly ascertained what two were meant, the question would be decided. All the poet's biographers, with the exception of Schneider, suppose he intends Severus and Antoninus, *i. e.* Caracalla. The latter was proclaimed by the army, after the reduction of Ctesiphon, partner in the empire with his father, and accordingly the poet writes,

Εξ ϐ μοι κραινεσι, μεγαν θρονον εμϐεϐαωτες
Αμφω, θεσπεσιος τε πατηρ και φαιδιμος ὁρπηξ.

LIB. ii. v. 682.

And again,

Σοι τε, μακαρ, και παιδι μεγαυχεϊ πωεια θηρης.

LIB. i. v. 66.

* Since this passage was written, I have found that Bodinus, who published an edition of Oppian, Lutetiæ, 1555, entertained a similar sentiment. "Quia Ciliciæ proxima est Syria, utramque patriam appellat."

But, says Schneider, these lines are addressed to M. Aurelius and his son Commodus. In confirmation of his opinion, he quotes the following lines, and it must be acknowledged, they favour his opinion more than any other of his arguments :

> Αλλα συ μοι, καρτιστε πολισσυχων βασιλεων,
> Αυτος τ' Αντωνινε και υιεος ηγαθεον κηρ,
> Προφρονες εισαιοιτε.
>
> Lib. iv. v. 4.

This is a serious difficulty. The only solution I can offer, without concurring with Schneider, is the following, and the learned reader may judge of its validity. Caracalla had a son by his wife Plautina. Both the mother and her child became objects of the tyrant's hatred and persecution. But, notwithstanding, might not the poet have intended a compliment to the father, in thus invoking the patronage of his son, though an infant, who might be regarded as successor, or heir apparent, to the empire ?

As to any argument founded on the style of the two poems, I think it decidedly against the hypothesis of Schneider. The style of each contains as strong evidence as the most incredulous critic can require, that one pen was the writer of both : for in both do we not only meet the same images and sentiments, clothed in nearly the same expressions, but the same train of thought and mode of illustration ? These resemblances are not casual, nor like the imitations of one poet from another ; but they exhibit the same disposition and complexion of thought diffused through different topics, in such a manner as evinces them to be emanations of an individual mind. Each discovers that the author of the one possessed a familiar knowledge of the subject of the other. The

habits of beasts and fishes are compared in each, and introduced for the sake of mutual illustration. Thus, in the first Halieutic, a ship arrested in the middle of her course, by the adhesion of the Remora, or sucking fish, is assimilated to a wild beast suddenly struck by the shaft of the hunter. The habits of the bear, in the third Cynegetic, resemble those of the Polypus. The one retires in the wintry season, to the shelter of his cavern ; the other to his habitation in the deep : the one finds sustenance in licking his paws, the other in the corrosion of its cirri. The same fondness for his native haunts which we have already seen ascribed to the deer, in the second book of the Cynegetics, is ascribed to the lobster in the first of the Halieutics: and each description is accompanied with similar reflections couched in almost the same language.

Αστάκος αυ περι δη τι και ε φατον όιον ερωτα
Οικειης θαλαμης κευθει φρεσιν, ηδε ποτ' αυτης
Λειπεθ' έκων, άλλ' ει μιν αναγκαιη τις ερυσσας
Τηλε φερων ετερωσε παλιν ποτονδε μεθειη,
Αύταρ όγ' ε μετα δηρον εην νοστησε χαραδρην
Σπευδων, ηδ' έθελει ξεινον μυχον άλλον ελεσθαι,
Ουδ' ετερης πετρης επιβαλλεται, αλλα διωκει
Και δομον, ον κατελείπε, και ηθεα και νομον άλμης
Κεινης, ή μιν εφερβε, και ες ηχθηρε θαλασσαν,
Της μιν άπεξεινωσαν άλιπλοοι αγρευτηρες.
Ως άρα και πλωτοισιν έος δομος ήδε θαλασσα
Πατρωη, και χορος έφεστιος, ενθ' εγενοντο,
Σταζει ενι κραδιη γλυκερον γανος, ηδ' αρα μενοις
Πατρις έφημεριοισι τελει γλυκερωτατον άλλων·
Ουδ' αλεγεινοτερον και κυντερον, ος κεν άναγκη

Φυξίπολιν πατρης τελεση βιον ἀλγινοεντα,
Ξεινος εν ἀλλοδαποισιν ατιμιης ζυγον ελκων.

HALI. 4. l. 263.

So dear the lobster loves his native home,
Nought e'er can lure him from its bounds to roam;
But if transported, by some stern decree,
To distant shores, then left to wander free,
Around no foreign rock his arms he flings;
To no new chamber in the deep he clings;
But back, with eager speed, his path explores
To his loved grottoes, and his well-known shores;*
Nor dreads his wonted pasture to regain,
Tho' banished thence by hunters of the main.
Dear to the finny tribes their native waves,
Their sands paternal, and their coral caves;—
Each haunt sweet rapture on their hearts distils:
Not man alone the patriot passion thrills;
These feel it too, and well with him they know
That angry fate inflicts no direr woe
Than durance sad, beneath her ruthless stroke,
In hopeless exile, and a shameful yoke.

* These lines, and still more those on the deer, page 11, remind us of our own pathetic Goldsmith's verses on a similar topic:

And as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return, and die at home at last.

To point out other similitudes equally striking would be more tedious than difficult. There is not only a general resemblance in the style of the two poems, but the same peculiarities, and whole lines exactly the same occur in both. As to the charge of barbarism, and violation of the rules of syntax, brought by Schneider against the Cynegetics, it is not well supported. Belu shows that the passages selected to justify the charge are sanctioned by the example of the best Greek writers; and that the anomalies imputed to Oppian might, with equal reason, be imputed to Homer, Pindar, Lucian, and others. He is accused, for instance, of making a masculine singular agree with a verb plural, though the highest classical examples authorize the practice, when the noun is a collective, or when it indicates a genus and not an individual. Because a word, or a phrase, an ingenious metaphor, or *callida junctura*, happens to be rare, or to be found only in one author, it does not follow that it must be a barbarism. Such a canon would be fatal to the spirit of a writer, oblige him to follow, with servile steps, the tracks of his predecessors, debar him from every "brave disorder," and crush every attempt at originality.*

* Schneider condemns the following passage as barbarous:

Αιετος αιθερισισιν επιθυνών γυαλοισι,

but says not wherefore. It is justified by the example of the verses attributed to Orpheus;

σμαραγεῖ δι κεραυνος
αιθερος εν γυαλοισι·

and it will, no doubt, strike the reader of taste as truly poetical. *The eagle rushing impetuously on the ethereal concaves*, and the thunder roaring in the *concaves of ether*, are sublime images. The former reminds us of Gray's eagle—

Whatever merit Schneider may possess as the editor of a Greek work, his observations on the style of the Cynegetics, lay him under the imputation of deficiency in those qualities of taste which have the keenest perception and highest relish of the beauties of classical composition. The erudition of Bentley, though so successfully employed in rectifying or altering the text of Horace, and other classical writers, by no means qualified him for being an useful editor of Milton. The province of a verbal corrector, and that of a liberal and enlightened critic, are very distinct; and though I am not prepared to maintain that the very requisites of the one tend to disqualify for the other, it will scarcely be denied that minute and laborious attention to words, is often fatal to the spirit of liberal criticism; and that a false quantity, or erroneous punctuation, may be detected by the pedant who shall suffer beauties of the very highest order to escape unnoticed. There are critics, indeed, who enjoy the happy talent of uniting a strict observance of all the niceties of style, to the feeling and comprehension with which the works under their judgment were composed; who read with the same spirit as the author wrote, and who, from stooping to the correction of a point or accent, rise and accompany the philosopher and poet, in researches the most profound, and in flights the most elevated. But, among those who assume the office of criticising, how few shall we find of this description?

Though it is to be regretted that the history of Oppian is not more circumstantial, we may learn from what has been preserved

> Sailing with supreme dominion,
> Through the azure depths of air;

The latter of Milton's thunders when they

> "Bellow'd through the vast and boundless deep."

of it, that he was endowed with some of the most amiable virtues, particularly filial piety, which forms a most beautiful and interesting trait in his character. He was also sincerely attached to the land of his birth, as is demonstrated by some passages in his poems, as well as by the circumstance of his having left all the attractions of the Roman court to return to his native city, where he died. If an author's works may be considered as a fair reflection of his mind, we may contemplate Oppian in this mirror, with improvement and delight. Though not blessed with a belief or knowledge of revelation, he was a firm believer in the equity, wisdom, and goodness of Providence; as what honest and enlightened lover of nature is not? "His admirable lessons of morality on all occasions," says Kennet, "especially that most wise and elegant reflection at the beginning of the second book of the Halieutics, on the weakness of mankind in the smallest matters, without the influence and assistance of heaven, show him to have been one of the most rational and best principled of heathens; and that his works are able to teach us nobler secrets, than the mysteries of hunting and fishing." He evinces great tenderness of disposition, with just detestation of cruelty; and paints the influence of natural affection in colours inimitably beautiful. He has been praised for his love of truth, for his exposure of certain vulgar errors, and for a virtue seldom found in a heathen writer,—modesty; as, when he speaks of a certain fish, with whose trivial name he would not pollute his page, he describes it by a circumlocution. I could wish there had been more room for this part of his eulogy. Regard for the moral virtues is the first and highest praise of every writer. But the genius which is employed in embellishing vice, and

rendering corruption palatable, is deserving the reprobation of every lover of mankind.

Oblivion whelm the amatory lay
In whose inebriate, deep-drugged current, rolls
The soft pollution that corrodes the heart,
And saps its virtue! aye, tho' sweet it flow,
More sweet than ever flowed from Lesbian lyre,
Yet let it perish! ne'er may ivy wreath,
Nor deathless laurel clasp the poet's brow,
Whose lyre corruption strings.

The works of Oppian are valuable to the naturalist, on account of their correct and beautiful descriptions of animals, and the view which they exhibit of the state of natural history at the period when they were written. If he has recorded many fables, he only availed himself of the poet's privilege. Some of these fables might have been received as true; others are such palpable inventions that they could not even be intended to misinform or deceive. Such are the stories of the boy and the dolphin; of the transformation of the nurses of Bacchus into lynxes; of Phineus becoming a mole, Myrrha a tree, and Mentha a plant; of the preservation of Arion; of Perseus and the Chimæra; of Progne and Philomela. These are the *speciosa miracula* of the Cynegetics and Halieutics.

The style of Oppian is perspicuous and florid; the versification flowing and harmonious. Sometimes he borders on affectation, and indulges a fondness for Ovidian graces. In describing a fish, as the fisherman draws it out of the sea, he calls it the "marine dancer."

Εἰναλιον φορεησι δι' ἠερος ὀρχηστηρα.
Cyn. A. 61.

His metaphors are often daring, his apostrophes sublime, and his similies, not unfrequently, lengthened into minor episodes. These abound in his poems, and, like Homer's, are always instructive and amusing. He sometimes indulges an Asiatic style of hyperbole. He compares dogs, for instance, to the ridges of towering hills, and the elephant to the immense summit of a mountain, or to a weighty cloud bringing tempest to timid mortals.

Φαιης κεν ιδων Ελεφαντα,
Η κορυφην ὀρεος παναπειριτον, η νεφος αινον,
Χειμα φερον δειλοισι βροτων, επι χερσον ὀδευειν·

Yet this is not more hyperbolical than Homer's comparison of Hector to a " moving mountain topt with snow,"

ὄρεϊ μφόεντι εοικως.

Or of a wild boar to a wooded promontory,

Θρεψεν ἐπι χλωνην Συν ἀγριον, ὑδε' ἑωκει
Θηρι γε σιτοφαγῳ ἀλλα ῥῖῳ ὑληεντι.

A very marked characteristic of his style is a profusion of epithets. Having described the horse, he says,

Τοιος μοι βαινοι κρατερην Θηρειον ενυω,
Θυμαινων, συναεθλος, αρηϊος, οβριμος ἱππος·

The Syrian bulls are,

Αιθωνες, κρατεροι, μεγαλητορες, ευρυμετωποι,
Αγραυλοι, σθεναροι, κερεαλκεες, αγριοθυμοι,
Μυκηται, βλοσυροι, ζηλημονες, ευρυγνειοι·

The arrows of love,

Τοιως, αγριε δαιμον, εχεις πυροεντας οιστους,
Πευκεδανους, μαλερους, φθισιφρονας, οιστρηεντας,
Τηκεδονα πνειοντας, αναλθεας, οισι και αυτης
Θηρας ανεπτοησας επ' αζυκτοισι πωθοισι;

The ape tribes,

Τις γαρ αν ε στυγεη τοιον γενος, εχθρον ιδεσθαι,
Αβληχρον, στυγερον, δυσδερκετον, αιολοβυλον

The cetaceous tribes

Κητεα δ' οβριμογυια, πελωρια, θαυματα ποντε
Αλκη αμαιμακετῳ βεβριθοτα, δειμα μεν οσσοις,
Εισιδεειν αιει δ' ολοη κεκορυθμενα λυσση.

In this fondness for epithets he has imitated Homer, who frequently crowds his line with them; for example,

δολιχοσκιον εγχος,
Βριθυ, μεγα, στιβαρον, κεκορυθμενον.

Αρες, Αρες, βροτολοιγε, μιαιφονε, τειχεσιπλητα.

These specimens may give a tolerably correct idea of one of the

most marked features of Oppian's style. His sentiments and moral reflections are well-timed and judicious. No poet has treated with more effect of the loves and antipathies of the brute tribes, of jealousy and love, the pains of parturition, the rage of famine, the admirable powers of the human mind, and the mutual affection of parents and their offspring, both in the human and irrational creation. His account of the love of the wild goat for her kids contains a noble specimen of his powers in the pathetic. In description, the great province of the poet, he is exceedingly animated. He draws with a pencil so bold and discriminating, and with a colouring so vivid, as to place the object before the eyes of the spectator *προ ομματων ποιει το πραγμα*;* and, at the same time with an accuracy which the best naturalists might be proud to imitate. What ichthyologist has not admired and quoted his beautiful account of the Nautilus? The noise and rage of his bull-fight, which shrinks not from a comparison with Virgil's, are nobly enhanced by the original simile of two war-ships engaging in battle. The attack on the stag by an army of serpents, and the efforts of the animal to extricate himself from their folds, are fearfully descriptive. The influence of spring on the animal creation would be worthy of Lucretius, nor is there in the whole range of Greek poetry a more spirited apostrophe than that to love.

Though Oppian sought and found untasted springs, he did not disdain to quaff of the fountains which had been discovered by his predecessors; yet he is no servile imitator. Possessed of powers to shine as an original, he reads nature for himself, not only with the eye of a poet, but the discriminating judgment of a naturalist. Homer, in his comparison of the cranes bringing war and death on

* Vide "Rittershusii de Vita Oppiani."

the pygmies, marks only the clamour* with which they urge their flight. Oppian describes them as darkening the air with their broad and continuous files.

————Ορνιθες ως
Ηυτε περ κλαγγη γερανων πελει ερανοθι προ
Αιτ' επι ευ χειμωνα φυγον, και αθεσφατον ομβρον
Κλαγγη ταιγε πετονται επ' ωκεανοιο ροαων,
Ανδρασι πυγμαιοισι φονον, και κηρα φερεσαι·
Ηρεαι δ' αρα ταιγε κακην εριδα προφερονται.
Il. B.

Ως δ' οτ' απ' αιθιοπων τε και αιγυπτοιο ροαων
Υψιπετης γερανων ΧΟΡΟΣ ερχεται ηεροφωνων
Ατλαντος νιφοεντα παγον, και χειμα φυγεσαι,
Πυγμαιων τ' ολιγοδρανεων αμενηνα γενεθλα.
Τησι δ' αρ' ιπταμενησι κατα ΣΤΙΧΑΣ ευρεες εσμοι
Ηερα τε σκιαεσσι, και ΑΛΑΥΤΟΝ ΟΓΜΟΝ εχεσι.
Opp. Al. A.

As when from Æthiop, or Egyptian springs,
The cranes' shrill chorus spread their soaring wings;
What time the feeble pigmy race they fly,
The snows of Atlas, and the wintry sky:—
In files unbroken moves the long array,
Their shade deep-darkening all th' ethereal way.

* Pope says "with noise and order, war and death they bring." But no order is mentioned in the original, nor should it in the translation; for Homer's object is to contrast the disorderly approach of the Trojans to the well-disciplined march of the Greeks.

Virgil has imitated Homer with far inferior success:

Quales sub nubibus atris,
Strymoniæ dant signa grues, atque æthera tranant
Cum sonitu, fugiuntque notos, clamore secundo.

Lucan shews more observation than Virgil; but, I apprehend, a naturalist would not have admitted chance as the disposer of the orderly arrangement of the cranes in their flight.

Strymona sic gelidum, bruma pellente, relinquunt,
Poturæ te, Nile, grues, primoque volatu
Effingunt varias, casu monstrante, figuras.
Mox ubi percussit tensas Notus altior alas,
Confusos temerè immixtæ glomerantur in orbes,
Et turbata perit dispersis litera pennis.

LUCAN. lib. v. 711.

The bird hastening with food to her young, and the joy which they express at her appearance, are beautifully described in the following lines of Oppian:

Ως δ' οποτ' απτηνεσσι φερει βοσιν ορταλιχοισι
Μητηρ ειαρινη ζεφυρω πρωταγγελος ορνις
Οιδ' απαλον τρυζοντες επιδρωσκωσι καλεη
Γηθοσυνοι περι μητρι, και ιμειροντες εδωδης
Χειλος αναπτυσσωσιν· απαν δ' επι δωμα λεληκεν
Ανδρος ξεινοδοκοιο λιγα κλαζωσι νεοσσοις.

As when the bird that heralds rosy spring,
Flies to her nest on fond maternal wing:
At her known voice, the tender callow brood
Leap with delight, and ask th' expected food;
With opening bills around her fondly crowd,
And tell their joy in chirrups clear and loud,
Till all the hospitable dome around
That shields their nest, re-echoes to the sound.

Nor is her grief for the loss of her unfledged progeny, when devoured by a serpent, less faithfully painted. He had a passage of Homer in view, but he has improved on his original.

Ως δ' οποτ' ορταλιχοισι χελιδοσι νηπιαχοισι
Νερθεν υπεξ οροφοιο τυχων οφις αγχι πελασση,
Και τες μεν κατεπεφνε και εσπασεν ενδον οδοντων,
Μητηρ δε πρωτον μεν ατυζομενη δεδονηται
Λοιγια τετραγυια φονε γοον· αλλ' οτε παιδας
Αθρηση φθιμενες, ηδ' ηκετι φυξιν ολεθρε
Διζεται, αλλ' αυτησιν υπαι γενυεσσιν δρακοντος
Ειλεται, μεσφ' ορνιν ελη παιδοκτονος ατη.

HAL. E. l. 579.

Thus when a serpent creeps, with hunger stung,
Where hangs the swallow's nest of twittering young;
As down his cruel jaws he draws the prize,
The wretched dam around him screaming flies,
Their fate bewailing, 'till her helpless brood
Have all become th' insatiate monster's food:

Then, pierced with anguish, and with deep despair,
And deeming life no longer worth her care,
Seeks his fell jaws, and lets the fate that slew
The hapless offspring, slay the parent too.

The description of the war-horse is very noble. The poet is supposed to have imitated Job, but I see no such resemblance as will justify the supposition. No heathen poet has equalled the sublimity of Job. The "neck clothed in thunder" is an image of unrivalled grandeur. התלביש צוארו רעמה This is but feebly rendered by the Septuagint ενεδυσας τραχηλω αυτε φοβον. Our translation is much superior, since it preserves the image and the spirit of the original.

If the testimony of critics be deemed necessary for the confirmation of the opinions expressed in this essay, of Oppian's merits as a poet, it may be had in abundance. Almost every distinguished critic and naturalist, since the publication of his poems, have been among his admirers. The scholiasts of Homer, Theocritus, Nicander, and Lycophron, speak of him with esteem. Tzetzes paraphrased his Halieutics in Greek, and Laurentius Lippus, an Italian, translated them into Latin. An elegant translation into Latin hexameters was made by David Peifer, an illustrious Saxon, in the sixteenth century, and lately published by Schneider. Erasmus, Barthius, Melancthon, Faber, and Sir Thomas Brown, with Gesner and Aldrovandus, have given him their meed of praise. But no one of all his eulogists is more warm in his panegyric than J. C. Scaliger. Language seems feeble in expressing his enthusiastic admiration of a poet whom, of all the Greek writers, he considers as the only one worthy to be placed by the side of Virgil.

It is not, however, to be concealed that all critics are not equally favourable. Rapin terms him dry. "Nicander est dur, Oppian est sec." Little credit can be attached to such sweeping criticism. It is scarcely to be imagined that the taste which has a true relish for the didactic style of the Georgics, could coincide in the sentiments of the French critic. The curse of Tantalus must have been upon him, when he pronounced Oppian dry.

The learned Gilbert Wakefield, in a letter to Fox, says of Oppian, that "he is very puerile, and writes in a false style; but his descriptions are entertaining and exact. He alone, of all the antients, delineates the cameleopard very accurately, and from nature. He will recompense the trouble of perusal." Something warmer might have been expected from the admirer and editor of Lucretius. If it be conceded that there are instances of false taste in Oppian, they are comparatively few; not so many, perhaps, in proportion to the number of his lines, as may be found in Ovid, whom Wakefield considered as "the first poet of all antiquity." The great abhorrence felt by the critic for field sports, may have given an unfavourable bias to his judgment of the author of the Cynegetics.

To the mere English reader the works of Oppian have been made known, but very partially and imperfectly, by a translation of the Halieutics, edited at Oxford in 1722. The two first books were translated by Mr. Diaper, and the remaining three by Mr. Jones. The latter speaks with the zeal of friendship of Mr. Diaper's translation, and though he allows that he has somewhat paraphrased the author, believes "that he has no where deviated from his sense and intention." The great fault of the translation is undoubtedly its verbiage, under which the beauty and spirit of the original are buried. In one passage twelve lines are employed to render three of the original; and

in another, no fewer than thirty to represent nine. But this is not to translate. Though a single grace or illustration may be admitted by a translator, provided it be done rarely, and in the true spirit of the original, such licentiousness should never be tolerated. It turns beauty into deformity, and sinks the sublime to the bathos.

ERRATUM, page 24, note, 3d line,—*for* volumine, &c. *read* volumini integros.

ANALYSIS

OF THE

CYNEGETICS

OF OPPIAN.

BOOK FIRST.

Read, Jan. 24th, 1820.

THE work commences with a very complimentary address to Antoninus, and praises his mother, Julia Domna, in terms of ingenious flattery. The poet then declares, that he is invited by Calliope and Diana herself, to undertake the novel subject on which he writes. He hears the voice of the goddess of the chace exhorting him to arise, and accompany her through a region of song where no poet ever trod before, and professes his willingness to sing what she may inspire. She does not wish to hear of the rites of Bacchus, the race of heroes, or the deeds of war; but desires him to sing of dogs and horses—the stratagems and profits of the chace—the loves, the antipathies, and the births of wild beasts.

Having besought the aid of him whose rule extends from the rising sun to the extreme limits of the ocean, to favour his design, he enters on his subject by saying, that a god first taught mortals the three kinds of chace, the aerial, the terrestrial, and the marine,

Ηερίην, χθονίην τε, καὶ εἰναλίην ἐρατεινήν·

These three modes are compared, to illustrate the danger of hunting. The pursuit of birds, and the toils of the fisherman are exempt from danger, and accompanied with pleasure: but it is a far different task to contend with the lion, the panther, and other ferocious beasts. The fisherman, sitting on a rock, and drawing up the fish, is very poetically described. **L. 56—61.**

> Th' intrepid fisher, by the sea-beat shore,
> With bending rod, and hooks distained with gore,
> Sits on the cliff, and oft delights to feel
> The playful fish upon his barbs of steel;
> From depths profound he lifts the finny prey,
> Dancing in air, and gasping life away.

The personal qualifications of the hunter, his dress and arms, are next described. Obesity is a great obstacle to activiy; he should therefore be light, agile, and strong; his right hand armed with two javelins, his girdle with a sword, while by his left he guides his dogs, as a rider his horse by the reins. His vest should be tucked above his knee, and his cloak should hang back from his shoulders, in such a manner as not to approach his hands,

or impede his movements. In tracing wild beasts it is often necessary to go unshod, and to throw the cloak aside, lest its motions in the wind, or the noise of the buskins should start the game prematurely. The times best adapted for hunting vary. Sometimes the morning, and at others the evening is to be preferred; now the meridian heat, and again the moon's pale ray. The season of spring, which protrudes the leaves of trees, or the autumn which causes their decay, is most favourable for a whole day's exercise. But in winter, the middle of the day should be chosen; and in summer the dawn of morning, when husbandmen yoke the plough, or the evening, when shepherds pen their flocks. The arms and apparatus of the chace, nets, poles, spears, and a variety of instruments for which we have no corresponding terms in English are here enumerated. Horses are preferable to mares, because they are stronger, and less prone, in the season of love, to disturb the game by neighing. The races of horses are as varied as those of men. The one which is superior to all others is distinguished by the loftiness of his head bending down from an arched neck; by the breadth of the space between his eyes, and the clustering locks of his temples. His eye is keen and fiery—his nostrils expanded—mouth wide—ears short—chest broad—back long, and his mane curves and tosses like the plumes of the warrior's crest. The tail of sweepy length—the thighs compact and muscular—his legs long and taper, and as free from flesh as the legs of the storm-footed stag;—his hoof, which he lifts high from the ground, dense, horny, and solid.

> Such, such be mine, unmatched in strength and speed,
> The social, high-souled, battle-bearing steed!

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

With what impatient joy he hears, from far,
The shrill-tongued clarion speak the coming war!
Gods! with what transport he beholds the fields
Bristling with pointed spears, and serried shields!
Thro' the long ranks he darts a fearless gaze,
Nor winks to meet the armour's steely blaze.
Well is he skilled his rider's voice to know,
When to stand firm, and when to charge the foe.
Dauntless he moves beneath th' embattled tower,
Where burns the siege, where smites the arrowy shower,
When locking targe on targe the foemen spread
The wing-like shield of safety o'er their head.
Aloft in air a seven-fold plain is raised,
Art's sage device, with boss on boss emblazed;
Beneath the solar fires it flashes bright,
And the sky blazes with reflected light.

Various perfections of the horse—his docility—affection for his master, and regret for his loss when he falls in battle:—this has sometimes proved strong enough to burst the chains of nature, and make him express his grief in articulate sounds. He can fly over the standing corn without bending it, and over the billows of the deep without wetting his hoof. He bore the hero who slew the Chimæra beyond the skies, and seated a king on the Persian throne. What may seem most surprising in his character is his insuperable abhorrence of all incestuous intercourse. A certain king's horses were all swept away by a plague, except one mare and her foal, from which he hoped to restore the loss; after many

fruitless attempts to effect their union, he succeeded at length by an artifice. When the unhappy horses discovered the imposition, they showed the greatest horror, and by incessant neighings seemed to call on the gods to avenge their wrongs: at last, by a mutual impulse, they dashed their heads against the rocks, and terminated their wretched existence.

The swiftest horses of Sicily are excelled by those of Parthia and Armenia, and these again by the horses of Iberia, whose fleetness is equalled only by that of the eagle, the hawk, or the dolphin in the waves; but they are deficient in courage and strength, and their beautiful forms are no compensation for their broad and feeble hoofs.

The Moorish horse excels every other in patient endurance of toil, and the performance of long journies:—next is the Lybian;—greater in size, and more able to resist the violence of heat and thirst. The Parthian alone has courage to brave the roar of the lion. The virtues of horses are ascertained by the colour of their eyes. Those with eyes of an azure hue are best for pursuit of the stag;—the blue of the bear;—the sanguine of the panther;—the fiery of the boar,—and the grey of the lion. The Nysæan horse, the favourite of kings, has no rival in beauty. Of the Orynx, (the Zebra) another beautiful race, there are two species; the one marked with long stripes like the tiger,—the other with round spots, like those inflicted by burning brass on the panther's young.—The modes employed by men to vary the hues of horses while they are yet in embryo, of pigeons, and of children, as practised by the Lacedemonians.—These adorn the chambers of their pregnant women with pictures of the most beautiful youths, Nereus, Narcissus, Hyacinthus, Apollo or Bacchus, that the frequent contemplation of them may transfer the similitude to their infants.

The poet having finished his observations on horses, proceeds to the management of dogs, and, at the commencement of this topic, gives a powerful description of the influence of love, in the season of spring, on all the animal creation. In mingling the breeds of dogs, the congruity of their nature should be studied. The Arcadian should be mixed with the Elean, the Cretan with the Pæonian. But the dog of an unmixed breed is preferred by all hunters; his form is long and vigorous—his head light—eyes of a sparkling azure—mouth wide, well armed with teeth—a thin membrane falls over his small ears—neck long—chest broad—fore-legs shorter than the hind ones; the tibiæ long—shoulders broad—the contexture (ταξσα) of the ribs oblique—loins muscular, not fat—the tail long and slender. Such a dog is best fitted for pursuing the deer and hare;—but for the attack of the bull, the boar, and the lion, a larger and more ferocious race are required, a race distinguished by their fiery eye, hirsute covering, broad back, and intrepid spirit. The white and the grey coloured are of little value, as they are incapable of bearing either heat or cold. Those are superior to all others whose form resembles that of the wolf, the tiger, the fox or the panther, and whose colour is that of wheat.

In rearing dogs, they should not be suckled at the teats which have recently begun to flow, of the goat, the sheep, or domestic bitch, but at the teats of the stag, the lioness, or the wolf. They imbibe the spirit of their nutriment, and become strong and swift as their nurse. Their names should be short, and care taken to render them social and familiar both with horses and men, and observant of strict silence at the command of their master.

There are two kinds of tracing—that of men and that of dogs; the former find the game by sight, the latter by the smell. Winter,

when snow covers the ground, is the most favourable season for this amusement. In spring the dogs are perplexed by the variety of odours exhaled from the flowers, but in autumn the effluvia of the game are easily detected.

In Britain is found a small species of dog, in size and form resembling the domestic, table-courting race, but armed with formidable claws, and strong serried teeth. They are known by the name of Agassæan, and excel all others in the acutensss of their smell, and the accuracy of their search.

The mode in which the hunter should train his dog is next described. He is recommended to take a hare in his arms, and having gone to a distance, by a circuitous and involved path, to bury it in the ground. The dog is then desired to find it; until he succeeds, he shews all the restlessness and anxiety of a young woman, who, for the first time, is on the eve of parturition. The simile is worthy of quotation. L. 494—501.

> Thus the young wife, assailed by pain and fear,
> What time the tenth revolving moon is near
> To hail her mother,—from her panting breast
> Her gems unlooses, and unbinds her vest.
> Her brows ungirt, loose floats her clustering hair,
> As round and round she roves in sad despair.
> To every room she tells her torturing pain;
> Now seeks her couch for rest, but seeks in vain.
> Then low in dust some new position tries,
> And tears her rosy cheeks, and utters piteous cries.

The dog moves round every stone and clod, and leaves no place unsearched. When he succeeds he barks for joy, and skips like

a fawn round its dam. If he be trained for wild hares, he approaches them privately, creeps low beneath the covering of the vines or the stubble, like a rapacious wolf stealing on the flock, when the shepherd is asleep, and at last makes a sudden spring, swift as an arrow or a hissing snake, and takes, kills, and carries off the prey. Thus the waggon bears the fruits of harvest; the rustics gathering round it use all their exertions to urge it forward; one applies his shoulder to the wheel, another to the body, and a third to the axis. The sweating steers respire from their labour, and the wearied soul of the driver is rejoiced. Thus the dog comes with the prey in his jaws, the huntsman meets him delighted, relieves him of his burden, and caresses him in his arms.

ANALYSIS OF BOOK SECOND.

THE origin of hunting ascribed to the Centaurs;—but among articulate-speaking men, Perseus, assisted by his winged steed, was the first who led to the chace of the wild goat and the stag. Castor taught men to hunt on horseback, and to strike wild beasts with the javelin in their full career. Pollux employed the assistance of dogs, and Hippolytus shewed the use of nets and toils. Meleager excelled in the standing conflict with wild beasts; Atalanta pursued them with arrows, and Orion took them in nocturnal snares.

The eulogy on hunting is written in the spirit of one who had a deep sense of its pleasures.

> Such strenuous chiefs, of old, the race pursued,
> Whom numbers followed, by its love subdued;
> For who but once the glorious sport has tried,
> In chains unbroken is for ever tied.
> How sweet the hunter's sleep on vernal flowers!
> How cool his rest in Summer's sunless bowers!
> How joyed, 'mid rocks, the short repast he shares,
> Or plucks the fruit mellifluous Autumn bears!
> His thirst in streamlets from the cave he cools,
> Or bathes his wearied limbs in standing pools.
> And in the woods the shepherds' off'ring hails,
> Their loaded baskets and their flowing pails.

The poet now proceeds to sing of the jealousies and battles of bulls.—One must reign lord of the herd, but if he meets a rival a dreadful contest takes place. They eye each other obliquely with indignation and rage; they breathe fire from their nostrils, scatter the dust around them like wrestlers in the arena, roar the signal of fierce defiance, and rush to the conflict with terrific violence. Their shock is like that of two hostile gallies impelled by the wind and oars,—the brazen prows crash, and the ocean foams. One of the combatants is at length obliged to yield. Groaning with anguish and shame he retires to the mountain forest, in whose covert he abides, till returning strength enables him to renew the fight. Again he roars defiance to his rival, now enervated by pleasure, and becomes in turn the master of the field.

The bull of Egypt is superior to all others,—of a snowy whiteness—equal in size to a Βαθυτεμονα νηα, a deep-beamed ship, and of a gentle, social disposition.

The Phrygian bull is of a yellow or red hue, his neck brawny; a round excrescence rises on his forehead, and he has the power of depressing or elevating his horns at pleasure.

The Aonian bull is of a dappled colour, remarkable for a solid hoof, and single horn rising from the middle of his forehead. The Armenian bull has formidable horns, retorted at the points. The Syrian is strong and ferocious, swift in the course and strenuous in the fight. Such was the race that Hercules drove from Erythia when he slew Geryon. It was then the hero made a passage for the inundations of the Orontes, by rending asunder the stony barriers of the Dioclæan and Emblonian hills. This inundation, its effects, and the manner in which the passage was rent, are described with great effect.

The Biston, so named from its country, Biston of Thrace, is

ranked with the bulls, and distinguished by the shaggy locks, which toss on his neck and chin; in this particular, as well as in colour and ferocity, he resembles the lion; the acuminated tips of his horns are curved like hooks—they point not in a direction towards each other, but vertically, whence, when he attacks beasts or men he raises them aloft on their points. His tongue has the roughness of a file, and when he licks himself it is distained with blood.

The horn-bearing deer is described with much accuracy; his eyes large—skin dappled—head lofty—back fat—limbs slender—small neck and short tail; his nostrils quadrifid, and he pours his breath through four channels. His horns are of no use, for he wants courage to employ them against the beasts of prey, the dog, or even the timid hare. He is easily stung by jealousy, and feels all the power of love with as much violence as the males of the gallinaceous tribes, and all fowls of a flowery plumage * * * * * * * * * At the time of parturition the female retires into the deepest coverts, as does the male also when he sheds his horns, ashamed to appear divested of the "branchy honors of his head." He hides his horns in the ground, that they may not fall into the hands of the hunter.—When a herd of deer has to pass an arm of the sea, one of them acts as a pilot,—all the rest follow in a continuous line, each leaning his neck and head on the deer before him. When the leader is wearied he retires to the rear, and the second in order becomes the guide, till he resigns his place to the next. They use their feet as oars, and spread their broad antlers to the wind, like the sails of a ship.

Between the deer and serpent tribes exists a deadly animosity. When the deer spies the marks of a serpent in the dust, he traces

him to his den, and putting his nostrils to the opening, blows so strong a blast that he rouses the serpent, and provokes him, though reluctant, to mortal conflict. The serpent lifts his neck on high, champs his venomed jaws, and utters fearful hisses, but in vain. The deer, as if in disdainful sport of his enemy, lacerates him with his teeth, and stamps his palpitating mutilated body on the ground, in a manner to excite pity even for a monster so ruthless. Serpents, however, seek their revenge. On the sandy plains of Libya a whole army of them will attack a deer. They fasten on his head and neck—they twine around his limbs, his horns, breast, and loins, till he is all enveloped in their folds. In vain does he attempt to fly; he attacks them with his horns, he rends them with his teeth, and stamps them to pieces with his hoof, till the ground is covered with their gore and their fragments. But still they cling to his sides, and even in death retain their hold. At length the deer, by a divine impulse inspired, hastes to the brink of a river, and finds in its crabs a remedy for his misfortune. The serpents drop from his skin, and his wounds are closed.

The swiftness and strength of the Δορκος, Gazelle, are well known. Between this race and that of Partridges subsists an intimate friendship, and they always love to dwell near each other, a circumstance which cruel men turn to their destruction, since they employ the one species as a decoy for the other.

Goats and sheep have the seat of strength in their forehead, which they can use with so much power as to lay the wild boar palpitating in the dust. Often too, they combat with each other, and the noise of their meeting horns resounds to heaven. The contest is mortal, and one must be victorious or die. A small canal in the middle of their horns serves as a passage for their breath, whence if its orifice be covered with wax, the gate of life is closed. The

affection of the young for their old and decrepid dams is equalled only by that of pious children to their parents.

Crete contains a race of four-horned sheep, remarkable for their purple fleece, which is so hard and rough that it resembles the covering of a goat rather than that of a sheep.

The Subus has two horns on his broad red forehead, and when he swims through the sea he is accompanied by shoals of fishes sporting delighted around him.—The mutual love of animals of different species for each other, is a subject of wonder. Such is that of the deer and the attage (the quail, rail, or woodcock)—of the gazelle and the partridge, the horse and the bustard, the wolf and the pye, for the wolf always delights in a bird of a grassy hue.

The address to love, the " improbus amor," is very spirited.

O Love, dread power, invincible, divine,
What wond'rous art, what matchless might is thine!
The firm-set earth beneath thy arrows reels,
And fix'd is ocean when their power he feels.
When high from earth thou speed'st thy heaven-ward flight,
Olympus trembles.—E'en in realms of night,
Tormented shades, in anguish as they groan,
With shivering horror thy dread presence own,
And though the sweets of Lethe's stream they prove,
Ne'er drink oblivion to the power of love.
In strength resistless spreads thy awful sway,
Beyond where ever shot the solar ray.
In vain with thine his arms would Phœbus wield,
E'en Jove's winged lightnings to thy terrors yield.
Such, dreadful god, thy shafts of keen desire,
Heart-wounding, cureless, dipt in plague and fire,

To lawless loves they savage beasts impel,
And against nature drive them to rebel.

It is admirable to see the attiges perching on the back of fawns, or partridges fanning the gazelle with their wings, or the bustard pursuing the horse in play. The sargus assails the goat. But all the tribes of fishes crowd around the subus, in admiration of him as he swims. He makes a cruel return by devouring them, but even his cruelty cannot provoke them to hostility.

There is an animal of extraordinary ferocity and strength named the Oryx. His colour is that of vernal milk, his cheeks alone being black; his chine is fat and double; his horns lofty, black, sharp, and harder than brass or iron. He is daring and intrepid, fearing not the bark of the hunter's dog, the roaring of the wild boar, the bellowing of the bull, nor the lion, nor panther, nor man himself. The hunters often perish among the precipices in their conflicts with this creature. When he sees a boar with naked tusks, or a lion with serrated teeth rushing against him, he fixes his horns firmly on the ground, and waits the attack with such resolution, that the enemy is slain by the shock. Thus the hunter receives the lion on his spear. Sometimes, however, they are both slain, and become a prey to the astonished rustic.

He ranks the elephant among the horned tribes, and by arguments, now known to be erroneous, contends that his tusks are horns. It is said that elephants converse with each other in articulate sounds, that they have a spirit of prophecy, and like swans foretel their death.

The Rhinoceros is not much larger than the Oryx. He elevates a horn, situated a little above his nose, of such strength and sharpness, that it can perforate brass, and dissever the hardest rock.

He often lays the elephant dead. His colour is a light yellow, and purple drops adorn his back. All of this species are males—at least no female was ever seen. How they are generated he knows not, unless they spring from the earth, or by some mysterious mode from each other, without love, nuptials, or parturition, as some of the testaceous tribes are generated in the sands.

As to the smaller animals, his muse cannot condescend to sing of them, though he speaks of the dormouse and its winter's sleep with his usual descriptive powers. Neither will he sing of the squirrel, whose bushy tail covers his whole body, as his gorgeous plumage covers the peacock; nor of the rough race of hedge-hogs, of which there are two species, bristled with sharp thorny prickles; nor of the three kinds of apes, a weak, mischievous, and impertinent race; nor of the blind mole, though sprung, according to fame, from the royal blood of Phineus, who was changed, by the wrath of Phœbus, into an animal which still retains his similitude in its blindness and voracity.

ANALYSIS OF BOOK THIRD.

HAVING sung, in the former book, of the horn bearing graminivorous tribes, the poet now proposes to sing of carnivorous animals, and commences with the lion.—The metamorphose of the Curetes by Saturn, for being instrumental to the saving of Jupiter when newly born.—The Armenian and Parthian lions are not remarkable for strength. Those of Arabia are universally celebrated, but their number is small. In Africa they are more abundant, possess immense strength, and are superior to all others. They devote one day to feeding, and another to the chace,—and sleep wherever they chance to be overtaken by night, without precaution or concealment. They have a narcotic power by which they immediately relax the limbs of the beast which they attack. Five whelps are the produce of the first parturition, four of the second, and each in succession is diminished by one, till the lioness becomes effete.

Of the Panther there are two species, differing in size, but in other respects similar, except in the tail, which in the small species is longer than in the other. These were originally the nurses of Bacchus, and hence they still delight in wine. Of Lynxes there are also two species.—the one small and the other large. The former preys upon hares, the latter attacks and subdues the stag. The colour of the one is red, of the other saffron or sulphureous. In other respects they have a strong resemblance.

The love of lions, tigers, lynxes, pards, and tigers for their young is very powerful. When returning to their lair, they find their cubs taken away, they raise a lamentable cry, like that of women twining around their children, when they see their country laid waste by the sword of the enemy, and their houses encircled by a devouring conflagration. The power of parental affection στοργη, in all the animal creation is here beautifully illustrated. When the hen spies a hawk at a distance, immediately she screams aloud—calls her young ones—curves her neck aloft in a posture of defence,—ruffles up her feathers, and spreads out her wings. The timid brood lie chuckling close under their protection, while she resolutely repels the bird of prey. In the same cause do wild beasts shew the most ferocious courage in contending with the hunter. They fear not the multitude of armed youths advancing against them, nor the glittering of iron and the missile rock, but dare even to die for their beloved young.

Bears are a savage and cunning race. They bring forth unformed masses of flesh, which they lick into shape. During the winter they sleep in caves, and live by the suction of their paws, as does the polypus in the waters. The onager, or wild ass, is exceedingly jealous, and delights in many females. When a young one is brought forth, if it is a female, he licks it with great tenderness; but if it is a male he rushes against it, and endeavours to inflict a severe proof of hostility. The dam, making all the opposition in her power, is compared to a mother whose child is slaughtered in her arms by barbarous warriors.—The effect of jealousy is finely described.—The wild horses of the Æthiopians are cloven-footed like stags, and so impatient of servitude that they can never be tamed to the yoke.—The wolf and hyæna, the one hostile to sheep, the other to dogs,—both nocturnal robbers; the one impelled

by hunger, the other seeing only in the dark ;—the one resembles a shepherd's dog, the other is gibbous in the middle of his spine, hirsute all over, and marked with black stripes. A whip made of wolf skin has peculiar terrors for dogs—a drum of the same material puts to silence all drums made of sheep skin—for even dead sheep dread dead wolves!—The hyænas change their sex yearly, and the male becomes a fruitful dam.—Of wolves there are five species—the first of a yellow hue,—swift, audacious, and by shepherds named the archer,—the next of superior magnitude and swiftness, known by the two names of the hawk and the plunderer; he seeks his prey with the dawn, and dwells in the lofty mountains—but when snow covers the ground, he assumes greater boldness, and in quest of prey approaches even the city walls. The third species inhabits the mountains of Taurus and Cilicia—an animal superior to the race of wolves, named the Golden, of prodigious strength, and able to resist the unspent brass and the pointed iron. He dreads the rising of the dog-star, and during the prevalence of its heat, lies concealed in his shady cavern. Of the two remaining species, the one from his white colour is named the Hoary Kite. The other is of smaller size,—black,—hirsute,—preys on hares.

Wolves copulate with panthers, and produce the animals called Thoes.

The tigress excels among quadrupeds as much as the peacock among birds,—resembles a mountain lioness, except in her beautifully spotted skin ;—such are her fiery eyes, her strong limbs, and sweepy tail. She is the swiftest of wild beasts: the boar is the most ferocious. His hair bristles on his neck like the rough plumes of the warriors crest; he distils his foam on the ground, and in rage gnashes his white tusks, which are said to conceal a hidden fire, the effects of which are seen in the singed coats of the dogs which he attacks.

The porcupine is the most hideous of animals,—he raises his quills like the spines of the hedge-hog; when attacked he shoots them forth like arrows from the bow of a skilful archer,—discharging them as he flies from the conflict, and mortally wounding the pursuing dogs. Hence the hunters are obliged to take him by craft.

The Ichneumon is a small creature, but worthy of the muse's song, both for his ingenuity and courage, which he employs successfully against the serpent and crocodile. When he observes the latter sleeping, he darts down the open jaws, and feasts luxuriously on the liver and viscera, till nothing but a shell is left, when he leaves his confinement in search of new prey. The torments of the crocodile vainly struggling to escape, or eject the internal foe that devours him, are ably depicted.—When the ichneumon sees a serpent he conceals himself in the sands, coiled up, with nothing visible but the point of his tail, and fiery eyes; suddenly he darts on the enemy, as he approaches breathing pestiferous blasts, and displaying his venomous fangs in vain. The ichneumon grasps him by the jaws, and lays him dead.

Of wild animals the Fox is the most crafty. He dwells in a den which has seven passages remote from each other, to favour his escape from the hunter's snares. He is often a formidable enemy to beasts of prey, and the sportsman's dogs. When winter approaches, and the vine hangs destitute of clusters, he plans his frauds with success against birds and young hares.

The poet next invokes the muse to sing of animals of a mixed nature, particularly of that one which partakes of the camel and panther, viz. the camelopard, which is described with fidelity; and the ostrich, the offspring of the sparrow and camel. The bird-lime twig that waves in the aerial path of birds takes her not—but horses, dogs, and hidden snares. Her size is enormous, and she can

bear a grown boy, as a rider, on her back. Her feet are like those of the camel, and covered with scales. Though well-plumed she sails not through the lofty paths of ether, but runs with a velocity equal to the speed of flying birds.

The book closes with a description of the hare. Her colour corresponds to that of the soil she inhabits. She is exceedingly vigilant—sleeps with her eyes open—is very prolific by reason of her superfetation, and of all animals is the most libidinous.

ANALYSIS OF BOOK FOURTH.

IN the fourth book, the poet proposes to sing of the arts employed by hunters, against their prey. These are so numerous that no mortal could name them—they are known to the gods alone. He will therefore sing of such as he knows by his own experience, or has learned from the information of others.

Some wild beasts find compensation for their want of size and strength in cunning. Some are timid but fleet—others excel in courage and strength; all know instinctively to use the arms which nature has supplied. The stag and bull employ their horns—the oryx and the lion their jaws,—the boar his tusks, and the hare her fleetness.

The common modes of hunting are by means of nets, fetters, horses, and dogs. The hunter often pursues his game on horseback without dogs, and sometimes strikes it with arrows. When laying the nets, or going in quest of game, it is as necessary for him, as for the mariner, to be attentive to the direction of the winds; since wild beasts have great acuteness of smell, and flee as soon as it indicates the enemy's approach. The hunter, therefore, should always face the wind.

The mode of taking a lion:—When the traces are observed of his customary path to a river to slake his thirst, the hunters dig a deep

pit, surround it with an enclosure of stones to prevent its being seen, and suspend a lamb from the top of a column erected in the middle of it. The lion, allured by the bleating of the lamb, makes a spring at it, over the fence, and falls into the snare. A trap is then let down by ropes, and the lion, invited by the meat within, enters it and is drawn up.

On the banks of the Euphrates are a swift grey-coloured race of horses, so courageous that they dare to meet the lion:—mounted on these the hunters start and pursue him, while another party on foot, having spread the toils, and taken their appointed stations, shaking burning torches, and beating shields which they carry on their left arms, join in the pursuit, and drive the prey into their toils, as fishermen drive a shoal of fishes scared by the torches' blaze.

A third mode of taking lions, as practised by the Æthiopians, is wonderful as it is dangerous. Four men take as many shields, composed of flexible twigs, round and covered with bull hides, to defend themselves against both the claws and the teeth of the lion. They clothe themselves in sheep skins, and tie on their heads a helmet which leaves no part uncovered except the eyes, nose, and lips. Thus armed, they approach the lion's den, loudly cracking their whips;—he, provoked by the sound, springs out with a tremendous roar, swelling with rage,—his eyes darting fire,—impetuous as a thunderbolt. The woods and rocks and all the welkin re-echo to the roar, which is loud as the cataracts of the Ganges, augmented by the confluence of twenty torrents. He rushes against them like a wintry tempest. But they wait his onset firm,—and while his rage is directed against one in front, he is assailed by another behind, and he quits the former object of his fury to take vengeance on his latter assailant. But he spends his rage in vain.

They, trusting to their woollen mail, their shields, and belts, which neither his powerful teeth, nor iron claws, can penetrate, persevere unremittingly in their hostile attacks. He is beset on all sides, like a warrior who after many desperate acts of valour is encircled by the foe and compelled to yield. He distils his bloody foam on the ground, casts down his eyes ashamed to be overcome,—and at length falls like the pugilist who, after many victories, is forced to yield to the superior fortune of his antagonist. He suffers himself to be bound, and to be lifted up as quietly as an unresisting ram.

In a similar manner are panthers and thoes taken. Panthers, though now a wild race of beasts, were once a beautiful blue-eyed race of women, crowned with flowers, the nurses of Bacchus. Him they lodged in a mountain cave, in a cradle covered with fawn-skin, and adorned with bunches of grapes; and danced around him, beating their tympana, and striking their cymbals. They were the first to celebrate the sacred mysteries of the god. Having departed from the Bœotian land, they placed the ark which bore him on the back of an ass, and coming to the banks of the Euripus, supplicated an old fisherman to ferry them over. He received them into his boat, and immediately the benches and stern were covered with ivy and the vine. The fisherman, struck with terror, sprang into the sea. Aristæus, to whose mansion they were conducting the god, had taught men the arts of husbandry and pasturage,—to press the berries of the olive,—coagulate milk, and enclose bees in skeps. He received Bacchus from the women, and educated him in a cave with the Dryads and Apiarian nymphs.—When the child began to play among the boys, he was wont to strike the rocks with a rod, and they gushed with wine. Sometimes he cut the lambs into small pieces, and again conjoined them so ingeniously that they revived, and

cropped the green pasture as before.——Now he found his thyrsus, and wandered over the country teaching his arts. At length he approached Thebes, and all the inhabitants ran out to meet the fire-engendered youth. But Pentheus threatened to rend him asunder, maugre the hoary hairs of Cadmus and Agave suppliant at his feet. The Bacchantæ, alarmed, cast their garlands from their heads, and their thyrsi from their hands,—tears fell from their eyes, and they called aloud on Bacchus to hurl his paternal thunderbolts, and take vengeance on the ruthless tyrant,—to change him into a bull, and them into carnivorous beasts of prey, to rend him asunder. Their prayer was heard. The god raised aloft the neck of Pentheus, gave him a sanguinary eye, and armed him with threatening horns. He caused the women to assume the savage aspect of wild beasts, lined their jaws with formidable teeth, clothed them in dappled hides like deer, and rendered their disposition fierce. They became panthers, and tore their unhappy victim to pieces. They still retain their native fondness for wine, as is evinced by the mode in which they are taken. In the thirsty regions of Africa, when they have discovered a small pool of water, they repair to slake their thirst in it, with the first rays of the morning. Thither, before the dawn, the hunters have brought twenty jars of sweet wine, ripened by the revolution of nine years. Having mingled it with the water, they retire to a distance, and lie concealed. The panthers come to the wonted haunt, drink copiously, and then frisk about like dancers, till overpowered by the wine they lie down and sleep, and become an easy prey to the hunter.

The hunting of bears on the banks of the Tigris is thus pursued: A great multitude of hunters go into the deep recesses of the woods, accompanied by dogs in leashes, one of which is slipt to trace the wild beast to his lair. The dog pursues, exulting as a young virgin

who, in the season of spring, wanders with naked feet, among the mountains in quest of early flowers. The fragrance of some sweet violet invites her onward. Her cheerful mind exults in the gathered prize, and she returns to her rural cot, crowned with a flowery garland.—The nets are immediately spread, and a rope extended from each extremity about as high as a man's middle, thickly set with fillets of various colours, and the feathers of numerous wild birds, the terror of beasts of prey. While this stratagem is preparing on the left hand, an ambush is laid under the rocks to the right. Arbours thickly covered with green branches are formed at a small distance from each other, and four men are lodged in each. All things being now ready, a trumpet is sounded —the beast, roused from his den, springs forth with a loud roar, and flies, pursued by the youths, to the open plain. The ambuscade arising drive him towards the formidable cord. Terrified by the shouting of the crowd and the flapping of the feathers, he falls into the toils. The men stationed at each extremity of the net, come together and enclose him in the fatal snare. He rages furiously, and not unfrequently escapes. When taken, a strong man chains his right paw, deprives him of all power, binds him to a stake, and at last shuts him up in a chest of pine.

The hare, when hunted, should be pursued down the declivity. For when she sees the hunters, she immediately ascends the hill, because her fore legs are shorter than her hind ones, and they have the advantage in such a chace, the ascent being difficult for horses. —Beaten paths should be avoided, for the hare bounds over them easily, but in ploughed lands, and in the summer season, her feet are heavy, and in winter they are shod with a pernicious weight of clay.

The deer should be allowed no respite in the chace,—for if the

shortest time be granted her for free respiration, or any other demand of nature, she renews her course with redoubled speed.

The Fox is taken neither by snares nor nets—for, with wonderful cunning, he detects the one, and breaks the meshes of the other.—Packs of hounds pursue him; but their victory over him is not bloodless.

Auto Idealo! Idolo subre-bello!
Fièro Princesso! O tu, Fado Esterello!
Encarnacioun de toun pais!
Pèr forço baus e forço vàsti vabre,
Toujour ardènt e mai-que-mai alabre,
Veici toun Troubadou que sèmpre te seguis!

Niflant de linen toun alen balsamique,
Vé, vièu aqueu, lou Felibre eisoutique
Qu'a canta 'Li Parpaioun Blu'? . . .
Encuei, ma barbo es blanco, e la Vieiesso
Vèndra lèu-lèu m'espoutriga, Princesso!
Qu'encheu? pèr Tu mi pèd, moun cor, tout es alu!

Auto Idealo! Idolo subre-bello!
Fièro Princesso! O tu, Fado Esterello!
Encarnacioun de tour païs!
Pèr forço baus e forço vàsti vabre,
Toujour ardènt e mai-que-mai alabre,
Veici toun Troubadou que sèmpre te seguis!

Niflant de liuen toun alen balsamique,
Vé, sièu aquéu, lou Felibre eisoutique
Qu'a canta 'Li Parpaioun Blu'? . . .
Encuei, ma barbo es blanco, e la Vieiesso
Vèndra lèu-lèu m'espoutriga, Princesso!
Qu'encheu? pèr Tu mi pèd, moun cor, tout es alu!

Au Felibrige

Le Cantique de Sainte Estelle

Des ténèbres tombantes
Une conversation s'épanouit !
C'était Toi, la Sainte Estelle !
Et la campagne sourit.
Sainte Estelle trois fois belle !
O resplendissante Sainte Estelle !

Voilà ta clarté bienveillante,
A travers les rochers, les ravins,
A conduit les rois insatiables,
au bin fond de l'Orient
A la face du Messie,
A la lumière qui brille éternellement,
Loin, ô loin les mécréants

To the Felibrige

The Canticle of Saint Estella

From the descending darkness
A refulgence rose and spread, . . .
It was Thou, the Saint Estella.
And the landscape smiled.
Saint Estella, thrice beautiful!
O lustrous Holy Star!

Lo, thy benignant gleam
Over cliffs, over chasms,
Hath guided the insatiate kings,
From the very heart of the Orient,
Unto the Messiah's face,
Unto the light which shineth for ever,
Far, Oh far from such as believe not

Au FELIBRIGE

Lou CANTICO de SANTO ESTELLO

Di sournuro toumbareìlo
Un trelus s'espandiguè ! . . .
Ero tu, la Santo-Estello !
E lou campas sourriguè !
Santo Estello tres fes bello !
Resplendènto Santo Estello !

Ve, toun lume benfasènt,
A travès li baus, li vabre,
A coundu li rèi alabre,
Dóu fin founs de l'Ouriènt,
A la pàci dóu Messio,
A la lus que toujour briho,
Liuen, oh liuen di mesiresènt.

Chœur

Sainte Estelle trois fois belle
O resplendissante Sainte Estelle
Nous te poursuivrons plus que jamais,
A travers les rochers, les ravins,
Ardents, enflammés, insatiables,
Ainsi que les Rois, sans peur.

2

Dans ce temps qu'enveloppe
La nuit, la neige, le brouillard,
Tu as lancé, Sainte Etoile
Sur ce lieu fondé notre gloire
Sainte Estelle trois fois belle!
O resplendissante Sainte Etoile!

Tu as ensoleillé de ton
Notre langue méprisée:
Avec les rayonnements
Tu as fait voir aux gregeants
La beauté de la Patrie,
La Poésie claire et sereine,
Et la Cause, et le Chemin!

Chœur

Sainte Estelle trois fois belle
O resplendissante Sainte Estelle

Choir

Saint Estella three beauteous,
O lustrous Holy Star!
Thee will we follow more and more,
Thru cliffs, over chasms,
Ardent, bold, impetuous,
Like to the kings, unsparing.

2

In this time, which is encompassed
By night, and snow and mist,
Thou hast beamed, Saint Stella!
Thou hast poised our ice!
Saint Estella three revelled
O lustrous Holy Star.

Holy Star

Thou hast summed from us
Our language seemed:
With thy gusts of light
Thou hast made manifest to grandeur
The beauty of the Mother tongue,
The Poetry that is wholesome and high,
And the Cause, and the Way!

Choir

Saint Estella three, vaulted!
O lustrous Holy Star!

Idéale sublime ! Idole de beauté souveraine !
Fière Princesse ! O toi, Enchanteresse Estérelle !
Incarnation de ton pays !
Par bien de rocs et bien d'immenses abîmes,
Toujours ardent, et plus insatiable que jamais,
8. Me Voici ton Troubadour qui te suis sans cesse !

Flairant de loin ton haleine embaumée,
Vois tu, je suis celui-là, le Félibre exotique
Qui chanta jadis 'Li Parpaioun Blu' : ...
Aujourd'hui ma barbe est blanche, et la Vieillesse
Viendra bientôt m'écraser, ô Princesse !
N'importe ! n'importe ! pour toi mes pieds, mon coeur, tout est ailé !

Lofty Ideal ! Idol surpassingly fair !
2. } tr. High-souled Princess ! O thou, Enchantress Esterella !
1. } Over many a crag and many a vasty chasm,
Embodyment of thy native land !
Ever ardent, and more and more insatiate,
Behold thy Troubadour who is following thee unceasingly !

Scenting from afar thy balsamic breath,
Lo, I am he, the Felibre from foreign parts
Who sang [of old] 'The Blue Butterflies' : ...
To-day my beard is white, and Old Age
Will be coming soon to crush me, O Princess !
What matter ? for Thee my feet, my heart, everything is winged !