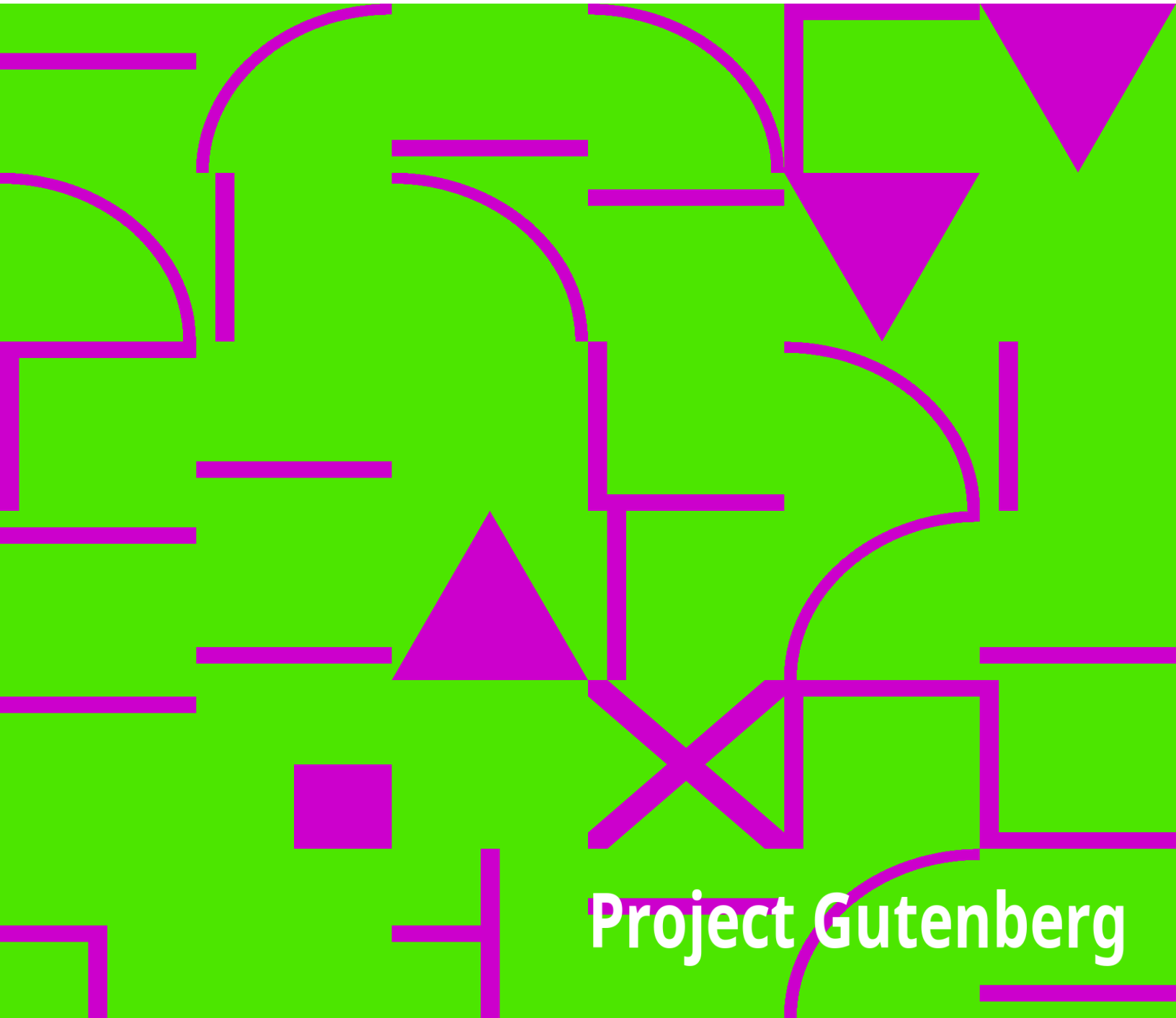
Curiosities of Literature, Vol. 3

Isaac Disraeli and Earl of Beaconsfield



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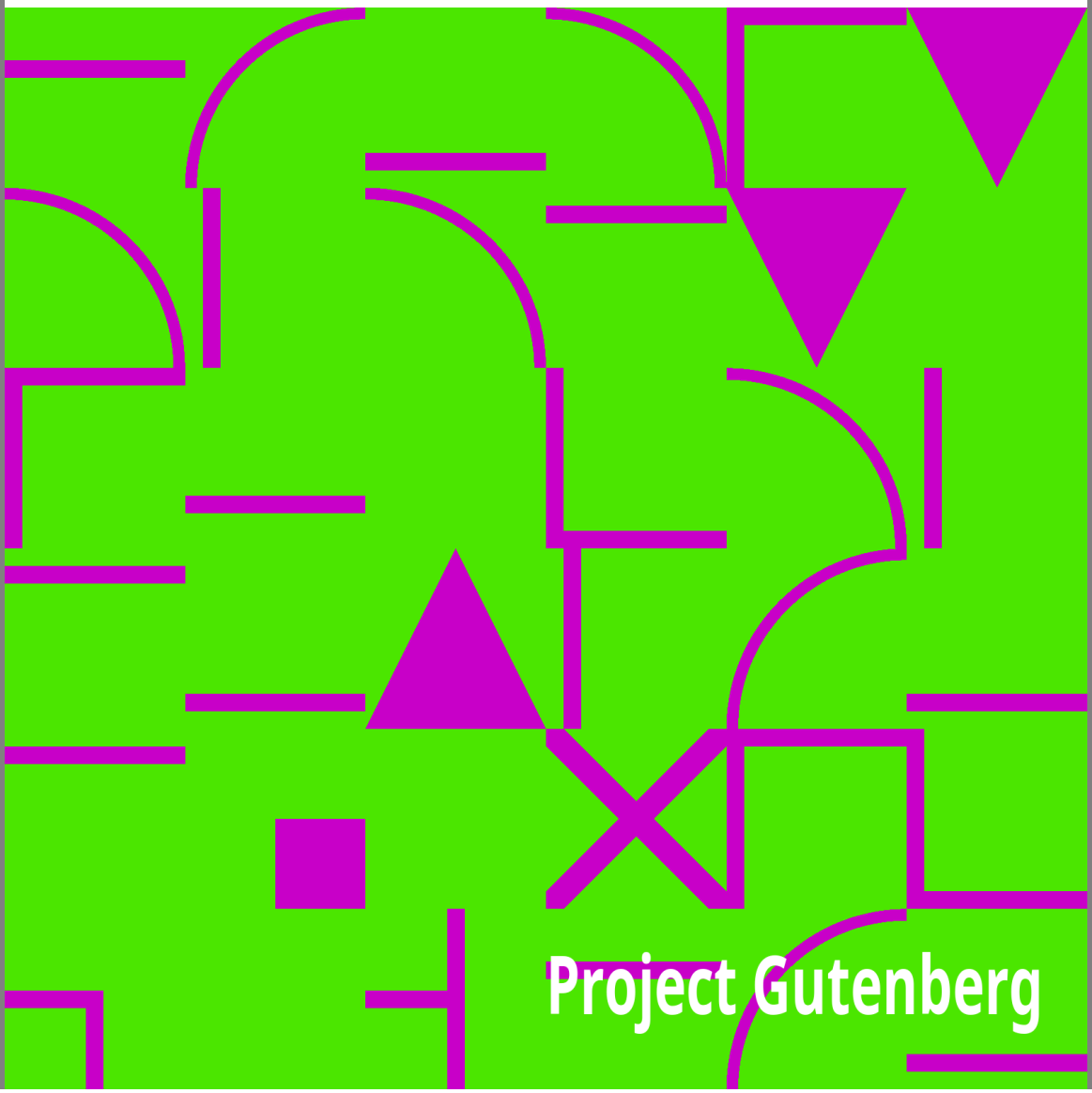

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CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

BY

ISAAC DISRAELI.

A New Edition,

EDITED, WITH MEMOIR AND NOTES,

BY HIS SON,

THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.

IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOL. III.

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME III.

	PAGE
LOCAL DESCRIPTIONS	1
MASQUES	4
OF DES MAIZEAUX, AND THE SECRET HISTORY OF ANTHONY COLLINS'S MANUSCRIPTS	13
HISTORY OF NEW WORDS	23
THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROVERBS	32
CONFUSION OF WORDS	65

POLITICAL NICKNAMES 80

THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF A POET—SHENSTONE VINDICATED 90

SECRET HISTORY OF THE BUILDING OF BLENHEIM 102

SECRET HISTORY OF SIR WALTER RAWLEIGH 111

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF THE LAST HOURS OF SIR WALTER RAWLEIGH 124

LITERARY UNIONS 131

OF A BIOGRAPHY PAINTED 136

CAUSE AND PRETEXT 141

POLITICAL FORGERIES AND FICTIONS 144

EXPRESSION OF SUPPRESSED OPINION 150

AUTOGRAPHS 163

THE HISTORY OF WRITING-MASTERS 167

THE ITALIAN HISTORIANS 177

OF PALACES BUILT BY MINISTERS 186

“TAXATION NO TYRANNY” 193

THE BOOK OF DEATH 200

HISTORY OF THE SKELETON OF DEATH 206

THE RIVAL BIOGRAPHERS OF HEYLIN 215

OF LENGLET DU FRESNOY 221

THE DICTIONARY OF TREVOUX 229

QUADRIO’S ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH POETRY 233

“POLITICAL RELIGIONISM” 238

TOLERATION 245

APOLOGY FOR THE PARISIAN MASSACRE 255

PREDICTION 260

DREAMS AT THE DAWN OF PHILOSOPHY 280
ON PUCK THE COMMENTATOR 296
LITERARY FORGERIES 303
OF LITERARY FILCHERS 316
OF LORD BACON AT HOME 320
SECRET HISTORY OF THE DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH 328
JAMES THE FIRST AS A FATHER AND A HUSBAND 333
THE MAN OF ONE BOOK 337
A BIBLIOGNOSTE 340
SECRET HISTORY OF AN ELECTIVE MONARCHY 346
BUILDINGS IN THE METROPOLIS, AND RESIDENCE IN THE COUNTRY 363
ROYAL PROCLAMATIONS 371
TRUE SOURCES OF SECRET HISTORY 380
LITERARY RESIDENCES 394
WHETHER ALLOWABLE TO RUIN ONESELF? 400
DISCOVERIES OF SECLUDED MEN 408
SENTIMENTAL BIOGRAPHY 414
LITERARY PARALLELS 425
THE PEARL BIBLES, AND SIX THOUSAND ERRATA 427
VIEW OF A PARTICULAR PERIOD OF THE STATE OF RELIGION IN OUR CIVIL WARS 423
BUCKINGHAM'S POLITICAL COQUETRY WITH THE PURITANS 443
SIR EDWARD COKE'S EXCEPTIONS AGAINST THE HIGH SHERIFF'S OATH 446

SECRET HISTORY OF CHARLES THE FIRST AND HIS FIRST PARLIAMENTS 448
THE RUMP 482
LIFE AND HABITS OF A LITERARY ANTIQUARY—OLDYS AND HIS MANUSCRIPTS 493
INDEX 513

CURIOSITIES OF LITERATURE.

LOCAL DESCRIPTIONS.

NOTHING is more idle, and, what is less to be forgiven in a writer, more tedious, than minute and lengthened descriptions of localities; where it is very doubtful whether the writers themselves had formed any tolerable notion of the place they describe,—it is certain their readers never can! These descriptive passages, in which writers of imagination so frequently indulge, are usually a glittering confusion of unconnected things; circumstances recollected from others, or observed by themselves at different times; the finest are thrust in together. If a scene from nature, it is possible that all the seasons of the year may be jumbled together; or if a castle or an apartment, its magnitude or its minuteness may equally

bewilder. Yet we find, even in works of celebrity, whole pages of these general or these particular descriptive sketches, which leave nothing behind but noun substantives propped up by random epithets. The old writers were quite delighted to fill up their voluminous pages with what was a great saving of sense and thinking. In the *Alaric* of Scudery sixteen pages, containing nearly five hundred verses, describe a palace, commencing at the *façade*, and at length finishing with the garden; but his description, we may say, was much better described by Boileau, whose good taste felt the absurdity of this "abondance stérile," in overloading a work with useless details,

> Un auteur, quelquefois, trop plein de son objet,
> Jamais sans l'épuiser n'abandonne un sujet.
> S'il rencontre un palais il m'en dépeint la face,
> Il me promène après de terrasae en terrasse.
> Ici s'offre un perron, là règne un corridor;
> Là ce balcon s'enferme en un balustre d'or;
> Il compte les plafonds, les ronds, et les ovales—
> Je saute vingt feuillets pour en trouver la fin;
> Et je me sauve à peine au travers du jardin!

And then he adds so excellent a canon of criticism, that we must not neglect it:—

> Tout ce qu'on dit de trop est fade et rébutant;
> L'esprit rassasié le rejette à l'instant,
> Qui ne sait se borner, ne sut jamais écrire.

We have a memorable instance of the inefficiency of local descriptions in a very remarkable one by a writer of fine genius, composing with an

extreme fondness of his subject, and curiously anxious to send down to posterity the most elaborate display of his own villa—this was the *Laurentinum* of Pliny. We cannot read his letter to Gallus, which the English reader may in Melmoth's elegant version,[1] without somewhat participating in the delight of the writer in many of its details; but we cannot with the writer form the slightest conception of his villa, while he is leading us over from apartment to apartment, and pointing to us the opposite wing, with a "beyond this," and a "not far from thence," and "to this apartment another of the same sort," &c. Yet, still, as we were in great want of a correct knowledge of a Roman villa, and as this must be the most so possible, architects have frequently studied, and the learned translated with extraordinary care, Pliny's *Description of his Laurentinum*. It became so favourite an object, that eminent architects have attempted to raise up this edifice once more, by giving its plan and elevation; and this extraordinary fact is the result—that not one of them but has given a representation different from the other! Montfaucon, a more faithful antiquary, in his close translation of the description of this villa, in comparing it with Felibien's plan of the villa itself, observes, "that the architect accommodated his edifice to his translation, but that their notions are not the same; unquestionably," he adds, "if ten skilful translators were to perform their task separately, there would not be one who agreed with another!"

If, then, on this subject of local descriptions, we find that it is impossible to convey exact notions of a real existing scene, what must we think of those which, in truth, describe scenes which have no other existence than the confused makings-up of an author's invention; where the more he details the more he confuses; and where the more particular he wishes to be, the more indistinct the whole appears?

Local descriptions, after a few striking circumstances have been selected, admit of no further detail. It is not their length, but their happiness, which

enters into our comprehension; the imagination can only take in and keep together a very few parts of a picture. The pen must not intrude on the province of the pencil, any more than the pencil must attempt to perform what cannot in any shape be submitted to the eye, though fully to the mind.

The great art, perhaps, of local description, is rather a general than a particular view; the details must be left to the imagination; it is suggestion rather than description. There is an old Italian sonnet of this kind which I have often read with delight; and though I may not communicate the same pleasure to the reader, yet the story of the writer is most interesting, and the lady (for such she was) has the highest claim to be ranked, like the lady of Evelyn, among *literary wives*.

Francesca Turina Bufalini di Citta di Castello, of noble extraction, and devoted to literature, had a collection of her poems published in 1628. She frequently interspersed little domestic incidents of her female friend, her husband, her son, her grandchildren; and in one of these sonnets she has delineated *her palace of San Giustino*, whose localities she appears to have enjoyed with intense delight in the company of "her lord," whom she tenderly associates with the scene. There is a freshness and simplicity in the description, which will perhaps convey a clearer notion of the spot than even Pliny could do in the voluminous description of his *villa*. She tells us what she found when brought to the house of her husband:—

Ampie salle, ampie loggie, ampio cortile
E stanze ornate con gentil pitture,
Trovai giungendo, e nobili sculture
Di marmo fatte, da scalpel non vile.
Nobil giardin con un perpetuo Aprile
Di varij fior, di frutti, e di verdure,
Ombre soavi, acque a temprar l'arsure

E strade di beltà non dissimile;
E non men forte estel, che per fortezza
Ha il ponte, e i fianchi, e lo circonda intorno
Fosso profundo e di real larghezza.
Qui fei col mio Signore dolce soggiorno
Con santo amor, con somma contentezza
Onde ne benedico il mese e il giorno!

Wide halls, wide galleries, and an ample court,
Chambers adorn'd by pictures' soothing charm,
I found together blended; noble sculpture
In marble, polish'd by no chisel vile;
A noble garden, where a lasting April
All-various flowers and fruits and verdure showers;
Soft shades, and waters tempering the hot air;
And undulating paths in equal beauty!
Nor less the castled glory stands in force,
And bridged and flanked. And round its circuit winds
The deepened moat, showing a regal size.
Here with my lord I cast my sweet sojourn,
With holy love, and with supreme content;
And hence I bless the month, and bless the day!

1 Book ii. lett. 17.

MASQUES.

It sometimes happens, in the history of national amusements, that a name survives while the thing itself is forgotten. This has been remarkably the case with our court Masques, respecting which our most eminent writers long ventured on so many false opinions, with a perfect ignorance of the nature of these compositions, which combined all that was exquisite in the imitative arts of poetry, painting, music, song, dancing, and machinery, at a period when our public theatre was in its rude infancy. Convinced of the miserable state of our represented drama, and not then possessing that more curious knowledge of their domestic history which we delight to explore, they were led into erroneous notions of one of the most gorgeous, the most fascinating, and the most poetical of dramatic amusements. Our present theatrical exhibitions are, indeed, on a scale to which the twopenny audiences of the barn playhouses of Shakspeare could never have strained their sight; and our picturesque and learned *costume*, with the brilliant changes of our scenery, would have maddened the "property-men" and the "tire-women" of the Globe or the Red Bull.[2] Shakspeare himself never beheld the true magical illusions of his own dramas, with "Enter the Red Coat," and "Exit Hat and Cloak," helped out with "painted cloths;" or, as a bard of Charles the Second's time chants—

> Look back and see
> The strange vicissitudes of poetrie;
> Your aged fathers came to plays for wit,
> And sat knee-deep in nut-shells in the pit.

But while the public theatre continued long in this contracted state, without scenes, without dresses, without an orchestra, the court displayed scenical and dramatic exhibitions with such costly magnificence, such inventive fancy, and such miraculous art, that we may doubt if the combined genius of Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones, and Lawes, or Ferobosco, at an era most favourable to the arts of imagination, has been equalled by the modern *spectacle* of the Opera.

But this circumstance had entirely escaped the knowledge of our critics. The critic of a Masque must not only have read it, but he must also have heard and have viewed it. The only witnesses in this case are those letter-writers of the day, who were then accustomed to communicate such domestic intelligence to their absent friends: from such ample correspondence I have often drawn some curious and sometimes important information. It is amusing to notice the opinions of some great critics, how from an original mis-statement they have drawn an illegitimate opinion, and how one inherits from the other the error which he propagates. Warburton said on Masques, that "Shakspeare was an enemy to these *fooleries*, as appears by his writing none." This opinion was among the many which that singular critic threw out as they arose at the moment; for Warburton forgot that Shakspeare characteristically introduces one in the *Tempest's* most fanciful scene.[3] Granger, who had not much time to study the manners of the age whose personages he was so well acquainted with, in a note on Milton's Masque, said that "these compositions were trifling and perplexed allegories, the persons of which are fantastical to the last degree. Ben Jonson, in his 'Masque of Christmas,' has introduced 'Minced Pie,' and 'Baby Cake,' who act their parts in the drama.[4] But the most *wretched performances* of this kind could please by the help of music, machinery, and dancing." Granger blunders, describing by two farcical characters a species of composition of which farce was not the characteristic. Such personages as he notices would enter into the Anti-masque, which was a

humorous parody of the more solemn Masque, and sometimes relieved it. Malone, whose fancy was not vivid, condemns Masques and the age of Masques, in which, he says, echoing Granger's epithet, "the *wretched taste* of the times found amusement." And lastly comes Mr. Todd, whom the splendid fragment of the "Arcades," and the entire Masque, which we have by heart, could not warm; while his neutralising criticism fixes him at the freezing point of the thermometer. "This dramatic entertainment, performed not without prodigious expense in machinery and decoration, to *which humour* we certainly owe the entertainment of 'Arcades,' and the inimitable Mask of 'Comus.'" *Comus*, however, is only a fine dramatic poem, retaining scarcely any features of the Masque. The only modern critic who had written with some research on this departed elegance of the English drama was Warton, whose fancy responded to the fascination of the fairy-like magnificence and lyrical spirit of the Masque. Warton had the taste to give a specimen from "The Inner Temple Mask by William Browne," the pastoral poet, whose Address to Sleep, he observed, "reminds us of some favourite touches in Milton's *Comus*, to which it perhaps gave birth." Yet even Warton was deficient in that sort of research which only can discover the true nature of these singular dramas.

Such was the state in which, some years ago, I found all our knowledge of this once favourite amusement of our court, our nobility, and our learned bodies of the four inns of court. Some extensive researches, pursued among contemporary manuscripts, cast a new light over this obscure child of fancy and magnificence. I could not think lightly of what Ben Jonson has called "The Eloquence of Masques;" entertainments on which from three to five thousand pounds were expended, and on more public occasions ten and twenty thousand. To the aid of the poetry, composed by the finest poets, came the most skilful musicians and the most elaborate machinists; Ben Jonson, and Inigo Jones,[5] and Lawes blended into one piece their respective genius; and Lord Bacon, and Whitelocke, and Selden, who sat in

committees for the last grand Masque presented to Charles the First, invented the devices; composed the procession of the Masquers and the Anti-Masquers; while one took the care of the dancing or the brawlers, and Whitelocke the music—the sage Whitelocke! who has chronicled his self-complacency on this occasion, by claiming the invention of a *Coranto*, which for thirty years afterwards was the delight of the nation, and was blessed by the name of "Whitelocke's Coranto," and which was always called for, two or three times over, whenever that great statesman "came to see a play!"[6] So much personal honour was considered to be involved in the conduct of a Masque, that even this committee of illustrious men was on the point of being broken up by too serious a discussion concerning precedence; and the Masque had nearly not taken place, till they hit on the expedient of throwing dice to decide on their rank in the procession! On this jealousy of honour in the composition of a Masque, I discovered, what hitherto had escaped the knowledge, although not the curiosity, of literary inquirers—the occasion of the memorable enmity between Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones, who had hitherto acted together with brotherly affection; "a circumstance," says Gifford, to whom I communicated it, "not a little important in the history of our calumniated poet." The trivial cause, but not so in its consequences, was the poet prefixing his own name before that of the architect on the title-page of a Masque, which hitherto had only been annexed;[7] so jealous was the great architect of his *part* of the Masque, and so predominant his power and name at court, that he considered his rights invaded by the *inferior* claims of the poet! Jonson has poured out the whole bitterness of his soul in two short satires: still more unfortunately for the subject of these satires, they provoked Inigo to sharpen his pen on rhyme; but it is edgeless, and the blunt composition still lies in its manuscript state.

While these researches had engaged my attention, appeared Gifford's Memoirs of Ben Jonson. The characteristics of Masques are there, for the first time, elaborately opened with the clear and penetrating spirit of that

ablest of our dramatic critics. I feel it like presumption to add to what has received the finishing hand of a master; but his jewel is locked up in a chest, which I fear is too rarely opened, and he will allow me to borrow something from its splendour. “The Masque, as it attained its highest degree of excellence, admitted of dialogue, singing, and dancing; these were not independent of one another, but combined, by the introduction of some ingenious fable, into an harmonious whole. When the plan was formed, the aid of the sister-arts was called in; for the essence of the Masque was pomp and glory. Moveable scenery of the most costly and splendid kind was lavished on the Masque; the most celebrated masters were employed on the songs and dances; and all that the kingdom afforded of vocal and instrumental excellence was employed to embellish the exhibition.[8] Thus magnificently constructed, the Masque was not committed to ordinary performers. It was composed, as Lord Bacon says, for princes, and by princes it was played.[9] Of these Masques, the skill with which their ornaments were designed, and the inexpressible grace with which they were executed, appear to have left a vivid impression on the mind of Jonson. His genius awakes at once, and all his faculties attune to sprightliness and pleasure. He makes his appearance, like his own Delight, ‘accompanied with Grace, Love, Harmony, Revel, Sport, and Laughter.’

> “In curious knot and mazes so
> The Spring at first was taught to go;
> And Zephyr, when he came to woo
> His Flora, had his *motions*[10] too;
> And thus did Venus learn to lead
> The Idalian brawls, and so to tread,
> As if the wind, not she, did walk,
> Nor press’d a flower, nor bow’d a stalk.

“But in what,” says Gifford, “was the taste of the times *wretched*? In poetry, painting, architecture, they have not since been equalled; and it ill becomes us to arraign the taste of a period which possessed a cluster of writers of whom the meanest would now be esteemed a prodigy.” Malone did not live to read this denouncement of his objection to these Masques, as “bungling shows;” and which Warburton treats as “fooleries;” Granger as “wretched performances;” while Mr. Todd regards them merely as “the humour of the times!”

Masques were often the private theatricals of the families of our nobility, performed by the ladies and gentlemen at their seats; and were splendidly got up on certain occasions: such as the celebration of a nuptial, or in compliment to some great visitor. The Masque of Comus was composed by Milton to celebrate the creation of Charles the First as Prince of Wales; a scene in this Masque presented both the castle and the town of Ludlow, which proves, that although our small public theatres had not yet displayed any of the scenical illusions which long afterwards Davenant introduced, these scenical effects existed in great perfection in the Masques. The minute descriptions introduced by Thomas Campion, in his “Memorable Masque,” as it is called, will convince us that the scenery must have been exquisite and fanciful, and that the poet was always a watchful and anxious partner with the machinist, with whom sometimes, however, he had a quarrel.

The subject of this very rare Masque was “The Night and the Hours.” It would be tedious to describe the first scene with the fondness with which the poet has dwelt on it. It was a double valley; one side, with dark clouds hanging before it; on the other, a green vale, with trees, and nine golden ones of fifteen feet high; from which grove, towards “the State,” or the seat of the king, was a broad descent to the dancing-place: the bower of Flora was on the right, the house of Night on the left; between them a hill, hanging like a cliff over the grove. The bower of Flora was spacious,

garnished with flowers and flowery branches, with lights among them; the house of Night ample and stately, with black columns studded with golden stars; within, nothing but clouds and twinkling stars; while about it were placed, on wire, artificial bats and owls, continually moving. As soon as the king entered the great hall, the hautboys, out of the wood on the top of the hill, entertained the time, till Flora and Zephyr were seen busily gathering flowers from the bower, throwing them into baskets which two silvans held, attired in changeable taffeta. The song is light as their fingers, but the burden is charming:—

Now hath Flora robb'd her bowers
To befriend this place with flowers;
  Strow about! strow about!
Divers, divers flowers affect
For some private dear respect;
  Strow about! strow about!
But he's none of Flora's friend
That will not the rose commend;
  Strow about! strow about!

I cannot quit this Masque, of which, collectors know the rarity, without preserving one of those Doric delicacies, of which, perhaps, we have outlived the taste! It is a playful dialogue between a Silvan and an Hour, while Night appears in her house, with her long black hair spangled with gold, amidst her Hours; their faces black, and each bearing a lighted black torch.

SILVAN. Tell me, gentle Hour of Night,
Wherein dost thou most delight?

HOUR. Not in sleep!

SILVAN. Wherein then?

HOUR. In the frolic view of men!

SILVAN. Lov'st thou music?

HOUR. Oh! 'tis sweet!

SILVAN. What's dancing?

HOUR. E'en the mirth of feet.

SILVAN. Joy you in fairies and in elves?

HOUR. We are of that sort ourselves!
But, Silvan! say, why do you love
Only to frequent the grove?

SILVAN. Life is fullest of content
When delight is innocent.

HOUR. Pleasure must vary, not be long!
Come then, let's close, and end the song!

That the moveable scenery of these Masques formed as perfect a scenical illusion as any that our own age, with all its perfection of decoration, has attained to, will not be denied by those who have read the few Masques which have been printed. They usually contrived a double division of the scene; one part was for some time concealed from the spectator, which produced surprise and variety. Thus in the Lord's Masque, at the marriage of the Palatine, the scene was divided into two parts, from the roof to the floor; the lower part being first discovered, there appeared a wood in perspective, the innermost part being of "releeve or whole round," the rest painted. On the left a cave, and on the right a thicket, from which issued Orpheus. At the back part of the scene, at the sudden fall of a curtain, the upper part broke on the spectators, a heaven of clouds of all hues; the stars suddenly vanished, the clouds dispersed; an element of artificial fire played about the house of Prometheus—a bright and transparent cloud, reaching

from the heavens to the earth, whence the eight masquers descending with the music of a full song; and at the end of their descent the cloud broke in twain, and one part of it, as with a wind, was blown athwart the scene. While this cloud was vanishing, the wood, being the under part of the scene, was insensibly changing; a perspective view opened, with porticoes on each side, and female statues of silver, accompanied with ornaments of architecture, filling the end of the house of Prometheus, and seemed all of goldsmiths' work. The women of Prometheus descended from their niches, till the anger of Jupiter turned them again into statues. It is evident, too, that the size of the proscenium, or stage, accorded with the magnificence of the scene; for I find choruses described, "and changeable conveyances of the song," in manner of an echo, performed by more than forty different voices and instruments in various parts of the scene. The architectural decorations were the pride of Inigo Jones; such could not be trivial.

"I suppose," says the writer of this Masque, "few have ever seen more neat artifice than Master Inigo Jones showed in contriving their motion; who, as all the rest of the workmanship which belonged to the whole invention, showed extraordinary industry and skill, which if it be not as lively expressed in writing as it appeared in view, rob not him of his due, but lay the blame on my want of right apprehending his instructions, for the *adoring* of his art." Whether this strong expression should be only *adorning* does not appear in any errata; but the feeling of admiration was fervent among the spectators of that day, who were at least as much astonished as they were delighted. Ben Jonson's prose descriptions of scenes in his own exquisite Masques, as Gifford observes, "are singularly bold and beautiful." In a letter which I discovered, the writer of which had been present at one of these Masques, and which Gifford has preserved,[11] the reader may see the great poet anxiously united with Inigo Jones in working the machinery. Jonson, before "a sacrifice could be performed, turned the globe of the earth, standing behind the altar." In this globe "the sea was expressed

heightened with silver waves, which stood, or rather hung (for no axle was seen to support it), and *turning softly*, discovered the first Masque,"[12] &c. This "turning softly" producing a very magical effect, the great poet would trust to no other hand but his own!

It seems, however, that as no Masque-writer equalled Jonson, so no machinist rivalled Inigo Jones. I have sometimes caught a groan from some unfortunate poet, whose beautiful fancies were spoilt by the bungling machinist. One says, "The *order of this scene* was carefully and ingeniously disposed, and as happily put in act (for the *motions*) by the king's master carpenter;" but he adds, "the *painters*, I must needs say (not to belie them), lent small colour to any, to attribute much of the spirit of these things to their pencil." Campion, in one of his Masques, describing where the trees were gently to sink, &c., by an engine placed under the stage, and in sinking were to open, and the masquers appear out at their tops, &c., adds this vindictive marginal note: "Either by the *simplicity*, *negligence*, or *conspiracy* of the *painter*, the passing away of the trees was somewhat hazarded, though the same day they had been shown with much admiration, and were left together to the same night;" that is, they were worked right at the rehearsal, and failed in the representation, which must have perplexed the nine masquers on the tops of these nine trees. But such accidents were only vexations crossing the fancies of the poet: they did not essentially injure the magnificence, the pomp, and the fairy world opened to the spectators. So little was the character of these Masques known, that all our critics seemed to have fallen into repeated blunders, and used the Masques as Campion suspected his painters to have done, "either by simplicity, negligence, or conspiracy." Hurd, a cold systematic critic, thought he might safely prefer the Masque in the *Tempest*, as "putting to shame all the Masques of Jonson, not only in its *construction*, but in the *splendour* of its show;"—"which," adds Gifford, "was danced and sung by the ordinary performers to a couple of fiddles, perhaps in the balcony of the stage." Such

is the fate of criticism without knowledge! And now, to close our Masques, let me apply the forcible style of Ben Jonson himself: “The glory of all these solemnities had perished like a blaze, and gone out in the beholder’s eyes; so short-lived are the bodies of all things in comparison of their souls!”[13]

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2 Sir Philip Sidney, in his “Defence of Poesy,” 1595, alludes to the custom of writing the supposed locality of each scene over the stage, and asks, “What child is there that coming to a play, and seeing *Thebes* written in great letters on an old door, doth believe that it is Thebes.” As late as the production of Davenant’s *Siege of Rhodes* (*circa* 1656), this custom was continued, and is thus described in the printed edition of the play:—“In the middle of the frieze was a compartment wherein was written *Rhodes*.” In many instances the spectator was left to infer the locality of the scene from the dialogue.—“Now,” says Sidney, “you shall have three ladies walke to gather flowers, and then we must believe the stage to be a garden. By and by we heare newes of shipwracke in the same place; then we are to blame if we accept it not for a rock.” In Middleton’s *Chaste Maid*, 1630, when the scene changes to a bed-room, “a bed is thrust out upon the stage, Alwit’s wife in it;” which simple process was effected by pushing it through the curtains that hung across the entrance to the stage, which at that time projected into the pit.

3 The play of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, performed by the clowns in Shakspeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*, is certainly constructed in burlesque of characters in court Masques, which sometimes were as difficult to be made comprehensible to an audience as “the clowns of Athens” found *Wall* and *Moonshine* to be.

4 It is due to a great poet like Ben Jonson, that, without troubling the reader to turn to his works, we should give his own description of these characters, to show that they were not the “perplexed allegories” they are asserted to be by Granger; nor inappropriate to the *Masque of Christmas*, for which they were designed. Minced-Pie was habited “like a fine cook’s wife, drest neat, her man carrying a pie, dish, and spoon.” Baby-Cake was “drest like a boy, in a fine long coat, biggin-bib, muckender (or handkerchief), and a little dagger; his usher bearing a great cake, with a bean and a pease;” the latter being indicative of those generally inserted in a

Christmas cake, which, when cut into slices and distributed, indicated by the presence of the bean the person who should be king; the slice with the pea doing the same for the queen. Neither of these characters speak, but make part of the show to be described by Father Christmas. Jonson's inventive talent was never more conspicuous than in the concoction of court Masques.

5 The first employment of these two great men was upon *The Masque of Blackness*, performed at Whitehall on Twelfth-Night, 1603; and which cost nearly 10,000*l.*, of our present money.

6 The music of Whitelocke's *Coranto* is preserved in Hawkins's "History of Music." Might it be restored for the ladies as a waltz?

7 This was *Chloridia*, a Masque performed by the queen and her ladies at court, on Shrovetide, 1630; upon the title-page of which is printed "the inventors—Ben Jonson, Inigo Jones." Jonson was, by reason of the influence of Inigo, deprived of employ at court ever after, supplanted by other poets named by the architect, and among them Heywood, Shirley, and Davenant.

8 George Chapman's *Memorable Maske*, performed at Whitehall, 1630, by the gentlemen of the Middle Temple and Lincoln's Inn, cost the latter society nearly 2000*l.* for their share of the expenses.

9 Ben Jonson records the names of the noble ladies and gentlemen who enacted his inventions at court.

10 The figures and actions of dancers in Masques were called motions.

11 Memoirs of Jonson, p. 88.

12 See Gifford's Jonson, vol. vii. p. 78. This performance was in the *Masque of Hymen*, enacted at court in 1605, on the occasion of the marriage of the Earl of Essex to the daughter of the Earl of Suffolk.

13 Splendour ultimately ruined these works; they ended in gaudy dresses and expensive machinery, but poetry was not associated with them. The youthful days of Louis XIV. raised them to a height of costly luxuriance to sink them ever after in oblivion.

OF DES MAIZEAUX, AND THE SECRET HISTORY OF ANTHONY COLLINS'S MANUSCRIPTS.

Des Maizeaux was an active literary man of his day, whose connexions with Bayle, St. Evremond, Locke, and Toland, and his name being set off by an F.R.S., have occasioned the dictionary-biographers to place him prominently among their "hommes illustres." Of his private history nothing seems known. Having something important to communicate respecting one of his friends, a far greater character, with whose fate he stands connected, even Des Maizeaux becomes an object of our inquiry.

He was one of those French refugees whom political madness or despair of intolerance had driven to our shores. The proscription of Louis XIV., which supplied us with our skilful workers in silk, also produced a race of the unemployed, who proved not to be as exquisite in the handicraft of book-making; such were *Motteux*, *La Coste*, *Ozell*, *Durand*, and others. Our author had come over in that tender state of youth, just in time to become half an Englishman: and he was so ambidextrous in the languages of the two great literary nations of Europe, that whenever he took up his pen, it is evident by his manuscripts, which I have examined, that it was mere accident which determined him to write in French or in English. Composing without genius, or even taste, without vivacity or force, the simplicity and fluency of his style were sufficient for the purposes of a ready dealer in all the *minutiæ literariæ*; literary anecdotes, curious quotations, notices of

obscure books, and all that *supellex* which must enter into the history of literature, without forming a history. These little things, which did so well of themselves, without any connexion with anything else, became trivial when they assumed the form of voluminous minuteness; and Des Maizeaux at length imagined that nothing but anecdotes were necessary to compose the lives of men of genius! With this sort of talent he produced a copious life of Bayle, in which he told everything he possibly could; and nothing can be more tedious, and more curious: for though it be a grievous fault to omit nothing, and marks the writer to be deficient in the development of character, and that sympathy which throws inspiration over the vivifying page of biography, yet, to admit everything, has this merit—that we are sure to find what we want! Warburton poignantly describes our Des Maizeaux, in one of those letters to Dr. Birch which he wrote in the fervid age of study, and with the impatient vivacity of his genius, "Almost all the life-writers we have had before Toland and Des Maizeaux are indeed strange, insipid creatures; and yet I had rather read the worst of them, than be obliged to go through with this of Milton's, or the other's life of Boileau; where there is such a dull, heavy succession of long quotations of uninteresting passages, that it makes their method quite nauseous. But the verbose, tasteless Frenchman seems to lay it down as a principle, that every life must be a book,—and, what is worse, it seems a book without a life; for what do we know of Boileau after all his tedious stuff?"

Des Maizeaux was much in the employ of the Dutch booksellers, then the great monopolisers in the literary mart of Europe. He supplied their "nouvelles littéraires" from England; but the work-sheet price was very mean in those days. I have seen annual accounts of Des Maizeaux settled to a line for four or five pounds; and yet he sent the "Novelties" as fresh as the post could carry them! He held a confidential correspondence with these great Dutch booksellers, who consulted him in their distresses; and he seems rather to have relieved them than himself. But if he got only a few

florins at Rotterdam, the same “nouvelles littéraires” sometimes secured him valuable friends at London; for in those days, which perhaps are returning on us, an English author would often appeal to a foreign journal for the commendation he might fail in obtaining at home; and I have discovered, in more cases than one, that, like other smuggled commodities, the foreign article was often of home manufactory!

I give one of these curious bibliopolical distresses. Sauzet, a bookseller at Rotterdam, who judged too critically for the repose of his authors, seems to have been always fond of projecting a new “Journal;” tormented by the ideal excellence which he had conceived of such a work, it vexed him that he could never find the workmen! Once disappointed of the assistance he expected from a writer of talents, he was fain to put up with one he was ashamed of; but warily stipulated on very singular terms. He confided this precious literary secret to Des Maizeaux. I translate from his manuscript letter.

“I send you, my dear Sir, four sheets of the continuation of my journal, and I hope this second part will turn out better than the former. The author thinks himself a very able person; but I must tell you frankly, that he is a man without erudition, and without any critical discrimination; he writes pretty well, and turns passably what he says; but that is all! Monsieur Van Effen having failed in his promises to realise my hopes on this occasion, necessity compelled me to have recourse to him; but for *six months only*, and on condition that he should not, on any account whatever, *allow any one to know that he is the author of the journal*; for his *name* alone would be sufficient to make even a passable book discreditable. As you are among my friends, I will confide to you in secrecy the name of this author; it is Mons. *De Limiers*.[14] You see how much my interest is concerned that the author should not be known!” This anecdote is gratuitously presented to the editors of certain reviews, as a serviceable hint to enter into the same

engagement with some of their own writers: for it is usually the *De Limiers* who expend their last puff in blowing their own name about the town.

In England, Des Maizeaux, as a literary man, made himself very useful to other men of letters, and particularly to persons of rank: and he found patronage and a pension,—like his talents, very moderate! A friend to literary men, he lived amongst them, from "Orator" Henley, up to Addison, Lord Halifax, and Anthony Collins. I find a curious character of our Des Maizeaux in the handwriting of Edward, Earl of Oxford, to whose father (Pope's Earl of Oxford) and himself the nation owes the Harleian treasures. His lordship is a critic with high Tory principles, and high-church notions. "This Des Maizeaux is a great man with those who are pleased to be called *Freethinkers*, particularly with Mr. Anthony Collins, collects passages out of books for their writings. His Life of Chillingworth is wrote to please that set of men." The secret history I am to unfold relates to Anthony Collins and Des Maizeaux. Some curious book-lovers will be interested in the personal history of an author they are well acquainted with, yet which has hitherto remained unknown. He tells his own story in a sort of epistolary petition he addressed to a noble friend, characteristic of an author, who cannot be deemed unpatronised, yet whose name, after all his painful labours, might be inserted in my "Calamities of Authors."

In this letter he announces his intention of publishing a Dictionary like Bayle; having written the life of Bayle, the next step was to become himself a Bayle; so short is the passage of literary delusion! He had published, as a specimen, the lives of Hales and Chillingworth. He complains that his circumstances have not allowed him to forward that work, nor digest the materials he had collected.

A work of that nature requires a steady application, free from the cares and avocations incident to all persons obliged to seek for their maintenance. I have had the misfortune to be in the case of those persons, and am now reduced to a pension on the Irish establishment, which, deducting the tax of

four shillings in the pound, and other charges, brings me in about 40*l.* a year of our English money.[15] This pension was granted to me in 1710, and I owe it chiefly to the friendship of Mr. Addison, who was then secretary to the Earl of Wharton, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. In 1711, 12, and 14, I was appointed one of the Commissioners of the Lottery by the interest of Lord Halifax.

And this is all I ever received from the Government, though I had some claim to the royal favour; for in 1710, when the enemies to our constitution were contriving its ruin, I wrote a pamphlet entitled "Lethe," which was published in Holland, and afterwards translated into English, and twice printed in London; and being reprinted in Dublin, proved so offensive to the ministry in Ireland, that it was burnt by the hands of the hangman. But so it is, that after having showed on all occasions my zeal for the royal family, and endeavoured to make myself serviceable to the public by several books published; after forty years' stay in England, and in an advanced age, I find myself and family destitute of a sufficient livelihood, and suffering from complaints in the head and impaired sight by constant application to my studies.

I am confident, my lord, he adds, that if the queen, to whom I was made known on occasion of Thuanus's French translation, were acquainted with my present distress, she would be pleased to afford me some relief.[16]

Among the confidential literary friends of Des Maizeaux, he had the honour of ranking Anthony Collins, a great lover of literature, and a man of fine genius, and who, in a continued correspondence with our Des Maizeaux, treated him as his friend, and employed him as his agent in his literary concerns. These, in the formation of an extensive library, were in a state of perpetual activity, and Collins was such a true lover of his books, that he drew up the catalogue with his own pen.[17] Anthony Collins wrote several well-known works without prefixing his name; but having pushed too far his curious inquiries on some obscure and polemical points, he incurred the odium of a *freethinker*,—a term which then began to be in vogue, and which the French adopted by translating it, in their way, *a strong thinker*, or *esprit fort*. Whatever tendency to "liberalise" the mind from *dogmas* and *creeds* prevails in these works, the talents and learning of Collins were of the first class. His morals were immaculate, and his personal character independent; but the *odium theologicum* of those days contrived every means to stab in the dark, till the taste became hereditary

with some. I shall mention a fact of this cruel bigotry, which occurred within my own observation, on one of the most polished men of the age. The late Mr. Cumberland, in the romance entitled his "Life," gave this extraordinary fact, that Dr. Bentley, who so ably replied by his "Remarks," under the name of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, to Collins's "Discourse on Free-thinking," when, many years after, he discovered him fallen into great distress, conceiving that by having ruined Collins's character as a writer for ever, he had been the occasion of his personal misery, he liberally contributed to his maintenance. In vain I mentioned to that elegant writer, who was not curious about facts, that this person could never have been *Anthony* Collins, who had always a plentiful fortune; and when it was suggested to him that this "A. Collins," as he printed it, must have been *Arthur* Collins, the historical compiler, who was often in pecuniary difficulties, still he persisted in sending the lie down to posterity, *totidem verbis*, without alteration in his second edition, observing to a friend of mine, that "the story, while it told well, might serve as a striking instance of his great relative's generosity; and that *it should stand*, because it could do no harm to any but to *Anthony* Collins, whom he considered as little short of an atheist." So much for this pious fraud! but be it recollected that this Anthony Collins was the confidential friend of Locke, of whom Locke said, on his dying bed, that "Collins was a man whom he valued in the first rank of those that he left behind him." And the last words of Collins on his own death-bed were, that "he was persuaded he was going to that place which God had designed for them that love him." The cause of true religion will never be assisted by using such leaky vessels as *Cumberland's* wilful calumnies, which in the end must run out, and be found, like the present, mere empty fictions!

An extraordinary circumstance occurred on the death of Anthony Collins. He left behind him a considerable number of his own manuscripts, there was one collection formed into eight octavo volumes; and that they might

be secured from the common fate of manuscripts, he bequeathed them all, and confided them to the care of our Des Maizeaux. The choice of Collins reflects honour on the character of Des Maizeaux, yet he proved unworthy of it! He suffered himself to betray his trust, practised on by the earnest desire of the widow, and perhaps by the arts of a Mr. Tomlinson, who appears to have been introduced into the family by the recommendation of Dean Sykes, whom at length he supplanted, and whom the widow, to save her reputation, was afterwards obliged to discard.[18] In an unguarded moment he relinquished this precious *legacy of the manuscripts*, and accepted *fifty guineas as a present*. But if Des Maizeaux lost his honour in this transaction, he was at heart an honest man, who had swerved for a single moment; his conscience was soon awakened, and he experienced the most violent compunctions. It was in a paroxysm of this nature that he addressed the following letter to a mutual friend of the late Anthony Collins and himself.

January 6, 1730.

SIR,

I am very glad to hear you are come to town, and as you are my best friend, now I have lost Mr. Collins, give me leave to open my heart to you, and to beg your assistance in an affair which highly concerns both Mr. Collins's (your friend) and my own honour and reputation. The case, in few words, stands thus:—Mr. Collins by his last will and testament left me his manuscripts. Mr. Tomlinson, who first acquainted me with it, told me that Mrs. Collins should be glad to have them, and I made them over to her; whereupon she was pleased to present me with fifty guineas. I desired her at the same time to take care they should be kept safe and unhurt, which she promised to do. This was done the 25th of last month. Mr. Tomlinson, who managed all this affair, was present.

Now, having further considered that matter, I find that I have done a most wicked thing. I am persuaded that I have betrayed the trust of a person who, for twenty-six years, had given me continual instances of his friendship and confidence. I am convinced that I have acted contrary to the will and intention of my dear deceased friend; showed a disregard to the particular mark of esteem he gave me on that occasion; in short, that I have forfeited what is dearer to me than my own life—honour and reputation.

These melancholy thoughts have made so great an impression upon me, that I protest to you I can enjoy no rest; they haunt me everywhere, day and night. I earnestly beseech you, sir, to represent my unhappy case to Mrs. Collins. I acted with all the simplicity and uprightness of my heart; I considered that the MSS. would be as safe in Mrs. Collins's hands as in mine; that she was no less obliged to preserve them than myself; and that, as the library was left to her, they might naturally go along with it. Besides, I thought I could not too much comply with the desire of a lady to whom I have so many obligations. But I see now clearly that this is not fulfilling Mr. Collins's will, and that the duties of our conscience are superior to all other regards. But it is in her power to forgive and mend what I have done imprudently, but with a good intention. Her high sense of virtue and generosity will not, I am sure, let her take any advantage of my weakness; and the tender regard she has for the memory of the best of men, and the tenderest of husbands, will not suffer that his intentions should be frustrated, and that she should be the instrument of violating what is most sacred. If our late friend had designed that his MSS. should remain in her hands, he would certainly have left them to her by his last will and testament; his acting otherwise is an evident proof that it was not his intention.

All this I proposed to represent to her in the most respectful manner; but you will do it infinitely better than I can in this present distraction of mind; and I flatter myself that the mutual esteem and friendship which has continued so many years between Mr. Collins and you, will make you readily embrace whatever tends to honour his memory.

I send you the fifty guineas I received, which I do now look upon as the wages of iniquity; and I desire you to return them to Mrs. Collins, who, as I hope it of her justice, equity, and regard to Mr. Collins's intentions, will be pleased to cancel my paper.

I am, &c.,

P. Des Maizeaux.

The manuscripts were never returned to Des Maizeaux; for seven years afterwards Mrs. Collins, who appears to have been a very spirited lady, addressed to him the following letter on the subject of a report, that she had permitted transcripts of these very manuscripts to get abroad. This occasioned an animated correspondence from both sides.

March 10, 1736-37.

Sir,

I have thus long waited in expectation that you would ere this have called on Dean Sykes, as Sir B. Lucy said you intended, that I might have had some satisfaction in relation to a very unjust

reproach—viz., that I, or somebody that I had trusted, had *betrayed* some of the transcripts, or MSS., of Mr. Collins into the Bishop of London's hands. I cannot, therefore, since you have not been with the dean as was desired, but call on you in this manner, to know what authority you had for such a reflection; or on what grounds you went for saying that these transcripts are in the Bishop of London's hands. I am determined to trace out the grounds of such a report; and you can be no friend of mine, no friend of Mr. Collins, no friend to common justice, if you refuse to acquaint me, what foundation you had for such a charge. I desire a very speedy answer to this, who am, Sir,

Your servant,

ELIZ. COLLINS.

To Mr. Des Maizeaux, at his lodgings next door to the Quakers' burying-ground, Hanover-street, out of Long-Acre.

TO MRS. COLLINS.

March 14, 1737.

I had the honour of your letter of the 10th inst., and as I find that something has been misapprehended, I beg leave to set this matter right.

Being lately with some honourable persons, I told them it had been reported that some of Mr. C.'s MSS. were fallen into the hands of strangers, and that I should be glad to receive from you such information as might enable me to disprove that report. What occasioned this surmise, or what particular MSS. were meant, I was not able to discover; so I was left to my own conjectures, which, upon a serious consideration, induced me to believe that it might relate to the MSS. in eight volumes in 8vo, of which there is a transcript. But as the original and the transcript are in your possession, if you please, madam, to compare them together, you may easily see whether they be both entire and perfect, or whether there be anything wanting in either of them. By this means you will assure yourself, and satisfy your friends, that several important pieces are safe in your hands, and that the report is false and groundless. All this I take the liberty to offer out of the singular respect I always professed for you, and for the memory of Mr. Collins, to whom I have endeavoured to do justice on all occasions, and particularly in the memoirs that have been made use of in the General Dictionary; and I hope my tender concern for his reputation will further appear when I publish his life.

April 6, 1737.

SIR,

My ill state of health has hindered me from acknowledging sooner the receipt of yours, from which I hoped for some satisfaction in relation to your charge, in which I cannot but think myself very deeply concerned. You tell me now, that you was left to your own conjectures what particular MSS. were reported to have fallen into the hands of strangers, and that upon a serious

consideration you was induced to believe that it might relate to the MSS. in eight vols. 8vo, of which there was a transcript.

I must beg of you to satisfy me very explicitly who were the persons that reported this to you, and from whom did you receive this information? You know that Mr. Collins left several MSS. behind him; what grounds had you for your conjecture that it related to the MSS. in eight vols., rather than to any other MSS. of which there was a transcript? I beg that you will be very plain, and tell me what strangers were named to you; and why you said the Bishop of London, if your informer said stranger to you. I am so much concerned in this, that I must repeat it, if you have the singular respect for Mr. Collins which you profess, that you would help me to trace out this reproach, which is so abusive to,

Sir,

Your servant,

ELIZ. COLLINS.

TO MRS. COLLINS.

I flattered myself that my last letter would have satisfied you, but I have the mortification to see that my hopes were vain. Therefore I beg leave once more to set this matter right. When I told you what had been reported, I acted, as I thought, the part of a true friend, by acquainting you that some of your MSS. had been purloined, in order that you might examine a fact which to me appeared of the last consequence; and I verily believe that everybody in my case would have expected thanks for such a friendly information. But instead of that I find myself represented as an enemy, and challenged to produce proofs and witnesses of a thing dropt in conversation, a hearsay, as if in those cases people kept a register of what they hear, and entered the names of the persons who spoke, the time, place, &c., and had with them persons ready to witness the whole, &c. I did own I never thought of such a thing, and whenever I happened to hear that some of my friends had some loss, I thought it my duty to acquaint them with such report, that they might inquire into the matter, and see whether there was any ground for it. But I never troubled myself with the names of the persons who spoke, as being a thing entirely needless and unprofitable.

Give me leave further to observe, that you are in no ways *concerned* in the matter, as you seem to be apprehensive you are. Suppose some MSS. have been taken out of your library, who will say you ought to bear the guilt of it? What man in his senses, who has the honour to know you, will say you gave your consent to such thing—that you was privy to it? How can you then take upon yourself an action to which you was neither privy and consenting? Do not such things happen every day, and do the losers think themselves injured or *abused* when they are talked of? Is it impossible to be betrayed by a person we confided in?

You call what I told you was a report, a surmise; you call it, I say, an *information*, and speak of *informers* as if there was a plot laid wherein I received the information: I thought I had the honour to be better known to you. Mr. Collins loved me and esteemed me for my integrity and sincerity, of

which he had several proofs; how I have been drawn in to injure him, to forfeit the good opinion he had of me, and which, were he now alive, would deservedly expose me to his utmost contempt, is a grief which I shall carry to the grave. It would be a sort of comfort to me, if those who have consented I should be drawn in were in some measure sensible of the guilt towards so good, kind, and generous a man.

Thus we find that, *seven years* after Des Maizeaux had inconsiderately betrayed his sacred trust, his remorse was still awake; and the sincerity of his grief is attested by the affecting style which describes it: the spirit of his departed friend seemed to be hovering about him, and, in his imagination, would haunt him to the grave.

The nature of these manuscripts; the cause of the earnest desire of retaining them by the widow; the evident unfriendliness of her conduct to Des Maizeaux; and whether these manuscripts, consisting of eight octavo volumes with their transcripts, were destroyed, or are still existing, are all circumstances which my researches have hitherto not ascertained.

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14 *Van Effen* was a Dutch writer of some merit, and one of a literary knot of ingenious men, consisting of Sallengre, St. Hyacinthe, Prosper Marchand, &c., who carried on a smart review for those days, published at the Hague under the title of "Journal Littéraire." They all composed in French; and Van Effen gave the first translations of our "Guardian," "Robinson Crusoe," and the "Tale of a Tub," &c. He did something more, but not better; he attempted to imitate the "Spectator," in his "Le Misanthrope," 1726, which exhibits a picture of the uninteresting manners of a nation whom he could not make very lively.

De Limiers has had his name slipped into our biographical dictionaries. An author cannot escape the fatality of the alphabet; his numerous misdeeds are registered. It is said, that if he had not been so hungry, he would have given proofs of possessing some talent.

15 I find that the nominal pension was 3*s.* 6*d.* per diem on the Irish civil list, which amounts to above 63*l.* per annum. If a pension be granted for reward, it seems a mockery that the income should be so grievously reduced, which cruel custom still prevails.

16 This letter, or petition, was written in 1732. In 1743 he procured his pension to be placed on his wife's life, and he died in 1745.

He was sworn in as gentleman of his majesty's privy chamber in 1722—*Sloane MSS.* 4289.

17 There is a printed catalogue of his library.

18 This information is from a note found among Des Maizeaux's papers; but its truth I have no means to ascertain.

HISTORY OF NEW WORDS.

NEOLOGY, or the novelty of words and phrases, is an innovation, which, with the opulence of our present language, the English philologer is most jealous to allow; but we have puritans or precisians of English, superstitiously nice! The fantastic coinage of affectation or caprice will cease to circulate from its own alloy; but shall we reject the ore of fine workmanship and solid weight? There is no government mint of words, and it is no statutable offence to invent a felicitous or daring expression unauthorised by Mr. Todd! When a man of genius, in the heat of his pursuits or his feelings, has thrown out a peculiar word, it probably conveyed more precision or energy than any other established word, otherwise he is but an ignorant pretender!

Julius Cæsar, who, unlike other great captains, is authority on words as well as about blows, wrote a large treatise on “Analogy,” in which that fine genius counselled to “avoid every unusual word as a rock!”[19] The cautious Quintilian, as might be expected, opposes all innovation in language. “If the new word is well received, small is the glory; if rejected, it raises laughter.”[20] This only marks the penury of his feelings in this species of adventure. The great legislator of words, who lived when his own language was at its acmé, seems undecided, yet pleaded for this liberty. “Shall that which the Romans allowed to Cæcilius and to Plautus be refused to Virgil and Varius?” The answer to the question might not be favourable to the inquirer. While a language is forming, writers are applauded for extending its limits; when established, for restricting themselves to them. But this is to imagine that a perfect language can exist! The good sense and observation of Horace perceived that there may be occasions where necessity must become the mother of invented words:—

> ————Si forte necesse est
> Indiciis monstrare recentibus abdita rerum.
>
> If you write of things abstruse or new,
> Some of your own inventing may be used,
> So it be seldom and discreetly done.
>
> ROSCOMMON.

But Horace’s canon for deciding on the legality of the new invention, or the standard by which it is to be tried, will not serve to assist the inventor of words:—

> ————licuit, semperque licebit,
> Signatum præsente nota procudere nummum.[21]

This *præsens nota*, or public stamp, can never be affixed to any new coinage of words: for many received at a season have perished with it.[22] The privilege of stamping words is reserved for their greatest enemy—Time itself! and the inventor of a new word must never flatter himself that he has secured the public adoption, for he must lie in his grave before he can enter the dictionary.

In Willes' address to the reader, prefixed to the collection of Voyages published in 1577, he finds fault with Eden's translation from Peter Martyr, for using words that "smelt too much of the Latine." We should scarcely have expected to find among them *ponderouse*, *portentouse*, *despicable*, *obsequious*, *homicide*, *imbibed*, *destructive*, *prodigious*. The only words he quotes, not thoroughly naturalised, are *dominators*, *ditionaries,* (subjects), *solicitute* (careful).

The Tatler, No. 230, introduces several polysyllables introduced by military narrations, "which (he says), if they attack us too frequently, we shall certainly put them to flight, and cut off the rear;" every one of them still keep their ground.

Half the French words used affectedly by Melantha, in Dryden's *Marriage à-la-Mode*, as innovations in our language, are now in common use, *naïveté*, *foible*, *chagrin*, *grimace*, *embarras*, *double entendre*, *equivoque*, *eclaircissement*, *ridicule*, all these words, which she learns by heart to use occasionally, are now in common use. A Dr. Russel called Psalm-singers *Ballad-singers*, having found the Song of Solomon in an old translation, the *Ballad of Ballads*, for which he is reproached by his antagonist for not knowing that the signification of words alters with time; should I call him *knave*, he ought not to be concerned at it, for the Apostle Paul is also called a *knave of Jesus Christ*.[23]

Unquestionably, NEOLOGY opens a wide door to innovation; scarcely has a century passed since our language was patched up with Gallic idioms, as in the preceding century it was piebald with Spanish, and with Italian, and even with Dutch. The political intercourse of islanders with their neighbours has ever influenced their language. In Elizabeth's reign Italian phrases[24] and Netherland words were imported; in James and Charles the Spanish framed the style of courtesy; in Charles the Second the nation and the language were equally Frenchified. Yet such are the sources from whence we have often derived some of the wealth of our language!

There are three foul corruptors of a language: caprice, affectation, and ignorance! Such fashionable cant terms as "theatricals," and "musicals," invented by the flippant Topham, still survive among his confraternity of frivolity. A lady eminent for the elegance of her taste, and of whom one of the best judges, the celebrated Miss Edgeworth, observed to me, that she spoke the purest and most idiomatic English she had ever heard, threw out an observation which might be extended to a great deal of our present fashionable vocabulary. She is now old enough, she said, to have lived to hear the vulgarisms of her youth adopted in drawing-room circles.[25] To *lunch*, now so familiar from the fairest lips, in her youth was only known in the servants' hall. An expression very rife of late among our young ladies, *a nice man*, whatever it may mean, whether that the man resemble a pudding or something more nice, conveys the offensive notion that they are ready to eat him up! When I was a boy, it was an age of *bon ton*; this *good tone* mysteriously conveyed a sublime idea of fashion; the term, imported late in the eighteenth century, closed with it. *Twaddle* for a while succeeded *bore*; but *bore* has recovered the supremacy. We want another Swift to give a new edition of his "Polite Conversation." A dictionary of barbarisms too might be collected from some wretched neologists, whose pens are now at work! Lord Chesterfield, in his exhortations to conform to Johnson's Dictionary, was desirous, however, that the great lexicographer should add as an

appendix, "*A neological dictionary*, containing those polite, though perhaps not strictly grammatical, words and phrases commonly used, and sometimes understood by the *beau-monde*."[26] This last phrase was doubtless a contribution! Such a dictionary had already appeared in the French language, drawn up by two caustic critics, who in the *Dictionnaire néologique à l'usage des beaux Esprits du Siècle* collected together the numerous unlucky inventions of affectation, with their modern authorities! A collection of the fine words and phrases, culled from some very modern poetry, might show the real amount of the favours bestowed on us.

The attempts of neologists are, however, not necessarily to be condemned; and we may join with the commentators of Aulus Gellius, who have lamented the loss of a chapter of which the title only has descended to us. That chapter would have demonstrated what happens to all languages, that some neologisms, which at first are considered forced or inelegant, become sanctioned by use, and in time are quoted as authority in the very language which, in their early stage, they were imagined to have debased.

The true history of men's minds is found in their actions; their wants are indicated by their contrivances; and certain it is that in highly cultivated ages we discover the most refined intellects attempting NEOLOGISMS.[27] It would be a subject of great curiosity to trace the origin of many happy expressions, when, and by whom created. Plato substituted the term *Providence* for *fate*; and a new system of human affairs arose from a single word. Cicero invented several; to this philosopher we owe the term of *moral* philosophy, which before his time was called the philosophy of *manners*. But on this subject we are perhaps more interested by the modern than by the ancient languages. Richardson, the painter of the human heart, has coined some expressions to indicate its little secret movements, which are admirable: that great genius merited a higher education and more literary leisure than the life of a printer could afford. Montaigne created

some bold expressions, many of which have not survived him; his *incuriosité*, so opposite to curiosity, well describes that state of negligence where we will not learn that of which we are ignorant. With us the word *incurious* was described by Heylin, 1656, as an unusual word; it has been appropriately adopted by our best writers, although we still want *incuriosity*. Charron invented *étrangeté* unsuccessfully, but which, says a French critic, would be the true substantive of the word *étrange*; our Locke is the solitary instance produced for "foreignness" for "remoteness or want of relation to something." Malherbe borrowed from the Latin, *insidieux*, *sécurité*, which have been received; but a bolder word, *dévouloir*, by which he proposed to express *cesser de vouloir*, has not. A term, however, expressive and precise. Corneille happily introduced *invaincu* in a verse in the Cid,

Vous êtes *invaincu*, mais non pas *invincible*.

Yet this created word by their great poet has not sanctioned this fine distinction among the French, for we are told that it is almost a solitary instance. Balzac was a great inventor of neologisms. *Urbanité* and *féliciter* were struck in his mint. "Si le mot *féliciter* n'est pas française, il le sera l'année qui vient;" so confidently proud was the neologist, and it prospered as well as *urbanité*, of which he says, "Quand l'usage aura muri parmi nous un mot de si mauvais gout, et corrigé *l'amertume de la nouveauté* qui s'y peut trouver, nous nous y accoutumerons comme aux autres que nous avons emprunté de la même langue." Balzac was, however, too sanguine in some other words; for his *délecter*, his *sériosité*, &c. still retain their "bitterness of novelty."

Menage invented a term of which an equivalent is wanting in our language; "J'ai fait *prosateur* à l'imitation de l'italien *prosatore*, pour dire un homme qui écrit en prose." To distinguish a prose from a verse writer,

we *once* had “a proser.” Drayton uses it; but this useful distinction has unluckily degenerated, and the current sense is so daily urgent, that the purer sense is irrecoverable.

When D’Albancourt was translating Lucian, he invented in French the words *indolence* and *indolent*, to describe a momentary languor, rather than that habitual indolence in which sense they are now accepted; and in translating Tacitus, he created the word *turbulemment*; but it did not prosper any more than that of *temporisement*. Segrais invented the word *impardonnable*, which, after having been rejected, was revived, and is equivalent to our expressive *unpardonable*. Molière ridiculed some neologisms of the *Précieuses* of his day; but we are too apt to ridicule that which is new, and which we often adopt when it becomes old. Molière laughed at the term *s’encanailler*, to describe one who assumed the manners of a blackguard; the expressive word has remained in the language. The meaning is disputed as well as the origin is lost of some novel terms. This has happened to a word in daily use—*Fudge*! It is a cant term not in Grose, and only traced by Todd not higher than to Goldsmith. It is, however, no invention of his. In a pamphlet, entitled “Remarks upon the Navy,” 1700, the term is declared to have been the name of a certain nautical personage who had lived in the lifetime of the writer. “There was, sir, in our time, one *Captain Fudge*, commander of a merchantman, who upon his return from a voyage, how ill-fraught soever his ship was, always brought home his owners a good cargo of lies; so much that now, aboard ship, the sailors, when they hear a great lie told, cry out, ‘You *fudge* it!’” It is singular that such an obscure byword among sailors should have become one of the most popular in our familiar style; and not less, that recently at the bar, in a court of law, its precise meaning perplexed plaintiff and defendant and their counsel. I think it does not signify mere lies, but bouncing lies, or rhodomontades.

There are two remarkable French words created by the Abbé de Saint Pierre, who passed his meritorious life in the contemplation of political morality and universal benevolence—*bienfaisance* and *gloriole*. He invented *gloriole* as a contemptuous diminutive of *glorie*; to describe that vanity of some egotists, so proud of the small talents which they may have received from nature or from accident. *Bienfaisance* first appeared in this sentence: "L'Esprit de la vraie religion et le principal but de l'evangile c'est *la bienfaisance*, c'est-à-dire la pratique de la charité envers le prochain." This word was so new, that in the moment of its creation this good man explained its necessity and origin. Complaining that "the word 'charity' is abused by all sorts of Christians in the persecution of their enemies, and even heretics affirm that they are practising Christian charity in persecuting other heretics, I have sought for a term which might convey to us a precise idea of doing good to our neighbours, and I can form none more proper to make myself understood than the term of *bienfaisance*, good-doing. Let those who like, use it; I would only be understood, and it is not equivocal." The happy word was at first criticised, but at length every kind heart found it responded to its own feeling. Some verses from Voltaire, alluding to the political reveries of the good abbé, notice the critical opposition; yet the new word answered to the great rule of Horace.

Certain législateur, dont la plume féconde
Fit tant de vains projets pour le bien du monde,
Et qui depuis trente ans écrit pour des ingrats,
Vient de créer un mot qui manque à Vaugelas:
Ce mot est BIENFAISANCE; il me plaît, il rassemble
Si le cœur en est cru, bien des vertus ensemble.
Petits grammairiens, grands précepteurs de sots,
Qui pesez la parole et mesurez les mots,
Pareille expression vous semble hazardée,

Mais l’univers entier doit en cherir l’idée!

The French revolutionists, in their rage for innovation, almost barbarised the pure French of the Augustan age of their literature, as they did many things which never before occurred; and sometimes experienced feelings as transitory as they were strange. Their nomenclature was copious; but the revolutionary jargon often shows the danger and the necessity of neologisms. They form an appendix to the Academy Dictionary. Our plain English has served to enrich this odd mixture of philology and politics: *Club*, *clubiste*, *comité*, *jure*, *juge de paix*, blend with their *terrorisme*, *lanterner*, a verb active, *lévee en masse*, *noyades*, and the other verb active, *septembriser*, &c. The barbarous term *demoralisation* is said to have been the invention of the horrid capuchin Chabot; and the remarkable expression of *arrière pensée* belonged exclusively in its birth to the jesuitic astuteness of the Abbé Sieyes, that political actor, who, in changing sides, never required prompting in his new part!

A new word, the result of much consideration with its author, or a term which, though unknown to the language, conveys a collective assemblage of ideas by a fortunate designation, is a precious contribution of genius; new words should convey new ideas. Swift, living amidst a civil war of pamphlets, when certain writers were regularly employed by one party to draw up replies to the other, created a term not to be found in our dictionaries, but which, by a single stroke, characterises these hirelings; he called them *answer-jobbers*. We have not dropped the fortunate expression from any want of its use, but of perception in our lexicographers. The celebrated Marquis of Lansdowne introduced a useful word, which has of late been warmly adopted in France as well as in England—*to liberalise*; the noun has been drawn out of the verb—for in the marquis’s time that was only an abstract conception which is now a sect; and to *liberalise* was theoretically introduced before the *liberals* arose.[28] It is curious to observe

that as an adjective it had formerly in our language a very opposite meaning to its recent one. It was synonymous with “libertine or licentious;” we have “a *liberal* villain” and “a most profane and *liberal* counsellor;” we find one declaring “I have spoken *too liberally*.” This is unlucky for the *liberals*, who will not—

> Give allowance to our *liberal* jests
> Upon their persons—
>
> BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

Dr. Priestley employed a forcible, but not an elegant term, to mark the general information which had begun in his day; this he frequently calls “the *spread* of knowledge.” Burke attempted to brand with a new name that set of pert, petulant, sophistical sciolists, whose philosophy the French, since their revolutionary period, have distinguished as *philosophism*, and the philosophers themselves as *philosophistes*. He would have designated them as *literators*, but few exotic words will circulate; new words must be the coinage of our own language to blend with the vernacular idiom. Many new words are still wanted. We have no word by which we could translate the *otium* of the Latins, the *dillettante* of the Italians, the *alembiqué* of the French, as an epithet to describe that sublimated ingenuity which exhausts the mind, till, like the fusion of the diamond, the intellect itself disappears. A philosopher, in an extensive view of a subject in all its bearings, may convey to us the result of his last considerations by the coinage of a novel and significant expression, as this of Professor Dugald Stewart—*political religionism*. Let me claim the honour of one pure neologism. I ventured to introduce the term of FATHER-LAND to describe our *natale solum*; I have lived to see it adopted by Lord Byron and by Mr. Southey, and the word is now common. A lady has even composed both the words and the air of a song on “Father-land.” This energetic expression may therefore be

considered as authenticated; and patriotism may stamp it with its glory and its affection. FATHER-LAND is congenial with the language in which we find that other fine expression MOTHER-TONGUE. The patriotic neologism originated with me in Holland, when, in early life, it was my daily pursuit to turn over the glorious history of its independence under the title of *Vaderlandsche Historie*—the history of FATHER-LAND!

If we acknowledge that the creation of some neologisms may sometimes produce the beautiful, the revival of the dead is the more authentic miracle; for a new word must long remain doubtful, but an ancient word happily recovered rests on a basis of permanent strength; it has both novelty and authority. A collection of *picturesque words*, found among our ancient writers, would constitute a precious supplement to the history of our language. Far more expressive than our term of *executioner* is their solemn one of the *deathsman*; than our *vagabond*, their *scatterling*; than our *idiot* or *lunatic*, their *moonling*,—a word which, Mr. Gifford observes, should not have been suffered to grow obsolete. Herrick finely describes by the term *pittering* the peculiar shrill and short cry of the grasshopper: the cry of the grasshopper is pit! pit! pit! quickly repeated. Envy "*dusking* the lustre" of genius is a verb lost for us, but which gives a more precise expression to the feeling than any other words which we could use.

The late Dr. Boucher, in the prospectus of his proposed Dictionary, did me the honour, then a young writer, to quote an opinion I had formed early in life of the purest source of neology, which is in the *revival of old words*.

Words that wise Bacon or brave Rawleigh spake!

We have lost many exquisite and picturesque expressions through the dulness of our lexicographers, or by the deficiency in that profounder study of our writers which their labours require far more than they themselves

know. The natural graces of our language have been impoverished. The genius that throws its prophetic eye over the language, and the taste that must come from Heaven, no lexicographer imagines are required to accompany him amidst a library of old books!

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19 Aulus Gellius, lib. i. c. 10.

20 Instit. lib. i. c. 5.

21 This verse was corrected by Bentley *procudere nummum*, instead of *producere nomen*, which the critics agree is one of his happy conjectures.

22 Henry Cockeram's curious little "English Dictionarie, or an Interpretation of hard English words", 12mo, 1631, professes to give in its first book "the choicest words themselves now in use, wherewith our language is inriched and become so copious." Many have not survived, such as the following:—

Acyrologicall	An improper speech.
Adacted	Driven in by force.
Blandiloquy	Flattering speech.
Compaginate	To set together that which is broken.
Concessation	Loytering.
Delitigate	To scold, or chide vehemently.
Depalmate	To give one a box on the ear.
Esuriate	To hunger.
Strenuitie	Activity.

Curiously enough, this author notes some words as those "now out of use, and onely used of some ancient writers," but which we now commonly use. Such are the following:—

Abandon	To forsake or cast off.
Abate	To make lesse, diminish, or take from.

23 A most striking instance of the change of meaning in a word is in the old law-term *let* —"without *let* or hindrance;" meaning void of all opposition. Hence, "I will *let* you," meant "I will hinder you;" and not as we should now think, "I will give you free leave."

24 Shakspeare makes "Ancient Pistol" use a new-coined Italian word, when he speaks of being "better accommodated;" to the great delight of Justice Shallow, who exclaims, "It comes from *accommodo*—a good phrase!" And Ben Jonson, in his "Tale of a Tub," ridicules Inigo Jones's love of two words he often used:—

————If it *conduce*
To the design, whate'er is *feasible*,
I can express.

25 The term *pluck*, once only known to the prize-ring, has now got into use in general conversation, and also into literature, as a term indicative of ready courage.

26 Such terms as "*patent* to the public"—"*normal* condition"—"*crass* behaviour," are the inventions of the last few years.

27 Shakspeare has a powerfully-composed line in the speech of the Duke of Burgundy, (*Henry V.* Act v. Sc. 2), when, describing the fields overgrown with weeds, he exclaims—

——The coulter rusts,
That should *deracinate* such *savagery*.

28 The "Quarterly Review" recently marked the word *liberalise* in italics as a strange word, undoubtedly not aware of its origin. It has been lately used by Mr. Dugald Stewart, "to *liberalise* the views."—Dissert. 2nd part, p. 138.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PROVERBS.

In antique furniture we sometimes discover a convenience which long disuse had made us unacquainted with, and are surprised by the aptness which we did not suspect was concealed in its solid forms. We have found the labour of the workmen to have been as admirable as the material itself, which is still resisting the mouldering touch of time among those modern inventions, elegant and unsubstantial, which, often put together with unseasoned wood, are apt to warp and fly into pieces when brought into use. We have found how strength consists in the selection of materials, and that, whenever the substitute is not better than the original, we are losing something in that test of experience, which all things derive from duration.

Be this as it may! I shall not unreasonably await for the artists of our novelties to retrograde into massive greatness, although I cannot avoid reminding them how often they revive the forgotten things of past times! It is well known that many of our novelties were in use by our ancestors! In the history of the human mind there is, indeed, a sort of antique furniture which I collect, not merely for their antiquity, but for the sound condition in which I still find them, and the compactness which they still show. Centuries have not worm-eaten their solidity! and the utility and delightfulness which they still afford make them look as fresh and as ingenious as any of our patent inventions.

By the title of the present article the reader has anticipated the nature of the old furniture to which I allude. I propose to give what, in the style of our times, may be called the Philosophy of Proverbs—a topic which seems virgin. The art of reading proverbs has not, indeed, always been acquired

even by some of their admirers; but my observations, like their subject, must be versatile and unconnected; and I must bespeak indulgence for an attempt to illustrate a very curious branch of literature, rather not understood than quite forgotten.

Proverbs have long been in disuse. “A man of fashion,” observes Lord Chesterfield, “never has recourse to proverbs and vulgar aphorisms;” and, since the time his lordship so solemnly interdicted their use, they appear to have withered away under the ban of his anathema. His lordship was little conversant with the history of proverbs, and would unquestionably have smiled on those “men of fashion” of another stamp, who, in the days of Elizabeth, James, and Charles, were great collectors of them; would appeal to them in their conversations, and enforce them in their learned or their statesmanlike correspondence. Few, perhaps, even now, suspect that these neglected fragments of wisdom, which exist among all nations, still offer many interesting objects for the studies of the philosopher and the historian; and for men of the world still open an extensive school of human life and manners.

The home-spun adages, and the rusty “sayed-saws,” which remain in the mouths of the people, are adapted to their capacities and their humours. Easily remembered, and readily applied, these are the philosophy of the vulgar, and often more sound than that of their masters! whoever would learn what the people think, and how they feel, must not reject even these as insignificant. The proverbs of the street and of the market, true to nature, and lasting only because they are true, are records that the populace at Athens and at Rome were the same people as at Paris and at London, and as they had before been in the city of Jerusalem!

Proverbs existed before books. The Spaniards date the origin of their *refranes que dicen las viejas tras el fuego*, “sayings of old wives by their firesides,” before the existence of any writings in their language, from the

circumstance that these are in the old romance or rudest vulgar idiom. The most ancient poem in the Edda, “the sublime speech of Odin,” abounds with ancient proverbs, strikingly descriptive of the ancient Scandinavians. Undoubtedly proverbs in the earliest ages long served as the unwritten language of morality, and even of the useful arts; like the oral traditions of the Jews, they floated down from age to age on the lips of successive generations. The name of the first sage who sanctioned the saying would in time be forgotten, while the opinion, the metaphor, or the expression, remained, consecrated into a proverb! Such was the origin of those memorable sentences by which men learnt to think and to speak appositely; they were precepts which no man could contradict, at a time when authority was valued more than opinion, and experience preferred to novelty. The proverbs of a father became the inheritance of a son; the mistress of a family perpetuated hers through her household; the workman condensed some traditional secret of his craft into a proverbial expression. When countries are not yet populous, and property has not yet produced great inequalities in its ranks, every day will show them how “the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty, and drowsiness clothes a man with rags.” At such a period he who gave counsel gave wealth.

It might therefore have been decided, *à priori*, that the most homely proverbs would abound in the most ancient writers—and such we find in Hesiod; a poet whose learning was not drawn from books. It could only have been in the agricultural state that this venerable bard could have indicated a state of repose by this rustic proverb:—

Πηδάλιον μὲν ὑπὲρ καπνοῦ καταδεῖο

Hang your plough-beam o’er the hearth!

The envy of rival workmen is as justly described by a reference to the humble manufacturers of earthenware as by the elevated jealousies of the

literati and the artists of a more polished age. The famous proverbial verse in Hesiod's Works and Days—

Καὶ κεραμεὺς κεραμεῖ κοτέει,

is literally, "The potter is hostile to the potter!"

The admonition of the poet to his brother, to prefer a friendly accommodation to a litigious lawsuit, has fixed a paradoxical proverb often applied,—

Πλέον ἤμισυ παντός,

The half is better than the whole!

In the progress of time, the stock of popular proverbs received accessions from the highest sources of human intelligence; as the philosophers of antiquity formed their collections, they increased in "weight and number." Erasmus has pointed out some of these sources, in the responses of oracles; the allegorical symbols of Pythagoras; the verses of the poets; allusions to historical incidents; mythology and apologue; and other recondite origins. Such dissimilar matters, coming from all quarters, were melted down into this vast body of aphoristic knowledge. Those "WORDS OF THE WISE and their DARK SAYINGS," as they are distinguished in that large collection which bears the name of the great Hebrew monarch, at length seem to have required commentaries; for what else can we infer of the enigmatic wisdom of the sages, when the royal parœmiographer classes among their studies, that of "*understanding a proverb and the interpretation*?" This elevated notion of "the dark sayings of the wise" accords with the bold conjecture of their origin which the Stagyrite has thrown out, who considered them as the wrecks of an ancient philosophy which had been lost to mankind by the fatal revolutions of all human things, and that those had been saved from

the general ruin by their pithy elegance and their diminutive form; like those marine shells found on the tops of mountains, the relics of the Deluge! Even at a later period, the sage of Cheronea prized them among the most solemn mysteries; and Plutarch has described them in a manner which proverbs may even still merit: “Under the veil of these curious sentences are hid those germs of morals which the masters of philosophy have afterwards developed into so many volumes.”

At the highest period of Grecian genius, the tragic and the comic poets introduced into their dramas the proverbial style. St. Paul quotes a line which still remains among the first exercises of our school-pens:—

Evil communications corrupt good manners.

It is a verse found in a fragment of Menander the comic poet:

Φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρήσθ᾽ ὁμιλίαι κακαί.

As this verse is a proverb, and the apostle, and indeed the highest authority, Jesus himself, consecrates the use of proverbs by their occasional application, it is uncertain whether St. Paul quotes the Grecian poet, or only repeats some popular adage. Proverbs were bright shafts in the Greek and Latin quivers; and when Bentley, by a league of superficial wits, was accused of pedantry for his use of some ancient proverbs, the sturdy critic vindicated his taste by showing that Cicero constantly introduced Greek proverbs into his writings,—that Scaliger and Erasmus loved them, and had formed collections drawn from the stores of antiquity.

Some difficulty has occurred in the definition. Proverbs must be distinguished from proverbial phrases, and from sententious maxims; but as proverbs have many faces, from their miscellaneous nature, the class itself

scarcely admits of any definition. When Johnson defined a proverb to be “a short sentence frequently repeated by the people,” this definition would not include the most curious ones, which have not always circulated among the populace, nor even belong to them; nor does it designate the vital qualities of a proverb. The pithy quaintness of old Howell has admirably described the ingredients of an exquisite proverb to be *sense, shortness, and salt*. A proverb is distinguished from a maxim or an apophthegm by that brevity which condenses a thought or a metaphor, where one thing is said and another is to be applied. This often produces wit, and that quick pungency which excites surprise, but strikes with conviction; this gives it an epigrammatic turn. George Herbert entitled the small collection which he formed “Jacula Prudentium,” Darts or Javelins! something hurled and striking deeply; a characteristic of a proverb which possibly Herbert may have borrowed from a remarkable passage in Plato’s dialogue of “Protagoras or the Sophists.”

The influence of proverbs over the minds and conversations of a whole people is strikingly illustrated by this philosopher’s explanation of the term *to laconise*,—the mode of speech peculiar to the Lacedæmonians. This people affected to appear *unlearned*, and seemed only emulous to excel the rest of the Greeks in fortitude and in military skill. According to Plato’s notion, this was really a political artifice, with a view to conceal their pre-eminent wisdom. With the jealousy of a petty state, they attempted to confine their renowned sagacity within themselves, and under their military to hide their contemplative character! The philosopher assures those who in other cities imagined they *laconised*, merely by imitating the severe exercises and the other warlike manners of the Lacedæmonians, that they were grossly deceived; and thus curiously describes the sort of wisdom which this singular people practised.

"If any one wish to converse with the meanest of the Lacedæmonians, he will at first find him, for the most part, apparently despicable in conversation; but afterwards, when a proper opportunity presents itself, this same mean person, like a *skilful jaculator, will hurl a sentence*, worthy of attention, *short and contorted*; so that he who converses with him will appear to be in no respect superior to a boy! That *to laconise*, therefore, consists much more in philosophising than in the love of exercise, is understood by some of the present age, and was known to the ancients, they being persuaded that the ability of *uttering such sentences* as these is the province of a man perfectly learned. The seven sages were emulators, lovers, and disciples of the *Lacedæmonian erudition*. Their wisdom was a thing of this kind, viz. *short sentences uttered by each, and worthy to be remembered*. These men, assembling together, consecrated to Apollo the first fruits of their wisdom; writing in the Temple of Apollo, at Delphi, those sentences which are celebrated by all men, viz. *Know thyself!* and *Nothing too much!* But on what account do I mention these things? To show that *the mode of philosophy among the ancients was a certain laconic diction*."[29]

The "laconisms" of the Lacedæmonians evidently partook of the proverbial style: they were, no doubt, often proverbs themselves. The very instances which Plato supplies of this "laconising" are two most venerable proverbs.

All this elevates the science of PROVERBS, and indicates that these abridgments of knowledge convey great results, with a parsimony of words prodigal of sense. They have, therefore, preserved many "a short sentence, NOT repeated by the people."

It is evident, however, that the earliest writings of every people are marked by their most homely, or domestic proverbs; for these were more directly addressed to their wants. Franklin, who may be considered as the

founder of a people who were suddenly placed in a stage of civil society which as yet could afford no literature, discovered the philosophical cast of his genius, when he filled his almanacs with proverbs, by the ingenious contrivance of framing them into a connected discourse, delivered by an old man attending an auction. “These proverbs,” he tells us, “which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, when their scattered counsels were brought together, made a great impression. They were reprinted in Britain, in a large sheet of paper, and stuck up in houses: and were twice translated in France, and distributed among their poor parishioners.” The same occurrence had happened with us ere we became a reading people. Sir Thomas Elyot, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, describing the ornaments of a nobleman’s house, among his hangings, and plate, and pictures, notices the engraving of proverbs “on his plate and vessels, which served the guests with a most opportune counsel and comments.” Later even than the reign of Elizabeth our ancestors had proverbs always before them, on everything that had room for a piece of advice on it; they had them painted in their tapestries, stamped on the most ordinary utensils, on the blades of their knives,[30] the borders of their plates,[31] and “conned them out of goldsmiths’ rings.”[32] The usurer, in Robert Greene’s “Groat’s worth of Wit,” compressed all his philosophy into the circle of his ring, having learned sufficient Latin to understand the proverbial motto of “Tu tibi cura!” The husband was reminded of his lordly authority when he only looked into his trencher, one of its learned aphorisms having descended to us,—

The calmest husbands make the stormiest wives.

The English proverbs of the populace, most of which are still in circulation, were collected by old John Heywood.[33] They are arranged by Tusser for “the parlour—the guest’s chamber—the hall—table-lessons,” &c. Not a small portion of our ancient proverbs were adapted to rural life,

when our ancestors lived more than ourselves amidst the works of God, and less among those of men.[34] At this time, one of our old statesmen, in commending the art of compressing a tedious discourse into a few significant phrases, suggested the use of proverbs in diplomatic intercourse, convinced of the great benefit which would result to the negotiators themselves, as well as to others! I give a literary curiosity of this kind. A member of the House of Commons, in the reign of Elizabeth, made a speech entirely composed of the most homely proverbs. The subject was a bill against double payments of book-debts. Knavish tradesmen were then in the habit of swelling out their book-debts with those who took credit, particularly to their younger customers. One of the members who began to speak "for very fear shook," and stood silent. The nervous orator was followed by a blunt and true representative of the famed governor of Barataria, delivering himself thus—"It is now my chance to speak something, and that without humming or hawing. I think this law is a good law. Even reckoning makes long friends. As far goes the penny as the penny's master. *Vigilantibus non dormientibus jura subveniunt.* Pay the reckoning overnight and ye shall not be troubled in the morning. If ready money be *mensura publica*, let every one cut his coat according to his cloth. When his old suit is in the wane, let him stay till that his money bring a new suit in the increase."[35]

Another instance of the use of proverbs among our statesmen occurs in a manuscript letter of Sir Dudley Carlton, written in 1632, on the impeachment of Lord Middlesex, who, he says, is "this day to plead his own cause in the Exchequer-chamber, about an account of four-score thousand pounds laid to his charge. How his lordship sped I know not, but do remember well the French proverb, *Qui mange de l'oy du Roy chiera une plume quarante ans après*. 'Who eats of the king's goose, will void a feather forty years after!'"

This was the era of proverbs with us; for then they were *spoken* by all ranks of society. The free use of trivial proverbs got them into disrepute; and as the abuse of a thing raises a just opposition to its practice, a slender wit affecting "a cross humour," published a little volume of "Crossing of Proverbs, Cross-answers, and Cross-humours." He pretends to contradict the most popular ones; but he has not always the genius to strike at amusing paradoxes.[36]

Proverbs were long the favourites of our neighbours; in the splendid and refined court of Louis the Fourteenth they gave rise to an odd invention. They plotted comedies and even fantastical ballets from their subjects. In these Curiosities of Literature I cannot pass by such eccentric inventions unnoticed.

A COMEDY *of proverbs* is described by the Duke de la Vallière, which was performed in 1634 with prodigious success. He considers that this comedy ought to be ranked among farces; but it is gay, well-written, and curious for containing the best proverbs, which are happily introduced in the dialogue.

A more extraordinary attempt was a BALLET *of proverbs*. Before the opera was established in France, the ancient ballets formed the chief amusement of the court, and Louis the Fourteenth himself joined with the performers. The singular attempt of forming a pantomimical dance out of proverbs is quite French; we have a "ballet des proverbes, dansé par le Roi, in 1654." At every proverb the scene changed, and adapted itself to the subject. I shall give two or three of the *entrées* that we may form some notion of these *capriccios*.

The proverb was—

Tel menace qui a grand peur.

He threatens who is afraid.

The scene was composed of swaggering scaramouches and some honest cits, who at length beat them off.

At another *entrée* the proverb was—

L'occasion fait le larron.

Opportunity makes the thief.

Opportunity was acted by le Sieur Beaubrun, but it is difficult to conceive how the real could personify the abstract personage. The thieves were the Duke d'Amville and Monsieur de la Chesnaye.

Another *entrée* was the proverb of—

Ce qui vient de la flute s'en va au tambour.

What comes by the pipe goes by the tabor.

A loose dissipated officer was performed by le Sieur l'Anglois; the *Pipe* by St. Aignan, and the *Tabor* by le Sieur le Comte! In this manner every proverb was *spoken in action*, the whole connected by dialogue. More must have depended on the actors than the poet.[37]

The French long retained this fondness for proverbs; for they still have dramatic compositions entitled *proverbes*, on a more refined plan. Their invention is so recent, that the term is not in their great dictionary of Trevoux. These *proverbes* are dramas of a single act, invented by Carmontel, who possessed a peculiar vein of humour, but who designed them only for private theatricals. Each *proverb* furnished a subject for a few scenes, and created a situation powerfully comic: it is a dramatic amusement which does not appear to have reached us, but one which the celebrated Catherine of Russia delighted to compose for her own society.

Among the middle classes of society to this day, we may observe that certain family proverbs are traditionally preserved: the favourite saying of a father is repeated by the sons; and frequently the conduct of a whole generation has been influenced by such domestic proverbs. This may be perceived in many of the mottos of our old nobility, which seem to have originated in some habitual proverb of the founder of the family. In ages when proverbs were most prevalent, such pithy sentences would admirably serve in the ordinary business of life, and lead on to decision, even in its greater exigencies. Orators, by some lucky proverb, without wearying their auditors, would bring conviction home to their bosoms: and great characters would appeal to a proverb, or deliver that which in time by its aptitude became one. When Nero was reproached for the ardour with which he gave himself up to the study of music, he replied to his censurers by the Greek proverb, “An artist lives everywhere.” The emperor answered in the spirit of Rousseau’s system, that every child should be taught some trade. When Cæsar, after anxious deliberation, decided on the passage of the Rubicon (which very event has given rise to a proverb), rousing himself with a start of courage, he committed himself to Fortune, with that proverbial expression on his lips, used by gamesters in desperate play: having passed the Rubicon, he exclaimed, “The die is cast!” The answer of Paulus Æmilius to the relations of his wife, who had remonstrated with him on his determination to separate himself from her against whom no fault could be alleged, has become one of our most familiar proverbs. This hero acknowledged the excellences of his lady; but, requesting them to look on his shoe, which appeared to be well made, he observed, “None of you know where the shoe pinches!” He either used a proverbial phrase, or by its aptness it has become one of the most popular.

There are, indeed, proverbs connected with the characters of eminent men. They were either their favourite ones, or have originated with themselves. Such a collection would form a historical curiosity. To the

celebrated Bayard are the French indebted for a military proverb, which some of them still repeat, "*Ce que le gantelet gagne le gorgerin le mange*"—"What the gauntlet gets, the gorget consumes." That reflecting soldier well calculated the profits of a military life, which consumes, in the pomp and waste which are necessary for its maintenance, the slender pay it receives, and even what its rapacity sometimes acquires. The favourite proverb of Erasmus was *Festina lente*!—"Hasten slowly!"[38] He wished it be inscribed wherever it could meet our eyes, on public buildings, and on our rings and seals. One of our own statesmen used a favourite sentence, which has enlarged our stock of national proverbs. Sir Amias Pawlet, when he perceived too much hurry in any business, was accustomed to say, "Stay awhile, to make an end the sooner." Oliver Cromwell's coarse but descriptive proverb conveys the contempt he felt for some of his mean and troublesome coadjutors: "Nits will be lice!" The Italians have a proverb, which has been occasionally applied to certain political personages:—

Egli e quello che Dio vuole;
E sarà quello che Dio vorrà!

He is what God pleases;
He shall be what God wills!

Ere this was a proverb, it had served as an embroidered motto on the mystical mantle of Castruccio Castracani. That military genius, who sought to revolutionise Italy, and aspired to its sovereignty, lived long enough to repent the wild romantic ambition which provoked all Italy to confederate against him; the mysterious motto he assumed entered into the proverbs of his country! The Border proverb of the Douglases, "It were better to hear the lark sing than the mouse cheep," was adopted by every Border chief, to express, as Sir Walter Scott observes, what the great Bruce had pointed out,

that the woods and hills of their country were their safest bulwarks, instead of the fortified places which the English surpassed their neighbours in the arts of assaulting or defending. These illustrations indicate one of the sources of proverbs; they have often resulted from the spontaneous emotions or the profound reflections of some extraordinary individual, whose energetic expression was caught by a faithful ear, never to perish!

The poets have been very busy with proverbs in all the languages of Europe: some appear to have been the favourite lines of some ancient poem: even in more refined times, many of the pointed verses of Boileau and Pope have become proverbial. Many trivial and laconic proverbs bear the jingle of alliteration or rhyme, which assisted their circulation, and were probably struck off extempore; a manner which Swift practised, who was a ready coiner of such rhyming and ludicrous proverbs: delighting to startle a collector by his facetious or sarcastic humour, in the shape of an "old saying and true." Some of these rhyming proverbs are, however, terse and elegant: we have

Little strokes
Fell great oaks.

The Italian—

Chi duo lepri caccia
Uno perde, e l'altro lascia.

Who hunts two hares, loses one and leaves the other.

The haughty Spaniard—

El dar es honor,

Y el pedir dolor.

To give is honour, to ask is grief.

And the French—

Ami de table

Est variable.

The friend of the table

Is very variable.

The composers of these short proverbs were a numerous race of poets, who, probably, among the dreams of their immortality never suspected that they were to descend to posterity, themselves and their works unknown, while their extempore thoughts would be repeated by their own nation.

Proverbs were at length consigned to the people, when books were addressed to scholars; but the people did not find themselves so destitute of practical wisdom, by preserving their national proverbs, as some of those closet students who had ceased to repeat them. The various humours of mankind, in the mutability of human affairs, had given birth to every species; and men were wise, or merry, or satirical, and mourned or rejoiced in proverbs. Nations held an universal intercourse of proverbs, from the eastern to the western world; for we discover among those which appear strictly national, many which are common to them all. Of our own familiar ones several may be tracked among the snows of the Latins and the Greeks, and have sometimes been drawn from “The Mines of the East:” like decayed families which remain in obscurity, they may boast of a high lineal

descent whenever they recover their lost title-deeds. The vulgar proverb, “To carry coals to Newcastle,” local and idiomatic as it appears, however, has been borrowed and applied by ourselves; it may be found among the Persians: in the “Bustan” of Sadi we have *Infers piper in Hindostan*; “To carry pepper to Hindostan;” among the Hebrews, “To carry oil to the City of Olives;” a similar proverb occurs in Greek; and in Galland’s “Maxims of the East” we may discover how many of the most common proverbs among us, as well as some of Joe Miller’s jests, are of oriental origin.

The resemblance of certain proverbs in different nations, must, however, be often ascribed to the identity of human nature; similar situations and similar objects have unquestionably made men think and act and express themselves alike. All nations are parallels of each other! Hence all parœmiographers, or collectors of proverbs, complain of the difficulty of separating their own national proverbs from those which have crept into the language from others, particularly when nations have held much intercourse together. We have a copious collection of Scottish proverbs by Kelly, but this learned man was mortified at discovering that many which he had long believed to have been genuine Scottish, were not only English, but French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and Greek ones; many of his Scottish proverbs are almost literally expressed among the fragments of remote antiquity. It would have surprised him further had he been aware that his Greek originals were themselves but copies, and might have been found in D’Herbelot, Erpenius, and Golius, and in many Asiatic works, which have been more recently introduced to the enlarged knowledge of the European student, who formerly found his most extended researches limited by Hellenistic lore.

Perhaps it was owing to an accidental circumstance that the proverbs of the European nations have been preserved in the permanent form of volumes. Erasmus is usually considered as the first modern collector, but he

appears to have been preceded by Polydore Vergil, who bitterly reproaches Erasmus with envy and plagiarism, for passing by his collection without even a poor compliment for the inventor! Polydore was a vain, superficial writer, who prided himself in leading the way on more topics than the present. Erasmus, with his usual pleasantry, provokingly excuses himself, by acknowledging that he had forgotten his friend's book! Few sympathise with the quarrels of authors; and since Erasmus has written a far better book than Polydore Vergil's, the original "*Adagia*" is left only to be commemorated in literary history as one of its curiosities.[39]

The "Adagia" of Erasmus contains a collection of about five thousand proverbs, gradually gathered from a constant study of the ancients. Erasmus, blest with the genius which could enliven a folio, delighted himself and all Europe by the continued accessions he made to a volume which even now may be the companion of literary men for a winter day's fireside. The successful example of Erasmus commanded the imitation of the learned in Europe, and drew their attention to their own national proverbs. Some of the most learned men, and some not sufficiently so, were now occupied in this new study.

In Spain, Fernandez Nunes, a Greek professor, and the Marquis of Santellana, a grandee, published collections of their *Refranes*, or Proverbs, a term derived A REFERENDO, because it is often repeated. The "Refranes o Proverbios Castellanos," par Cæsar Oudin, 1624, translated into French, is a valuable compilation. In Cervantes and Quevedo, the best practical illustrators, they are sown with no sparing hand. There is an ample collection of Italian proverbs, by Florio, who was an Englishman, of Italian origin, and who published "Il Giardino di Ricreatione" at London, so early as in 1591, exceeding six thousand proverbs; but they are unexplained, and are often obscure. Another Italian in England, Torriano, in 1649, published an interesting collection in the diminutive form of a twenty-fours. It was

subsequent to these publications in England, that in Italy, Angelus Monozini, in 1604, published his collection; and Julius Varini, in 1642, produced his *Scuola del Vulgo*. In France, Oudin, after others had preceded him, published a collection of French proverbs, under the title of *Curiosités Françoises*. Fleury de Bellingen's *Explication de Proverbes François*, on comparing it with *Les Illustres Proverbes Historiques*, a subsequent publication, I discovered to be the same work. It is the first attempt to render the study of proverbs somewhat amusing. The plan consists of a dialogue between a philosopher and a Sancho Pança, who blurts out his proverbs with more delight than understanding. The philosopher takes that opportunity of explaining them by the events in which they originated, which, however, are not always to be depended on. A work of high merit on French proverbs is the unfinished one of the Abbé Tuet, sensible and learned. A collection of Danish proverbs, accompanied by a French translation, was printed at Copenhagen, in a quarto volume, 1761. England may boast of no inferior parœmiographers. The grave and judicious Camden, the religious Herbert, the entertaining Howell, the facetious Fuller, and the laborious Ray, with others, have preserved our national sayings. The Scottish have been largely collected and explained by the learned Kelly. An excellent anonymous collection, not uncommon, in various languages, 1707; the collector and translator was Dr. J. Mapletoft. It must be acknowledged, that although no nation exceeds our own in sterling sense, we rarely rival the delicacy, the wit, and the felicity of expression of the Spanish and the Italian, and the poignancy of some of the French proverbs.

The interest we may derive from the study of proverbs is not confined to their universal truths, nor to their poignant pleasantry; a philosophical mind will discover in proverbs a great variety of the most curious knowledge. The manners of a people are painted after life in their domestic proverbs; and it would not be advancing too much to assert, that the genius of the age might be often detected in its prevalent ones. The learned Selden tells us,

that the proverbs of several nations were much studied by Bishop Andrews: the reason assigned was, because “by them he knew the minds of several nations, which,” said he, “is a brave thing, as we count him wise who knows the minds and the insides of men, which is done by knowing what is habitual to them.” Lord Bacon condensed a wide circuit of philosophical thought, when he observed that “the genius, wit, and spirit of a nation are discovered by their proverbs.”

Proverbs peculiarly national, while they convey to us the modes of thinking, will consequently indicate the modes of acting among a people. The Romans had a proverbial expression for their last stake in play, *Rem ad triarios venisse*, “the reserve are engaged!” a proverbial expression, from which the military habits of the people might be inferred; the *triarii* being their reserve. A proverb has preserved a curious custom of ancient coxcombry, which originally came from the Greeks. To men of effeminate manners in their dress, they applied the proverb of *Unico digitulo scalpit caput*. Scratching the head with a single finger was, it seems, done by the critically nice youths in Rome, that they might not discompose the economy of their hair. The Arab, whose unsettled existence makes him miserable and interested, says, “Vinegar given is better than honey bought.” Everything of high esteem with him who is so often parched in the desert is described as *milk*—“How large his flow of milk!” is a proverbial expression with the Arab to distinguish the most copious eloquence. To express a state of perfect repose, the Arabian proverb is, “I throw the rein over my back;” an allusion to the loosening of the cords of the camels, which are thrown over their backs when they are sent to pasture. We discover the rustic manners of our ancient Britons in the Cambrian proverbs; many relate to the *hedge*. “The cleanly Briton is seen in the *hedge*: the horse looks not on the *hedge* but the corn: the bad husband’s *hedge* is full of gaps.” The state of an agricultural people appears in such proverbs as “You must not count your yearlings till May-day:” and their proverbial sentence for old age is, “An

old man's end is to keep sheep?" Turn from the vagrant Arab and the agricultural Briton to a nation existing in a high state of artificial civilization: the Chinese proverbs frequently allude to magnificent buildings. Affecting a more solemn exterior than all other nations, a favourite proverb with them is, "A grave and majestic outside is, as it were, the *palace* of the soul." Their notion of a government is quite architectural. They say, "A sovereign may be compared to a *hall*; his officers to the steps that lead to it; the people to the ground on which they stand." What should we think of a people who had a proverb, that "He who gives blows is a master, he who gives none is a dog?" We should instantly decide on the mean and servile spirit of those who could repeat it; and such we find to have been that of the Bengalese, to whom the degrading proverb belongs, derived from the treatment they were used to receive from their Mogul rulers, who answered the claims of their creditors by a vigorous application of the whip! In some of the Hebrew proverbs we are struck by the frequent allusions of that fugitive people to their own history. The cruel oppression exercised by the ruling power, and the confidence in their hope of change in the day of retribution, was delivered in this Hebrew proverb—"When the tale of bricks is doubled, Moses comes!" The fond idolatry of their devotion to their ceremonial law, and to everything connected with their sublime Theocracy, in their magnificent Temple, is finely expressed by this proverb —"None ever took a stone out of the Temple, but the dust did fly into his eyes." The Hebrew proverb that "A fast for a dream, is as fire for stubble," which it kindles, could only have been invented by a people whose superstitions attached a holy mystery to fasts and dreams. They imagined that a religious fast was propitious to a religious dream; or to obtain the interpretation of one which had troubled their imagination. Peyssonel, who long resided among the Turks, observes that their proverbs are full of sense, ingenuity, and elegance, the surest test of the intellectual abilities of any nation. He said this to correct the volatile opinion of De Tott, who, to

convey an idea of their stupid pride, quotes one of their favourite adages, of which the truth and candour are admirable; “Riches in the Indies, wit in Europe, and pomp among the Ottomans.”

The Spaniards may appeal to their proverbs to show that they were a high-minded and independent race. A Whiggish jealousy of the monarchical power stamped itself on this ancient one, *Va el rey hasta do peude, y no hasta do quiere*: “The king goes as far as he is able, not as far as he desires.” It must have been at a later period, when the national genius became more subdued, and every Spaniard dreaded to find under his own roof a spy or an informer, that another proverb arose, *Con el rey y la inquisicion, chiton!* “With the king and the Inquisition, hush!” The gravity and taciturnity of the nation have been ascribed to the effects of this proverb. Their popular but suppressed feelings on taxation, and on a variety of dues exacted by their clergy, were murmured in proverbs—*Lo que no lleva Christo lleva el fisco!* “What Christ takes not, the exchequer carries away!” They have a number of sarcastic proverbs on the tenacious gripe of the “abad avariento,” the avaricious priest, who, “having eaten the olio offered, claims the dish!” A striking mixture of chivalric habits, domestic decency, and epicurean comfort, appears in the Spanish proverb, *La muger y la salsa a la mano de la lança*: “The wife and the sauce by the hand of the lance;” to honour the dame, and to have the sauce near.

The Italian proverbs have taken a tinge from their deep and politic genius, and their wisdom seems wholly concentrated in their personal interests. I think every tenth proverb, in an Italian collection, is some cynical or some selfish maxim: a book of the world for worldlings! The Venetian proverb, *Pria Veneziana, poi Christiane*: “First Venetian, and then Christian!” condenses the whole spirit of their ancient Republic into the smallest space possible. Their political proverbs no doubt arose from the extraordinary state of a people sometimes distracted among republics, and

sometimes servile in petty courts. The Italian says, *I popoli s'ammazzano, ed i principi s'abbracciano*: "The people murder one another, and princes embrace one another." *Chi prattica co' grandi, l'ultimo a tavola, e'l primo a strapazzi*: "Who dangles after the great is the last at table, and the first at blows." *Chi non sa adulare, non sa regnare*: "Who knows not to flatter, knows not to reign." *Chi serve in corte muore sul' pagliato*: "Who serves at court, dies on straw." Wary cunning in domestic life is perpetually impressed. An Italian proverb, which is immortalised in our language, for it enters into the history of Milton, was that by which the elegant Wotton counselled the young poetic traveller to have—*Il viso sciolto, ed i pensieri stretti*, "An open countenance, but close thoughts." In the same spirit, *Chi parla semina, chi tace raccoglie*: "The talker sows, the silent reaps;" as well as, *Fatti di miele, e ti mangieran le mosche*: "Make yourself all honey, and the flies will devour you." There are some which display a deep knowledge of human nature: *A Lucca ti vidi, à Pisa ti connobbi!* "I saw you at Lucca, I knew you at Pisa!" *Guardati d'aceto di vin dolce*: "Beware of vinegar made of sweet wine;" provoke not the rage of a patient man!

Among a people who had often witnessed their fine country devastated by petty warfare, their notion of the military character was not usually heroic. *Il soldato per far male è ben pagato*: "The soldier is well paid for doing mischief." *Soldato, acqua, e fuoco, presto si fan luoco*: "A soldier, fire, and water soon make room for themselves." But in a poetical people, endowed with great sensibility, their proverbs would sometimes be tender and fanciful. They paint the activity of friendship, *Chi ha l'amor nel petto, ha lo sprone à i fianchi*: "Who feels love in the breast, feels a spur in his limbs:" or its generous passion, *Gli amici legono la borsa con un filo di ragnatelo*: "Friends tie their purse with a cobweb's thread." They characterised the universal lover by an elegant proverb—*Appicare il Maio ad ogn' uscio*: "To hang every door with May;" alluding to the bough which in the nights of May the country people are accustomed to plant before the

door of their mistress. If we turn to the French, we discover that the military genius of France dictated the proverb *Maille à maille se fait le haubergeon*: “Link by link is made the coat of mail;” and, *Tel coup de langue est pire qu’un coup de lance*; “The tongue strikes deeper than the lance;” and *Ce qui vient du tambour s’en retourne à la flute*; “What comes by the tabor goes back with the pipe.” *Point d’argent point de Suisse* has become proverbial, observes an Edinburgh Reviewer; a striking expression, which, while French or Austrian gold predominated, was justly used to characterise the illiberal and selfish policy of the cantonal and federal governments of Switzerland, when it began to degenerate from its moral patriotism. The ancient, perhaps the extinct, spirit of Englishmen was once expressed by our proverb, “Better be the head of a dog than the tail of a lion;” *i.e.*, the first of the yeomanry rather than the last of the gentry. A foreign philosopher might have discovered our own ancient skill in archery among our proverbs; for none but true toxophilites could have had such a proverb as, “I will either make a shaft or a bolt of it!” signifying, says the author of *Ivanhoe*, a determination to make one use or other of the thing spoken of: the bolt was the arrow peculiarly fitted to the cross-bow, as that of the long-bow was called a shaft. These instances sufficiently demonstrate that the characteristic circumstances and feelings of a people are discovered in their popular notions, and stamped on their familiar proverbs.

It is also evident that the peculiar, and often idiomatic, humour of a people is best preserved in their proverbs. There is a shrewdness, although deficient in delicacy, in the Scottish proverbs; they are idiomatic, facetious, and strike home. Kelly, who has collected three thousand, informs us, that, in 1725, the Scotch were a great proverbial nation; for that few among the better sort will converse any considerable time, but will confirm every assertion and observation with a Scottish proverb. The speculative Scotch of our own times have probably degenerated in prudential lore, and deem themselves much wiser than their proverbs. They may reply by a Scotch

proverb on proverbs, made by a great man in Scotland, who, having given a splendid entertainment, was harshly told, that “Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them;” but he readily answered, “Wise men make proverbs, and fools repeat them!”

National humour, frequently local and idiomatical, depends on the artificial habits of mankind, so opposite to each other; but there is a natural vein, which the populace, always true to nature, preserve, even among the gravest people. The Arabian proverb, “The barber learns his art on the orphan’s face;” the Chinese, “In a field of melons do not pull up your shoe; under a plum-tree do not adjust your cap;”—to impress caution in our conduct under circumstances of suspicion;—and the Hebrew one, “He that hath had one of his family hanged may not say to his neighbour, *hang* up this fish!” are all instances of this sort of humour. The Spaniards are a grave people, but no nation has equalled them in their peculiar humour. The genius of Cervantes partook largely of that of his country; that mantle of gravity, which almost conceals its latent facetiousness, and with which he has imbued his style and manner with such untranslatable idiomatic raciness, may be traced to the proverbial erudition of his nation. “To steal a sheep, and give away the trotters for God’s sake!” is Cervantic nature! To one who is seeking an opportunity to quarrel with another, their proverb runs, *Si quieres dar palos a sur muger pidele al sol a bever*, “Hast thou a mind to quarrel with thy wife, bid her bring water to thee in the sunshine!”—a very fair quarrel may be picked up about the motes in the clearest water! On the judges in Gallicia, who, like our former justices of peace, “for half a dozen chickens would dispense with a dozen of penal statutes,” *A juezes Gallicianos, con los pies en las manos*: “To the judges of Gallicia go with feet in hand;” a droll allusion to a present of poultry, usually held by the legs. To describe persons who live high without visible means, *Los que cabritos venden, y cabras no tienen, de donde los vienen?* “They that sell kids, and have no goats, how came they by them?” *El vino*

no trae bragas, “Wine wears no breeches;” for men in wine expose their most secret thoughts. *Vino di un oreja*, “Wine of one ear!” is good wine; for at bad, shaking our heads, both our ears are visible; but at good the Spaniard, by a natural gesticulation lowering on one side, shows a single ear.

Proverbs abounding in sarcastic humour, and found among every people, are those which are pointed at rival countries. Among ourselves, hardly has a county escaped from some popular quip; even neighbouring towns have their sarcasms, usually pickled in some unlucky rhyme. The egotism of man eagerly seizes on whatever serves to depreciate or to ridicule his neighbour: nations proverb each other; counties flout counties; obscure towns sharpen their wits on towns as obscure as themselves—the same evil principle lurking in poor human nature, if it cannot always assume predominance, will meanly gratify itself by insult or contempt. They expose some prevalent folly, or allude to some disgrace which the natives have incurred. In France, the Burgundians have a proverb, *Mieux vaut bon repas que bel habit*; “Better a good dinner than a fine coat.” These good people are great gormandizers, but shabby dressers; they are commonly said to have “bowels of silk and velvet;” this is, all their silk and velvet goes for their bowels! Thus Picardy is famous for “hot heads;” and the Norman for *son dit et son dédit*, “his saying and his unsaying!” In Italy the numerous rival cities pelt one another with proverbs: *Chi ha a fare con Tosco non convien esser losco*, “He who deals with a Tuscan must not have his eyes shut.” *A Venetia chi vi nasce mal vi si pasce*, “Whom Venice breeds, she poorly feeds.”

There is another source of national characteristics, frequently producing strange or whimsical combinations; a people, from a very natural circumstance, have drawn their proverbs from local objects, or from allusions to peculiar customs. The influence of manners and customs over

the ideas and language of a people would form a subject of extensive and curious research. There is a Japanese proverb, that “A fog cannot be dispelled with a fan!” Had we not known the origin of this proverb, it would be evident that it could only have occurred to a people who had constantly before them fogs and fans; and the fact appears that fogs are frequent on the coast of Japan, and that from the age of five years both sexes of the Japanese carry fans. The Spaniards have an odd proverb to describe those who tease and vex a person before they do him the very benefit which they are about to confer—acting kindly, but speaking roughly; *Mostrar primero la horca que le lugar*, “To show the gallows before they show the town;” a circumstance alluding to their small towns, which have a gallows placed on an eminence, so that the gallows breaks on the eye of the traveller before he gets a view of the town itself.

The Cheshire proverb on marriage, “Better wed over the mixon than over the moor,” that is, at home or in its vicinity; mixon alludes to the dung, &c., in the farm-yard, while the road from Chester to London is over the moorland in Staffordshire: this local proverb is a curious instance of provincial pride, perhaps of wisdom, to induce the gentry of that county to form intermarriages; to prolong their own ancient families, and perpetuate ancient friendships between them.

In the Isle of Man a proverbial expression forcibly indicates the object constantly occupying the minds of the inhabitants. The two Deemsters or judges, when appointed to the chair of judgment, declare they will render justice between man and man “as equally as the herring bone lies between the two sides:” an image which could not have occurred to any people unaccustomed to the herring-fishery. There is a Cornish proverb, “Those who will not be ruled by the rudder must be ruled by the rock”—the strands of Cornwall, so often covered with wrecks, could not fail to impress on the

imaginations of its inhabitants the two objects from whence they drew this salutary proverb against obstinate wrongheads.

When Scotland, in the last century, felt its allegiance to England doubtful, and when the French sent an expedition to the Land of Cakes, a local proverb was revived, to show the identity of interests which affected both nations:

> If Skiddaw hath a cap,
> Scruffel wots full well of that.

These are two high hills, one in Scotland and one in England; so near, that what happens to the one will not be long ere it reach the other. If a fog lodges on the one, it is sure to rain on the other; the mutual sympathies of the two countries were hence deduced in a copious dissertation, by Oswald Dyke, on what was called "The Union-proverb," which *local proverbs* of our country Fuller has interspersed in his "Worthies," and Ray and Grose have collected separately.

I was amused lately by a curious financial revelation which I found in an opposition paper, where it appears that "Ministers pretend to make their load of taxes more portable, by shifting the burden, or altering the pressure, without, however, diminishing the weight; according to the Italian proverb, *Accommodare le bisaccie nella strada*, 'To fit the load on the journey:'" it is taken from a custom of the mule-drivers, who, placing their packages at first but awkwardly on the backs of their poor beasts, and seeing them ready to sink, cry out, "Never mind! we must fit them better on the road!" I was gratified to discover, by the present and some other modern instances, that the taste for proverbs was reviving, and that we were returning to those sober times, when the aptitude of a simple proverb would be preferred to the verbosity of politicians, Tories, Whigs, or Radicals!

There are domestic proverbs which originate in incidents known only to the natives of their province. Italian literature is particularly rich in these stores. The lively proverbial taste of that vivacious people was transferred to their own authors; and when these allusions were obscured by time, learned Italians, in their zeal for their national literature, and in their national love of story-telling, have written grave commentaries even on ludicrous, but popular tales, in which the proverbs are said to have originated. They resemble the old facetious *contes*, whose simplicity and humour still live in the pages of Boccaccio, and are not forgotten in those of the Queen of Navarre.

The Italians apply a proverb to a person who while he is beaten, takes the blows quietly:—

Per beato ch' elle non furon pesche!

Luckily they were not peaches!

And to threaten to give a man—

Una pesca in un occhio.

A peach in the eye,

means to give him a thrashing. This proverb, it is said, originated in the close of a certain droll adventure. The community of the Castle Poggibonsi, probably from some jocular tenure observed on St. Bernard's day, pay a tribute of peaches to the court of Tuscany, which are usually shared among the ladies in waiting, and the pages of the court. It happened one season, in a great scarcity of peaches, that the good people of Poggibonsi, finding them rather dear, sent, instead of the customary tribute, a quantity of fine juicy figs, which was so much disapproved of by the pages, that as soon as they got hold of them, they began in rage to empty the baskets on the heads

of the ambassadors of the Poggibonsi, who, in attempting to fly as well as they could from the pulpy shower, half-blinded, and recollecting that peaches would have had stones in them, cried out—

Per beato ch' elle non furon pesche!

Luckily they were not peaches!

Fare le scalée di Sant' Ambrogio; "To mount the stairs of Saint Ambrose," a proverb allusive to the business of the school of scandal. Varchi explains it by a circumstance so common in provincial cities. On summer evenings, for fresh air and gossip, the loungers met on the steps and landing-places of the church of St. Ambrose: whoever left the party, "they read in his book," as our commentator expresses it; and not a leaf was passed over! All liked to join a party so well informed of one another's concerns, and every one tried to be the very last to quit it,—not "to leave his character behind!" It became a proverbial phrase with those who left a company, and were too tender of their backs, to request they would not "mount the stairs of St. Ambrose." Jonson has well described such a company:

You are so truly fear'd, but not beloved
One of another, as no one dares break
Company from the rest, lest they should fall
Upon him absent.

There are legends and histories which belong to proverbs; and some of the most ancient refer to incidents which have not always been commemorated. Two Greek proverbs have accidentally been explained by Pausanias: "He is a man of Tenedos!" to describe a person of unquestionable veracity; and "To cut with the Tenedian axe;" to express an

absolute and irrevocable refusal. The first originated in a king of Tenedos, who decreed that there should always stand behind the judge a man holding an axe, ready to execute justice on any one convicted of falsehood. The other arose from the same king, whose father having reached his island, to supplicate the son's forgiveness for the injury inflicted on him by the arts of a step-mother, was preparing to land; already the ship was fastened by its cable to a rock; when the son came down, and sternly cutting the cable with an axe, sent the ship adrift to the mercy of the waves: hence, "to cut with the Tenedian axe," became proverbial to express an absolute refusal. "Business to-morrow!" is another Greek proverb, applied to a person ruined by his own neglect. The fate of an eminent person perpetuated the expression which he casually employed on the occasion. One of the Theban polemarchs, in the midst of a convivial party, received despatches relating to a conspiracy: flushed with wine, although pressed by the courier to open them immediately, he smiled, and in gaiety laying the letter under the pillow of his couch, observed, "Business to-morrow!" Plutarch records that he fell a victim to the twenty-four hours he had lost, and became the author of a proverb which was still circulated among the Greeks.

The philosophical antiquary may often discover how many a proverb commemorates an event which has escaped from the more solemn monuments of history, and is often the solitary authority of its existence. A national event in Spanish history is preserved by a proverb. *Y vengar quiniento sueldos*; "And revenge five hundred pounds!" An odd expression to denote a person being a gentleman! but the proverb is historical. The Spaniards of Old Castile were compelled to pay an annual tribute of five hundred maidens to their masters, the Moors; after several battles, the Spaniards succeeded in compromising the shameful tribute, by as many pieces of coin: at length the day arrived when they entirely emancipated themselves from this odious imposition. The heroic action was performed by men of distinction, and the event perpetuated in the recollections of the

Spaniards by this singular expression, which alludes to the dishonourable tribute, was applied to characterise all men of high honour, and devoted lovers of their country.

Pasquier, in his *Récherches sur la France*, reviewing the periodical changes of ancient families in feudal times, observes, that a proverb among the common people conveys the result of all his inquiries; for those noble houses, which in a single age declined from nobility and wealth to poverty and meanness, gave rise to the proverb, *Cent ans bannières et cent ans civières!* "One hundred years a banner and one hundred years a barrow!" The Italian proverb, *Con l'Evangilio si diventa heretico*, "With the gospel we become heretics,"—reflects the policy of the court of Rome; and must be dated at the time of the Reformation, when a translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue encountered such an invincible opposition. The Scotch proverb, *He that invented the maiden first hanselled it*; that is, got the first of it! The maiden is that well-known beheading engine, revived by the French surgeon Guillotine. This proverb may be applied to one who falls a victim to his own ingenuity; the artificer of his own destruction! The inventor was James, Earl of Morton, who for some years governed Scotland, and afterwards, it is said, very unjustly suffered by his own invention. It is a striking coincidence, that the same fate was shared by the French reviver; both alike sad examples of disturbed times! Among our own proverbs a remarkable incident has been commemorated; *Hand over head, as the men took the Covenant!* This preserves the manner in which the Scotch covenant, so famous in our history, was violently taken by above sixty thousand persons about Edinburgh, in 1638; a circumstance at that time novel in our own revolutionary history, and afterwards paralleled by the French in voting by "acclamation." An ancient English proverb preserves a curious fact concerning our coinage. *Testers are gone to Oxford, to study at Brazennose.* When Henry the Eighth debased the silver coin, called *testers*, from their having a head stamped on one side; the brass,

breaking out in red pimples on their silver faces, provoked the ill-humour of the people to vent itself in this punning proverb, which has preserved for the historical antiquary the popular feeling which lasted about fifty years, till Elizabeth reformed the state of the coinage. A northern proverb among us has preserved the remarkable idea which seems to have once been prevalent, that the metropolis of England was to be the city of York; *Lincoln was, London is, York shall be!* Whether at the time of the union of the crowns, under James the First, when England and Scotland became Great Britain, this city, from its centrical situation, was considered as the best adapted for the seat of government, or for some other cause which I have not discovered, this notion must have been prevalent to have entered into a proverb. The chief magistrate of York is the only provincial one who is allowed the title of Lord Mayor; a circumstance which seems connected with this proverb.

The Italian history of its own small principalities, whose well-being so much depended on their prudence and sagacity, affords many instances of the timely use of a proverb. Many an intricate negotiation has been contracted through a good-humoured proverb,—many a sarcastic one has silenced an adversary; and sometimes they have been applied on more solemn, and even tragical occasions. When Rinaldo degli Albizzi was banished by the vigorous conduct of Cosmo de' Medici, Machiavel tells us the expelled man sent Cosmo a menace, in a proverb, *La gallina covava!* "The hen is brooding!" said of one meditating vengeance. The undaunted Cosmo replied by another, that "There was no brooding out of the nest!"

I give an example of peculiar interest; for it is perpetuated by Dante, and is connected with the character of Milton.

When the families of the Amadei and the Uberti felt their honour wounded in the affront the younger Buondelmonte had put upon them, in breaking off his match with a young lady of their family, by marrying

another, a council was held, and the death of the young cavalier was proposed as the sole atonement for their injured honour. But the consequences which they anticipated, and which afterwards proved so fatal to the Florentines, long suspended their decision. At length Moscha Lamberti suddenly rising, exclaimed, in two proverbs, "That those who considered everything would never conclude on anything!" closing with an ancient proverbial saying—*cosa fatta capo ha!* "a deed done has an end!" The proverb sealed the fatal determination, and was long held in mournful remembrance by the Tuscans; for, according to Villani, it was the cause and beginning of the accursed factions of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Dante has thus immortalised the energetic expression in a scene of the "Inferno."

Ed un, ch' avea l'una e l'altra man mozza,
Levando i moncherin per l'aura fosca,
Si che 'l sangue facea la faccia sozza,
Gridò:—"Ricorderati anche del Mosca,
Che dissi, lasso: *Capo ha cosa fatta*,
Che fu 'l mal seme della gente Tosca."

———Then one
Maim'd of each hand, uplifted in the gloom
The bleeding stumps, that they with gory spots
Sullied his face, and cried—"Remember thee
Of Mosca too—I who, alas! exclaim'd
'The deed once done, there is an end'—that proved
A seed of sorrow to the Tuscan race."

CARY'S *Dante*.

This Italian proverb was adopted by Milton; for when deeply engaged in writing "The Defence of the People," and warned that it might terminate in his blindness, he resolvedly concluded his work, exclaiming with great magnanimity, although the fatal prognostication had been accomplished, *cosa fatta capo ha!* Did this proverb also influence his awful decision on that great national event, when the most honest-minded fluctuated between doubts and fears?

Of a person treacherously used, the Italian proverb says that he has eaten of

Le frutte di fratre Alberigo.

The fruit of brother Alberigo.

Landino, on the following passage of Dante, preserves the tragic story:—

———Io son fratre Alberigo,
Io son quel dalle frutta del mal orto
Che qui reprendo, &c.

Canto xxxiii.

"The friar Alberigo," answered he,
"Am I, who from the evil garden pluck'd
Its fruitage, and am here repaid the date
More luscious for my fig."

CARY'S *Dante*.

This was Manfred, the Lord of Fuenza, who, after many cruelties, turned friar. Reconciling himself to those whom he had so often opposed, to celebrate the renewal of their friendship he invited them to a magnificent entertainment. At the end of the dinner the horn blew to announce the

dessert—but it was the signal of this dissimulating conspirator!—and the fruits which that day were served to his guests were armed men, who, rushing in, immolated their victims.

Among these historical proverbs none are more entertaining than those which perpetuate national events, connected with those of another people. When a Frenchman would let us understand that he has settled with his creditors, the proverb is *J'ai payé tous mes Anglois*: "I have paid all my English." This proverb originated when John, the French king, was taken prisoner by our Black Prince. Levies of money were made for the king's ransom, and for many French lords; and the French people have thus perpetuated the military glory of our nation, and their own idea of it, by making the *English* and their *creditors* synonymous terms. Another relates to the same event—*Le Pape est devenu François, et Jesus Christ Anglais*: "Now the Pope is become French and Jesus Christ English;" a proverb which arose when the Pope, exiled from Rome, held his court at Avignon in France; and the English prospered so well, that they possessed more than half the kingdom. The Spanish proverb concerning England is well known —

Con todo el mondo guerra,
Y paz con Inglaterra!

War with the world,
And peace with England!

Whether this proverb was one of the results of their memorable armada, and was only coined after their conviction of the splendid folly which they had committed, I cannot ascertain. England must always have been a desirable ally to Spain against her potent rival and neighbour. The Italians have a proverb, which formerly, at least, was strongly indicative of the travelled

Englishmen in their country, *Inglese Italianato è un diavolo incarnato*; "The Italianised Englishman is a devil incarnate." Formerly there existed a closer intercourse between our country and Italy than with France. Before and during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First that land of the elegant arts modelled our taste and manners: and more Italians travelled into England, and were more constant residents, from commercial concerns, than afterwards when France assumed a higher rank in Europe by her political superiority. This cause will sufficiently account for the number of Italian proverbs relating to England, which show an intimacy with our manners that could not else have occurred. It was probably some sarcastic Italian, and, perhaps, horologer, who, to describe the disagreement of persons, proverbed our nation—"They agree like the clocks of London!" We were once better famed for merry Christmases and their pies; and it must have been the Italians who had been domiciliated with us who gave currency to the proverb—*Ha piu da fare che i forni di natale in Inghilterra*: "He has more business than English ovens at Christmas." Our pie-loving gentry were notorious, and Shakspeare's folio was usually laid open in the great halls of our nobility to entertain their attendants, who devoured at once Shakspeare and their pasty. Some of those volumes have come down to us, not only with the stains, but inclosing even the identical piecrusts of the Elizabethan age.

I have thus attempted to develope THE ART OF READING PROVERBS; but have done little more than indicate the theory, and must leave the skilful student to the delicacy of the practice. I am anxious to rescue from prevailing prejudices these neglected stores of curious amusement, and of deep insight into the ways of man, and to point out the bold and concealed truths which are scattered in these collections. There seems to be no occurrence in human affairs to which some proverb may not be applied. All knowledge was long aphoristical and traditional, pithily contracting the discoveries which were to be instantly comprehended and easily retained.

Whatever be the revolutionary state of man, similar principles and like occurrences are returning on us; and antiquity, whenever it is justly applicable to our times, loses its denomination, and becomes the truth of our own age. A proverb will often cut the knot which others in vain are attempting to untie. Johnson, palled with the redundant elegancies of modern composition, once said, "I fancy mankind may come in time to write all aphoristically, except in narrative; grow weary of preparation, and connexion, and illustration, and all those arts by which a big book is made." Many a volume indeed has often been written to demonstrate what a lover of proverbs could show had long been ascertained by a single one in his favourite collections.

An insurmountable difficulty, which every paræmiographer has encountered, is that of forming an apt, a ready, and a systematic classification: the moral Linnæus of such a "systema naturæ" has not yet appeared. Each discovered his predecessor's mode imperfect, but each was doomed to meet the same fate.[40] The arrangement of proverbs has baffled the ingenuity of every one of their collectors. Our Ray, after long premeditation, has chosen a system with the appearance of an alphabetical order; but, as it turns out, his system is no system, and his alphabet is no alphabet. After ten years' labour, the good man could only arrange his proverbs by commonplaces—by complete sentences—by phrases or forms of speech—by proverbial similes—and so on. All these are pursued in alphabetical order, "by the first letter of the most 'material word,' or if there be more words '*equally material*,' by that which usually stands foremost." The most patient examiner will usually find that he wants the sagacity of the collector to discover that word which is "the most material," or, "the words equally material." We have to search through all that multiplicity of divisions, or conjuring boxes, in which this juggler of proverbs pretends to hide the ball.[41]

A still more formidable objection against a collection of proverbs, for the impatient reader, is their unreadableness. Taking in succession a multitude of insulated proverbs, their slippery nature resists all hope of retaining one in a hundred; the study of proverbs must be a frequent recurrence to a gradual collection of favourite ones, which we ourselves must form. The experience of life will throw a perpetual freshness over these short and simple texts; every day may furnish a new commentary; and we may grow old, and find novelty in proverbs by their perpetual application.

There are, perhaps, about twenty thousand proverbs among the nations of Europe: many of these have spread in their common intercourse; many are borrowed from the ancients, chiefly the Greeks, who themselves largely took them from the eastern nations. Our own proverbs are too often deficient in that elegance and ingenuity which are often found in the Spanish and the Italian. Proverbs frequently enliven conversation, or enter into the business of life in those countries, without any feeling of vulgarity being associated with them: they are too numerous, too witty, and too wise to cease to please by their poignancy and their aptitude. I have heard them fall from the lips of men of letters and of statesmen. When recently the disorderly state of the manufacturers of Manchester menaced an insurrection, a profound Italian politician observed to me, that it was not of a nature to alarm a great nation; for that the remedy was at hand, in the proverb of the Lazzaroni of Naples, *Metà consiglio, metà esempio, metà denaro!* “Half advice, half example, half money!” The result confirmed the truth of the proverb, which, had it been known at the time, might have quieted the honest fears of a great part of the nation.

Proverbs have ceased to be studied or employed in conversation since the time we have derived our knowledge from books; but in a philosophical age they appear to offer infinite subjects for speculative curiosity. Originating in various eras, these memorials of manners, of events, and of modes of

thinking, for historical as well as for moral purposes, still retain a strong hold on our attention. The collected knowledge of successive ages, and of different people, must always enter into some part of our own! Truth and nature can never be obsolete.

Proverbs embrace the wide sphere of human existence, they take all the colours of life, they are often exquisite strokes of genius, they delight by their airy sarcasm or their caustic satire, the luxuriance of their humour, the playfulness of their turn, and even by the elegance of their imagery, and the tenderness of their sentiment. They give a deep insight into domestic life, and open for us the heart of man, in all the various states which he may occupy—a frequent review of proverbs should enter into our readings; and although they are no longer the ornaments of conversation, they have not ceased to be the treasuries of Thought!

29 Taylor's Translation of Plato's works, vol v. p. 36.

30 Shakspeare satirically alludes to the quality of such rhymes in his *Merchant of Venice*, Act v. Sc. 1. Speaking of one

"—— whose poesy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, *Love me, and leave me not*."

31 One of the *fruit trenchers*, for such these roundels are called in the *Gent. Mag.* for 1798, p. 398, is engraved there, and the inscriptions of an entire set given.—See also the Supplement to that volume, p. 1187. The author of the "Art of English Poesie," 1589, tells us they never contained above one verse, or two at the most, but the shorter the better. Two specimens may suffice the reader. One, under the symbol of a skull, thus morally discourses:—

"Content thyself with thine estate,
And send no poor wight from thy gate;
For why, this counsel I you give,
To learne to die, and die to live."

On another, decorated with pictures of fruit, are these satirical lines:—

"Feed and be fat: hear's pears and plums,
Will never hurt your teeth or spoil your gums.
And I wish those girls that painted are,
No other food than such fine painted fare."

32 This constant custom of engraving "posies," as they were termed, on rings, is noted by many authors of the Elizabethan era. Lilly, in his "Euphues," addresses the ladies for a favourable judgment on his work, hoping it will be recorded "as you do the posies in your rings, which are always next to the finger not to be seene of him that holdeth you by the hand, and yet

knowne by you that weare them on your hands." They were always engraved withinside of the ring. A MS. of the time of Charles I. furnishes us with a single posy, of one line, to this effect —"This hath alloy; my love is pure." From the same source we have the two following rhyming, or "double posies"—

"Constancy and heaven are round,
And in this the emblem's found."
"Weare me out, love shall not waste;
Love beyond tyme still is placed."

33 Heywood's "Dialogue, conteyninge the Number in Effecte of all the Proverbes in the English Tunge, 1561." There are more editions of this little volume than Warton has noticed. There is some humour in his narrative, but his metre and his ribaldry are heavy taxes on our curiosity.

34 The whole of Tusser's "Five Hundred Pointes of Good Husbandrie," 1580, was composed in quaint couplets, long remembered by the peasantry for their homely worldly wisdom. One, constructed for the bakehouse, runs thus:—

"New bread is a drivell (waste);
Much crust is as evil."

Another for the dairymaid assures her—

"Good dairie doth pleasure;
Ill dairie spends treasure."

Another might rival any lesson of thrift:—

"Where nothing will last,
Spare such as thou hast."

35 Townshend's Historical Collections, p. 283.

36 It was published in 1616: the writer only catches at some verbal expressions—as, for instance:—

The vulgar proverb runs, "The more the merrier."

The cross,—"Not so! one hand is enough in a purse."

The proverb, "It is a great way to the bottom of the sea."

The cross,—"Not so! it is but a stone's cast."

The proverb, "The pride of the rich makes the labours of the poor."

The cross,—"Not so! the labours of the poor make the pride of the rich."

The proverb, "He runs far who never turns."

The cross,—"Not so! he may break his neck in a short course."

37 It has been suggested that this whimsical amusement has been lately revived, to a certain degree, in the *acting of charades* among juvenile parties.

38 Now the punning motto of a noble family.

39 At the ROYAL INSTITUTION there is a fine copy of Polydore Vergil's "Adagia," with his other work, curious in its day, *De Inventoribus Rerum*, printed by Frobenius, in 1521. The *wood-cuts* of this edition seem to me to be executed with inimitable delicacy, resembling a pencilling which Raphael might have envied.

40 Since the appearance of the present article, several collections of PROVERBS have been attempted. A little unpretending volume, entitled "Select Proverbs of all Nations, with *Notes* and *Comments*, by Thomas Fielding, 1824," is not ill arranged; an excellent book for popular reading. The editor of a recent miscellaneous compilation, "The Treasury of Knowledge," has whimsically bordered the four sides of the pages of a Dictionary with as many proverbs. The plan was ingenious, but the proverbs are not. Triteness and triviality are fatal to a proverb.

41 A new edition of Ray's book, with large additions, was published by Bohn, in 1855, under the title of "A Handbook of Proverbs." It is a vast collection of "wise saws" of all ages and countries.

CONFUSION OF WORDS.

"THERE is nothing more common," says the lively Voltaire, "than to read and to converse to no purpose. In history, in morals, in law, in physic, and in divinity, be careful of equivocal terms." One of the ancients wrote a book to prove that there was no word which did not convey an ambiguous and uncertain meaning. If we possessed this lost book, our ingenious dictionaries of "synonyms" would not probably prove its uselessness. Whenever *the same word* is associated by the parties with *different ideas*, they may converse, or controverse, till "the crack of doom!" This with a little obstinacy and some agility in shifting his ground, makes the fortune of an opponent. While one party is worried in disentangling a meaning, and the other is winding and unwinding about him with another, a word of the kind we have mentioned, carelessly or perversely slipped into an argument, may prolong it for a century or two—as it has happened! Vaugelas, who passed his whole life in the study of words, would not allow that the *sense* was to determine the meaning of *words*; for, says he, it is the business of *words* to explain the *sense*. Kant for a long while discovered in this way a facility of arguing without end, as at this moment do our political

economists. “I beseech you,” exclaims a poetical critic, in the agony of a confusion of words, on the Pope controversy, “not to ask whether I mean *this* or *that*!” Our critic, positive that he has made himself understood, has shown how a few vague terms may admit of volumes of vindication. Throw out a word, capable of fifty senses, and you raise fifty parties! Should some friend of peace enable the fifty to repose on one sense, that innocent word, no longer ringing the *tocsin* of a party, would lie in forgetfulness in the Dictionary. Still more provoking when an identity of meaning is only disguised by different modes of expression, and when the term has been closely sifted, to their mutual astonishment both parties discover the same thing lying under the bran and chaff after this heated operation. Plato and Aristotle probably agreed much better than the opposite parties they raised up imagined; their difference was in the manner of expression, rather than in the points discussed. The Nominalists and the Realists, who once filled the world with their brawls, and who from irregular words came to regular blows, could never comprehend their alternate nonsense; “whether in employing general terms we use *words* or *names* only, or whether there is *in nature anything* corresponding to what we mean by a *general idea*?” The Nominalists only denied what no one in his senses would affirm; and the Realists only contended for what no one in his senses would deny; a hair’s breadth might have joined what the spirit of party had sundered!

Do we flatter ourselves that the Logomachies of the Nominalists and the Realists terminated with these scolding schoolmen? Modern nonsense, weighed against the obsolete, may make the scales tremble for awhile, but it will lose its agreeable quality of freshness, and subside into an equipoise. We find their spirit still lurking among our own metaphysicians! “Lo! the Nominalists and the Realists again!” exclaimed my learned friend, Sharon Turner, alluding to our modern doctrines on *abstract ideas*, on which there is still a doubt whether they are anything more than *generalising terms*.[42] Leibnitz confused his philosophy by the term *sufficient reason*: for every

existence, for every event, and for every truth there must be a *sufficient reason*. This vagueness of language produced a perpetual misconception, and Leibnitz was proud of his equivocal triumphs in always affording a new interpretation! It is conjectured that he only employed his term of *sufficient reason* for the plain simple word of *cause*. Even Locke, who has himself so admirably noticed the "abuse of words," has been charged with using vague and indefinite ones; he has sometimes employed the words *reflection*, *mind*, and *spirit* in so indefinite a way, that they have confused his philosophy: thus by some ambiguous expressions, our great metaphysician has been made to establish doctrines fatal to the immutability of moral distinctions. Even the eagle-eye of the intellectual Newton grew dim in the obscurity of the language of Locke. We are astonished to discover that two such intellects should not comprehend the same ideas; for Newton wrote to Locke, "I beg your pardon for representing that you struck at the root of morality in a principle laid down in your book of Ideas—and that I took you for a Hobbist!"[43] The difference of opinion between Locke and Reid is in consequence of an ambiguity in the word *principle*, as employed by Reid. The removal of a solitary word may cast a luminous ray over a whole body of philosophy: "If we had called the *infinite* the *indefinite*," says Condillac, in his *Traité des Sensations*, "by this small change of a word we should have avoided the error of imagining that we have a positive idea of *infinity*, from whence so many false reasonings have been carried on, not only by metaphysicians, but even by geometricians." The word *reason* has been used with different meanings by different writers; *reasoning* and *reason* have been often confounded; a man may have an endless capacity for *reasoning*, without being much influenced by *reason*, and to be *reasonable*, perhaps differs from both! So Moliere tells us,

> Raisonner est l'emploi de toute ma maison;
>
> Et le raisonnement en bannit la raison!

In this research on “confusion of words,” might enter the voluminous history of the founders of sects, who have usually employed terms which had no meaning attached to them, or were so ambiguous that their real notions have never been comprehended; hence the most chimerical opinions have been imputed to founders of sects. We may instance that of the *Antinomians*, whose remarkable denomination explains their doctrine, expressing that they were “against law!” Their founder was John Agricola, a follower of Luther, who, while he lived, had kept Agricola’s follies from exploding, which they did when he asserted that there was no such thing as sin, our salvation depending on faith, and not on works; and when he declaimed against the *Law of God*. To what length some of his sect pushed this verbal doctrine is known; but the real notions of this Agricola probably never will be! Bayle considered him as a harmless dreamer in theology, who had confused his head by Paul’s controversies with the Jews; but Mosheim, who bestows on this early reformer the epithets of *ventosus* and *versipellis*, windy and crafty! or, as his translator has it, charges him with “vanity, presumption, and artifice,” tells us by the term “law,” Agricola only meant the ten commandments of Moses, which he considered were abrogated by the Gospel, being designed for the Jews and not for the Christians. Agricola then, by the words the “Law of God,” and “that there was no such thing as sin,” must have said one thing and meant another! This appears to have been the case with most of the divines of the sixteenth century; for even Mosheim complains of “their want of precision and consistency in expressing *their sentiments*, hence their real sentiments have been misunderstood.” There evidently prevailed a great “confusion of words” among them! The *grace suffisante* and the *grace efficace* of the Jansenists and the Jesuits show the shifts and stratagems by which nonsense may be dignified. “Whether all men received from God *sufficient grace* for their conversion!” was an inquiry some unhappy metaphysical theologist set afloat: the Jesuits, according to their worldly system of making men’s

consciences easy, affirmed it; but the Jansenists insisted, that this *sufficient grace* would never be *efficacious*, unless accompanied by *special grace*. "Then the *sufficient grace*, which is not *efficacious*, is a contradiction in terms, and worse, a heresy!" triumphantly cried the Jesuits, exulting over their adversaries. This "confusion of words" thickened, till the Jesuits introduced in this logomachy with the Jansenists papal bulls, royal edicts, and a regiment of dragoons! The Jansenists, in despair, appealed to miracles and prodigies, which they got up for public representation; but, above all, to their Pascal, whose immortal satire the Jesuits really felt was at once "sufficient and efficacious," though the dragoons, in settling a "confusion of words," did not boast of inferior success to Pascal's. Former ages had, indeed, witnessed even a more melancholy logomachy, in the *Homoousion* and the *Homoiousion*! An event which Boileau has immortalised by some fine verses, which, in his famous satire on *L'Equivoque*, for reasons best known to the Sorbonne, were struck out of the text.

> D'une *syllabe* impie un saint *mot* augmenté
> Remplit tous les esprits d'aigreurs si meurtrières—
> Tu fis, dans une guerre et si triste et si longue,
> Périr tant de Chrétiens, *martyrs d'une diphthongue*!

Whether the Son was similar to the substance of the Father, or of the same substance, depended on the diphthong *oi,* which was alternately rejected and received. Had they earlier discovered, what at length they agreed on, that the words denoted what was incomprehensible, it would have saved thousands, as a witness describes, "from tearing one another to pieces." The great controversy between Abelard and St. Bernard, when the saint accused the scholastic of maintaining heretical notions of the Trinity, long agitated the world; yet, now that these confusers of words can no longer inflame our passions, we wonder how these parties could themselves

differ about words to which we can attach no meaning whatever. There have been few councils or synods where the omission or addition of a word or a phrase might not have terminated an interminable logomachy! At the council of Basle, for the convenience of the disputants, John de Secubia drew up a treatise of *undeclined words*, chiefly to determine the signification of the particles *from*, *by*, *but*, and *except*, which it seems were perpetually occasioning fresh disputes among the Hussites and the Bohemians. Had Jerome of Prague known, like our Shakspeare, the virtue of an IF, or agreed with Hobbes, that he should not have been so positive in the use of the verb IS, he might have been spared from the flames. The philosopher of Malmsbury has declared that "Perhaps *Judgment* was nothing else but the composition or joining of *two names of things, or modes*, by the verb IS." In modern times the popes have more skilfully freed the church from this "confusion of words." His holiness, on one occasion, standing in equal terror of the court of France, who protected the Jesuits, and of the court of Spain, who maintained the cause of the Dominicans, contrived a phrase, where a comma or a full stop, placed at the beginning or the end, purported that his holiness tolerated the opinions which he condemned; and when the rival parties despatched deputations to the court of Rome to plead for the period, or advocate the comma, his holiness, in this "confusion of words," flung an unpunctuated copy to the parties; nor was it his fault, but that of the spirit of party, if the rage of the one could not subside into a comma, nor that of the other close by a full period!

In jurisprudence much confusion has occurred in the uses of the term *rights*; yet the social union and human happiness are involved in the precision of the expression. When Montesquieu laid down, as the active principle of a republic, *virtue*, it seemed to infer that a republic was the best of governments. In the defence of his great work he was obliged to define the term; and it seems that by *virtue* he only meant *political virtue*, the love of the country.

In politics, what evils have resulted from abstract terms to which no ideas are affixed,—such as, “The Equality of Man—the Sovereignty or the Majesty of the People—Loyalty—Reform—even Liberty herself!—Public Opinion—Public Interest;” and other abstract notions, which have excited the hatred or the ridicule of the vulgar. Abstract ideas, as *sounds*, have been used as watchwords. The combatants will usually be found willing to fight for words to which, perhaps, not one of them has attached any settled signification. This is admirably touched on by Locke, in his chapter of “Abuse of Words.” “Wisdom, Glory, Grace, &c., are words frequent enough in every man’s mouth; but if a great many of those who use them should be asked what they mean by them, they would be at a stand, and know not what to answer—a plain proof that though they have learned those *sounds*, and have them ready at their tongue’s end, yet there are no determined *ideas* laid up in their minds which are to be expressed to others by them.”

When the American exclaimed that he was not represented in the House of Commons, because he was not an elector, he was told that a very small part of the people of England were electors. As they could not call this an *actual representation*, they invented a new name for it, and called it a *virtual one*. It imposed on the English nation, who could not object that others should be taxed rather than themselves; but with the Americans it was a sophism! and this *virtual* representation, instead of an *actual* one, terminated in our separation; “which,” says Mr. Flood, “at the time appeared to have swept away most of our glory and our territory; forty thousand lives, and one hundred millions of treasure!”

That fatal expression which Rousseau had introduced, *l’Egalité des Hommes*, which finally involved the happiness of a whole people, had he lived he had probably shown how ill his country had understood. He could only have referred in his mind to *political equality*, but not an equality of possessions, of property, of authority, destructive of social order and of

moral duties, which must exist among every people. “Liberty,” “Equality,” and “Reform” (innocent words!) sadly ferment the brains of those who cannot affix any definite notions to them; they are like those chimerical fictions in law, which declare the “sovereign immortal, proclaim his ubiquity in various places,” and irritate the feelings of the populace, by assuming that “the king can never do wrong!” In the time of James the Second “it is curious,” says Lord Russell, “to read the conference between the Houses on the meaning of the words ‘deserted’ and ‘abdicated,’ and the debates in the Lords whether or no there is an original contract between king and people.” The people would necessarily decide that “kings derived their power from them;” but kings were once maintained by a “right divine,” a “confusion of words,” derived from two opposite theories, and both only relatively true. When we listen so frequently to such abstract terms as “the majesty of the people,” “the sovereignty of the people,” whence the inference that “all power is derived from the people,” we can form no definite notions: it is “a confusion of words,” contradicting all the political experience which our studies or our observations furnish; for sovereignty is established to rule, to conduct, and to settle the vacillations and quick passions of the multitude. *Public opinion* expresses too often the ideas of one party in place; and *public interest* those of another party out! Political axioms, from the circumstance of having the notions attached to them unsettled, are applied to the most opposite ends! “In the time of the French Directory,” observes an Italian philosopher of profound views, “in the revolution of Naples, the democratic faction pronounced that ‘Every act of a tyrannical government is in its origin illegal;’ a proposition which at first sight seems self-evident, but which went to render all existing laws impracticable.” The doctrine of the illegality of the acts of a tyrant was proclaimed by Brutus and Cicero, in the name of the senate, *against the populace*, who had favoured Cæsar’s perpetual dictatorship; and the populace of Paris availed themselves of it, *against the National Assembly*.

This “confusion of words,” in time-serving politics, has too often confounded right and wrong; and artful men, driven into a corner, and intent only on its possession, have found no difficulty in solving doubts, and reconciling contradictions. Our own history in revolutionary times abounds with dangerous examples from all parties; of specious hypotheses for compliance with the government of the day or the passions of parliament. Here is an instance in which the subtle confuser of words pretended to substitute two consciences, by utterly depriving a man of any! When the unhappy Charles the First pleaded that to pass the bill of attainder against the Earl of Strafford was against his conscience, that remarkable character of “boldness and impiety,” as Clarendon characterizes Williams, Archbishop of York, on this argument of *conscience* (a simple word enough), demonstrated “that there were *two sorts of conscience*, public and private; that his public conscience as a king might dispense with his private conscience as a man!” Such was the ignominious argument which decided the fate of that great victim of State! It was an impudent “confusion of words” when Prynne (in order to quiet the consciences of those who were uneasy at warring with the king) observed that the statute of twenty-fifth Edward the Third ran in the singular number—“If a man shall levy war against *the king*, and therefore could not be extended to *the houses*, who are many and public *persons*.” Later, we find Sherlock blest with the spirit of Williams, the Archbishop of York, whom we have just left. When some did not know how to charge and to discharge themselves of the oaths to James the Second and to William the Third, this confounder of words discovered that there were *two rights*, as the other had that there were *two consciences*; one was a providential right, and the other a legal right; one person might very righteously claim and take a thing, and another as righteously hold and keep it; but that *whoever got the better* had the *providential* right by possession; and since all authority comes from God, the people were obliged to transfer their allegiance to him as a king of God’s making; so that

he who had the providential right necessarily had the legal one! a very simple discovery, which must, however, have cost him some pains; for this confounder of words was himself confounded by twelve answers by non-jurors! A French politician of this stamp recently was suspended from his lectureship for asserting that *the possession of the soil* was a right; by which principle, *any king* reigning over a country, whether by treachery, crime, and usurpation, was a *legitimate sovereign*. For this convenient principle the lecturer was tried, and declared not guilty—by persons who have lately found their advantage in a confusion of words. In treaties between nations, a "confusion of words" has been more particularly studied; and that negotiator has conceived himself most dexterous who, by this abuse of words, has retained an *arrière-pensée* which may fasten or loosen the ambiguous expression he had so cautiously and so finely inlaid in his mosaic of treachery. A scene of this nature I draw out of "Mesnager's Negociation with the Court of England." When that secret agent of Louis the Fourteenth was negotiating a peace, an insuperable difficulty arose respecting the acknowledgment of the Hanoverian succession. It was absolutely necessary, on this delicate point, to quiet the anxiety of the English public and our allies; but though the French king was willing to recognise Anne's title to the throne, yet the settlement in the house of Hanover was incompatible with French interests and French honour. Mesnager told Lord Bolingbroke that "the king, his master, would consent to any such article, *looking the other way, as might disengage him from the obligation of that agreement*, as the occasion should present." This ambiguous language was probably understood by Lord Bolingbroke: at the next conference his lordship informed the secret agent "that the queen could not admit of any *explanations, whatever her intentions might be*; that the *succession* was settled by act of parliament; that as to the private sentiments of the queen, or of any about her, he could say nothing." "All this was said with such an air, as to let me understand that he gave a *secret assent* to what

I had proposed, &c.; but he desired me to drop the discourse." Thus two great negotiators, both equally urgent to conclude the treaty, found an insuperable obstacle occur, which neither could control. Two honest men would have parted; but the "skilful confounder of words," the French diplomatist, hit on an expedient; he wrote the words which afterwards appeared in the preliminaries, "That Louis the Fourteenth will acknowledge the Queen of Great Britain in that quality, as also *the succession of the crown according to the* PRESENT SETTLEMENT." "The English agent," adds the Frenchman, "would have had me add—*on the house of Hanover*, but this I entreated him not to desire of me." The term PRESENT SETTLEMENT, then, was that article which was LOOKING THE OTHER WAY, *to disengage his master from the obligation of that agreement*, as occasion should present! that is, that Louis the Fourteenth chose to understand by the PRESENT SETTLEMENT the *old one*, by which the British crown was to be restored to the Pretender! Anne and the English nation were to understand it in their own sense—as the *new one*, which transferred it to the house of Hanover!

When politicians cannot rely upon each other's interpretation of *one of the commonest words* in our language, how can they possibly act together? The Bishop of Winchester has proved this observation, by the remarkable anecdote of the Duke of Portland and Mr. Pitt, who, with a view to unite parties, were to hold a conference *on* FAIR *and* EQUAL *terms*. His grace did not object to the word FAIR, but the word EQUAL was more specific and limited; and for a necessary preliminary, he requested Mr. Pitt to inform him what he *understood* by the word EQUAL? Whether Pitt was puzzled by the question, or would not deliver up an *arrière-pensée,* he put off the explanation to the conference. But the duke would not meet Mr. Pitt till the *word* was explained; and this important negotiation was broken off by not explaining a simple word which appeared to require no explanation.

There is nothing more fatal in language than to wander from the popular acceptation of words; and yet this popular sense cannot always accord with precision of ideas, for it is itself subject to great changes.

Another source, therefore, of the abuse of words, is that mutability to which, in the course of time, the verbal edifice, as well as more substantial ones, is doomed. A familiar instance presents itself in the titles of *tyrant*, *parasite*, and *sophist*, originally honourable distinctions. The abuses of dominion made the appropriate title of kings odious; the title of a magistrate, who had the care of the public granaries of corn, at length was applied to a wretched flatterer for a dinner; and absurd philosophers occasioned a mere denomination to become a by-name. To employ such terms in their primitive sense would now confuse all ideas; yet there is an affectation of erudition which has frequently revived terms sanctioned by antiquity. Bishop Watson entitled his vindication of the Bible "an *apology*:" this word, in its primitive sense, had long been lost for the multitude, whom he particularly addressed in this work, and who could only understand it in the sense they are accustomed to. Unquestionably, many of its readers have imagined that the bishop was offering an *excuse* for a belief in the Bible, instead of a *vindication* of its truth. The word *impertinent*, by the ancient jurisconsults, or law-counsellors, who gave their opinion on cases, was used merely in opposition to *pertinent—ratio pertinens* is a pertinent reason, that is, a reason *pertaining* to the cause in question, and a *ratio impertinens*, an impertinent reason, is an argument *not pertaining* to the subject.[44] *Impertinent* then originally meant neither absurdity nor rude intrusion, as it does in our present popular sense. The learned Arnauld having characterised a reply of one of his adversaries by the epithet *impertinent*, when blamed for the freedom of his language, explained his meaning by giving this history of the word, which applies to our own language. Thus also with us the word *indifferent* has entirely changed: an historian, whose work was *indifferently* written, would formerly have claimed our attention. In the

Liturgy it is prayed that “magistrates may *indifferently* minister justice.” *Indifferently* originally meant *impartially*. The word *extravagant*, in its primitive signification, only signified to digress from the subject. The Decretals, or those letters from the popes deciding on points of ecclesiastical discipline, were at length incorporated with the canon law, and were called *extravagant* by *wandering out* of the body of the canon law, being confusedly dispersed through that collection. When Luther had the Decretals publicly burnt at Wittemberg, the insult was designed for the pope, rather than as a condemnation of the canon law itself. Suppose, in the present case, two persons of opposite opinions. The catholic, who had said that the decretals were *extravagant*, might not have intended to depreciate them, or make any concession to the Lutheran. What confusion of words has the *common sense* of the Scotch metaphysicians introduced into philosophy! There are no words, perhaps, in the language which may be so differently interpreted; and Professor Dugald Stewart has collected, in a curious note in the second volume of his “Philosophy of the Human Mind,” a singular variety of its opposite significations. The Latin phrase, *sensus communis*, may, in various passages of Cicero, be translated by our phrase *common sense*; but, on other occasions, it means something different; the *sensus communis* of the schoolmen is quite another thing, and is synonymous with *conception*, and referred to the seat of intellect; with Sir John Davies, in his curious metaphysical poem, *common sense* is used as *imagination*. It created a controversy with Beattie and Reid; and Reid, who introduced this vague ambiguous phrase in philosophical language, often understood the term in its ordinary acceptation. This change of the meaning of words, which is constantly recurring in metaphysical disputes, has made that curious but obscure science liable to this objection of Hobbes, “with many words making nothing understood!”

Controversies have been keenly agitated about the principles of morals, which resolve entirely into *verbal disputes*, or at most into questions of

arrangement and classification, of little comparative moment to the points at issue. This observation of Mr. Dugald Stewart's might be illustrated by the fate of the numerous inventors of systems of thinking or morals, who have only employed very different and even opposite terms in appearance to express the same thing. Some, by their mode of philosophising, have strangely unsettled the words *self-interest* and *self-love*; and their misconceptions have sadly misled the votaries of these systems of morals; as others also by such vague terms as "utility, fitness," &c.

When Epicurus asserted that the sovereign good consisted in *pleasure*, opposing the unfeeling austerity of the Stoics by the softness of pleasurable emotions, his principle was soon disregarded; while his *word*, perhaps chosen in the spirit of paradox, was warmly adopted by the sensualist. Epicurus, of whom Seneca has drawn so beautiful a domestic scene, in whose garden a loaf, a Cytheridean cheese, and a draught which did not inflame thirst,[45] was the sole banquet, would have started indignantly at

The fattest hog in Epicurus' sty!

Such are the facts which illustrate that principle in "the abuse of words," which Locke calls "an affected obscurity arising from applying *old words to new, or unusual significations*."

It was the same "confusion of words" which gave rise to the famous sect of the Sadducees. The master of its founder Sadoc, in his moral purity, was desirous of a disinterested worship of the Deity; he would not have men like slaves, obedient from the hope of reward or the fear of punishment. Sadoc drew a quite contrary inference from the intention of his master, concluding that there were neither rewards nor punishments in a future state. The result is a parallel to the fate of Epicurus. The morality of the master of Sadoc was of the most pure and elevated kind, but in the "confusion of words," the

libertines adopted them for their own purposes—and having once assumed that neither rewards nor punishments existed in the after-state, they proceeded to the erroneous consequence that man perished with his own dust!

The plainest words, by accidental associations, may suggest the most erroneous conceptions, and have been productive of the grossest errors. In the famous Bangorian controversy, one of the writers excites a smile by a complaint, arising from his views of the signification of a plain word, whose meaning he thinks had been changed by the contending parties. He says, "the word *country*, like a great many others, such as *church* and kingdom, is, by the Bishop of Bangor's leave, become to signify a *collection of ideas* very different from its *original meaning*; with some it implies *party*, with others *private opinion*, and with most *interest*, and perhaps, in time, may signify *some other country*. When this good innocent word has been tossed backwards and forwards a little longer, some new reformer of language may arise to reduce it to its primitive signification—*the real interest of Great Britain!*" The antagonist of this controversialist probably retorted on him his own term of *the real interest*, which might be a very opposite one, according to their notions! It has been said, with what truth I know not, that it was by a mere confusion of words that Burke was enabled to alarm the great Whig families, by showing them their fate in that of the French *noblesse*; they were misled by the *similitude of names*. The French *noblesse* had as little resemblance to our nobility as they have to the Mandarins of China. However it may be in this case, certain it is that the same terms misapplied have often raised those delusive notions termed false analogies. It was long imagined in this country, that the *parliaments* of France were somewhat akin to our own; but these assemblies were very differently constituted, consisting only of lawyers in courts of law. A misnomer confuses all argument. There is a trick which consists in

bestowing good names on bad things. Vices, thus veiled, are introduced to us as virtues, according to an old poet,

As drunkenness, good-fellowship we call?

SIR THOMAS WIAT.

Or the reverse, when loyalty may be ridiculed, as

The right divine of kings—to govern wrong!

The most innocent recreations, such as the drama, dancing, dress, have been anathematised by puritans, while philosophers have written elaborate treatises in their defence—the enigma is solved, when we discover that these words suggested a set of opposite notions to each.

But the nominalists and the realists, and the *doctores fundatissimi*, *resolutissimi*, *refulgentes*, *profundi*, and *extatici*, have left this heirloom of logomachy to a race as subtle and irrefragable! An extraordinary scene has recently been performed by a new company of actors, in the modern comedy of Political Economy; and the whole dialogue has been carried on in an inimitable "confusion of words!" This reasoning and unreasoning fraternity never use a term as a term, but for an explanation, and which employed by them all, signifies opposite things, but never the plainest! Is it not, therefore, strange that they cannot yet tell us what are *riches*? what is *rent*? what is *value*? Monsieur Say, the most sparkling of them all, assures us that the English writers are obscure, by their confounding, like Smith, the denomination of *labour*. The vivacious Gaul cries out to the grave Briton, Mr. Malthus, "If I consent to employ your word *labour*, you must understand me," so and so! Mr. Malthus says, "Commodities are not exchanged for commodities only; they are also exchanged for *labour*;" and when the hypochondriac Englishman, with dismay, foresees "the glut of

markets," and concludes that we may produce more than we can consume, the paradoxical Monsieur Say discovers that "commodities" is a *wrong word*, for it gives a wrong idea; it should be "productions;" for his axiom is, that "productions can only be purchased with productions." Money, it seems, according to dictionary ideas, has no existence in his vocabulary; for Monsieur Say has formed a sort of Berkleian conception of wealth being immaterial, while we confine our views to its materiality. Hence ensues from this "confusion of words," this most brilliant paradox,—that "a glutted market is not a proof that we produce *too much* but that we produce *too little*! for in that case there is not enough produced to exchange with what is produced!" As Frenchmen excel in politeness and impudence, Monsieur Say adds, "I revere Adam Smith; he is my master; but this first of political economists did not understand all the phenomena of production and consumption." We, who remain uninitiated in this mystery of explaining the operations of trade by metaphysical ideas, and raising up theories to conduct those who never theorise, can only start at the "confusion of words," and leave this blessed inheritance to our sons, if ever the science survive the logomachy.

Caramuel, a famous Spanish bishop, was a grand architect of words. Ingenious in theory, his errors were confined to his practice: he said a great deal and meant nothing; and by an exact dimension of his intellect, taken at the time, it appeared that "he had genius in the eighth degree, eloquence in the fifth, but judgment only in the second!" This great man would not read the ancients; for he had a notion that the moderns must have acquired all they possessed, with a good deal of their own "into the bargain." Two hundred and sixty-two works, differing in breadth and length, besides his manuscripts, attest, that if the world would read his writings, they could need no other; for which purpose his last work always referred to the preceding ones, and could never be comprehended till his readers possessed those which were to follow. As he had the good sense to perceive that

metaphysicians abound in obscure and equivocal terms, to avoid this "confusion of words," he invented a jargon of his own; and to make "confusion worse confounded," projected grammars and vocabularies by which we were to learn it; but it is supposed that he was the only man who understood himself. He put every author in despair by the works which he announced. This famous architect of words, however, built more labyrinths than he could always get out of, notwithstanding his "*cabalistical* grammar," and his "*audacious* grammar."[46] Yet this great Caramuel, the critics have agreed, was nothing but a puffy giant, with legs too weak for his bulk, and only to be accounted as a hero amidst a "confusion of words."

Let us dread the fate of Caramuel! and before we enter into discussion with the metaphysician, first settle what he means by the nature of *ideas*; with the politician, his notion of *liberty* and *equality*; with the divine, what he deems *orthodox;* with the political economist, what he considers to be *value* and *rent*! By this means we may avoid, what is perpetually recurring, that extreme laxity or vagueness of words, which makes every writer, or speaker, complain of his predecessor, and attempt sometimes, not in the best temper, to define and to settle the signification of what the witty South calls "those rabble-charming words, which carry so much wildfire wrapt up in them."

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42 Turner's "History of England," i. 514

43 We owe this curious unpublished letter to the zeal and care of Professor Dugald Stewart, in his excellent "Dissertations."

44 It is still a Chancery word. An answer in Chancery, &c., is referred for *impertinence*, reported *impertinent*—and the *impertinence* ordered to be struck out, meaning only what is immaterial or superfluous, tending to unnecessary expense. I am indebted for this explanation to my friend, Mr. Merivale; and to another learned friend, formerly in that court, who describes its meaning as "an excess of words or matter in the pleadings," and who has received many an

official fee for “expunging impertinence,” leaving, however, he acknowledges, a sufficient quantity to make the lawyers ashamed of their verbosity.

45 Sen. Epist. 21.

46 Baillet gives the dates and plans of these grammars. The *cabalistic* was published in Bruxelles, 1642, in 12mo. The *audacious* was in folio, printed at Frankfort, 1654.—Jugemens des Savans. Tome ii. 3me partie.

POLITICAL NICKNAMES.

POLITICAL calumny is said to have been reduced into an art, like that of logic, by the Jesuits. This itself may be a political calumny! A powerful body, who themselves had practised the artifices of calumniators, may, in their turn, often have been calumniated. The passage in question was drawn out of one of the classical authors used in their colleges. Busembaum, a German Jesuit, had composed, in duodecimo, a “Medulla Theologiæ moralis,” where, among other casuistical propositions, there was found lurking in this old Jesuit’s “marrow” one which favoured regicide and assassination! Fifty editions of the book had passed unnoticed; till a new one appearing at the critical moment of Damien’s attempt, the duodecimo of the old scholastic Jesuit, which had now been amplified by its commentators into two folios, was considered not merely ridiculous, but dangerous. It was burnt at Toulouse, in 1757, by order of the parliament,

and condemned at Paris. An Italian Jesuit published an “apology” for this theory of assassination, and the same flames devoured it! Whether Busembaum deserved the honour bestowed on his ingenuity, the reader may judge by the passage itself.

“Whoever would ruin a person, or a government, must begin this operation by spreading calumnies, to defame the person or the government; for unquestionably the calumniator will always find a great number of persons inclined to believe him, or to side with him; it therefore follows, that whenever the object of such calumnies is once lowered in credit by such means, he will soon lose the reputation and power founded on that credit, and sink under the permanent and vindictive attacks of the calumniator.” This is the politics of Satan—the evil principle which regulates so many things in this world. The enemies of the Jesuits have formed a list of great names who had become the victims of such atrocious Machiavelism.[47]

This has been one of the arts practised by all political parties. Their first weak invention is to attach to a new faction a contemptible or an opprobrious nickname. In the history of the revolutions of Europe, whenever a new party has at length established its independence, the original denomination which had been fixed on them, marked by the passions of the party which bestowed it, strangely contrasts with the state of the party finally established!

The first revolutionists of Holland incurred the contemptuous name of “Les Gueux,” or the Beggars. The Duchess of Parma inquiring about them, the Count of Barlamont scornfully described them to be of this class; and it was flattery of the great which gave the name currency. The Hollanders accepted the name as much in defiance as with indignation, and acted up to it. Instead of brooches in their hats, they wore little wooden platters, such as beggars used, and foxes’ tails instead of feathers. On the targets of some of

these *Gueux* they inscribed “Rather Turkish than Popish!” and had the print of a cock crowing, out of whose mouth was a label, *Vive les Gueux par tout le monde!* which was everywhere set up, and was the favourite sign of their inns. The Protestants in France, after a variety of nicknames to render them contemptible—such as *Christodins*, because they would only talk about Christ, similar to our Puritans; and *Parpaillots*, or *Parpirolles*, a small base coin, which was odiously applied to them—at length settled in the well-known term of *Huguenots*, which probably was derived, as the Dictionnaire de Trévoux suggests, from their hiding themselves in secret places, and appearing at night, like King Hugon, the great hobgoblin of France. It appears that the term has been preserved by an earthen vessel without feet, used in cookery, which served the *Huguenots* on meagre days to dress their meat, and to avoid observation; a curious instance, where a thing still in use proves the obscure circumstance of its origin.

The atrocious insurrection, called *La Jacquerie*, was a term which originated in cruel derision. When John of France was a prisoner in England, his kingdom appears to have been desolated by its wretched nobles, who, in the indulgence of their passions, set no limits to their luxury and their extortion. They despoiled their peasantry without mercy, and when these complained, and even reproached this tyrannical nobility with having forsaken their sovereign, they were told that *Jacque bon homme* must pay for all. But *Jack good-man* came forward in person—a leader appeared under this fatal name, and the peasants revolting in madness, and being joined by all the cut-throats and thieves of Paris, at once pronounced condemnation on every gentleman in France! Froissart has the horrid narrative; twelve thousand of these *Jacques bon hommes* expiated their crimes; but the *Jacquerie*, who had received their first appellation in derision, assumed it as their *nom de guerre*.

In the spirited Memoirs of the Duke of Guise, written by himself, of his enterprise against the kingdom of Naples, we find a curious account of this political art of marking people by odious nicknames. “Gennaro and Vicenzo,” says the duke, “cherished underhand that aversion the rascality had for the better sort of citizens and civiller people, who, by the insolencies they suffered from these, not unjustly hated them. The better class inhabiting the suburbs of the Virgin were called *black cloaks*, and the ordinary sort of people took the name of *lazars*, both in French and English an old word for leprous beggar, and hence the *lazaroni* of Naples.” We can easily conceive the evil eye of a *lazar* when he encountered a *black cloak*! The Duke adds—“Just as, at the beginning of the revolution, the revolters in Flanders formerly took that of *beggars*; those of Guienne, that of *eaters*; those of Normandy that of *bare-feet*; and of Beausse and Soulogne, of *wooden-pattens*.” In the late French revolution, we observed the extremes indulged by both parties chiefly concerned in revolution—the wealthy and the poor! The rich, who, in derision, called their humble fellow-citizens by the contemptuous term of *sans-culottes*, provoked a reacting injustice from the populace, who, as a dreadful return for only a slight, rendered the innocent term of *aristocrate* a signal for plunder or slaughter!

It is a curious fact that the French verb *fronder*, as well the noun *frondeur*, are used to describe those who condemn the measures of government; and more extensively, designates any hyperbolical and malignant criticism, or any sort of condemnation. These words have only been introduced into the language since the intrigues of Cardinal de Retz succeeded in raising a faction against Cardinal Mazarin, known in French history by the nickname of the *Frondeurs*, or the Slingers. It originated in pleasantry, although it became the password for insurrection in France, and the odious name of a faction. A wit observed, that the parliament were like those school-boys, who fling their stones in the pits of Paris, and as soon as they see the *Lieutenant Civil*, run away; but are sure to collect again directly

he disappears. The comparison was lively, and formed the burthen of songs; and afterwards, when affairs were settled between the king and the parliament, it was more particularly applied to the faction of Cardinal de Retz, who still held out. “We encouraged the application,” says de Retz; “for we observed that the distinction of a name heated the minds of people; and one evening we resolved to wear hat-strings in the form of slings. A hatter, who might be trusted with the secret, made a great number as a new fashion, and which were worn by many who did not understand the joke; we ourselves were the last to adopt them, that the invention might not appear to have come from us. The effect of this trifle was immense; every fashionable article was now to assume the shape of a sling; bread, hats, gloves, handkerchiefs, fans, &c.; and we ourselves became more in fashion by this folly, than by what was essential.” This revolutionary term was never forgotten by the French, a circumstance which might have been considered as prognostic of that after-revolution, which de Retz had the imagination to project, but not the daring to establish. We see, however, this great politician, confessing the advantages his party derived by encouraging the application of a by-name, which served “to heat the minds of people.”

It is a curious circumstance that I should have to recount in this chapter on “Political Nicknames” a familiar term with all lovers of art, that of *Silhouette*! This is well understood as a *black profile*; but it is more extraordinary that a term so universally adopted should not be found in any dictionary, either in that of *L’Académie*, or in Todd’s, and has not even been preserved, where it is quite indispensable, in Millin’s *Dictionnaire des Beaux-Arts*! It is little suspected that this innocent term originated in a political nickname! *Silhouette* was a minister of state in France in 1759; that period was a critical one; the treasury was in an exhausted condition, and Silhouette, a very honest man, who would hold no intercourse with financiers or loan-mongers, could contrive no other expedient to prevent a national bankruptcy, than excessive economy and interminable reform!

Paris was not the metropolis, any more than London, where a Plato or a Zeno could long be minister of state without incurring all the ridicule of the wretched wits! At first they pretended to take his advice, merely to laugh at him:—they cut their coats shorter, and wore them without sleeves; they turned their gold snuff-boxes into rough wooden ones; and the new-fashioned portraits were now only profiles of a face, traced by a black pencil on the shadow cast by a candle on white paper! All the fashions assumed an air of niggardly economy, till poor Silhouette was driven into retirement, with all his projects of savings and reforms; but he left his name to describe the most economical sort of portrait, and one as melancholy as his own fate!

This political artifice of appropriating cant terms, or odious nicknames, could not fail to flourish among a people so perpetually divided by contending interests as ourselves; every party with us have had their watchword, which has served either to congregate themselves, or to set on the ban-dogs of one faction to worry and tear those of another. We practised it early, and we find it still prospering! The *Puritan* of Elizabeth's reign survives to this hour; the trying difficulties which that wise sovereign had to overcome in settling the national religion, found no sympathy in either of the great divisions of her people; she retained as much of the catholic rites as might be decorous in the new religion, and sought to unite, and not to separate, her children. John Knox, in the spirit of charity, declared, that "she was neither gude protestant, nor yet resolute papist; let the world judge quilk is the third."

A jealous party arose, who were for reforming the reformation. In their attempt at more than human purity, they obtained the nickname of *Puritans*; and from their fastidiousness about very small matters, *Precisians*; these Drayton characterises as persons that for a painted glass window would pull

down the whole church. At that early period these nicknames were soon used in an odious sense; for Warner, a poet in the reign of Elizabeth, says,—

> If hypocrites why *puritaines* we term be asked, in breese,
> ’Tis but an *ironised terme*; good-fellow so spels theese!

Honest Fuller, who knew that many good men were among these *Puritans*, wished to decline the term altogether, under the less offensive one of *Non-conformists*. But the fierce and the fiery of this party, in Charles the First’s time had been too obtrusive not to fully merit the ironical appellative; and the peaceful expedient of our moderator dropped away with the page in which it was written. The people have frequently expressed their own notions of different parliaments by some apt nickname. In Richard the Second’s time, to express their dislike of the extraordinary and irregular proceedings of the lords against the sovereign, as well as their sanguinary measures, they called it “The *wonder-working* and the *unmerciful* parliament.” In Edward the Third’s reign, when the Black Prince was yet living, the parliament, for having pursued with severity the party of the Duke of Lancaster, was so popular, that the people distinguished it as the *good* parliament. In Henry the Third’s time, the parliament opposing the king, was called “*Parliamentum insanum*,” the mad parliament, because the lords came armed to insist on the confirmation of the great charter. A Scottish parliament, from its perpetual shiftings from place to place was ludicrously nicknamed the *running* parliament; in the same spirit we had our *long* parliament. The nickname of *Pensioner* parliament stuck to the House of Commons which sate nearly eighteen years without dissolution, under Charles the Second; and others have borne satirical or laudatory epithets. So true it is, as old Holingshed observed, “The common people will manie times give such *bie names* as seemeth *best liking to themselves*.”

It would be a curious speculation to discover the sources of the popular feeling; influenced by delusion, or impelled by good sense!

The exterminating political nickname of *malignant* darkened the nation through the civil wars: it was a proscription—and a list of *good* and *bad* lords was read by the leaders of the first tumults. Of all these inventions, this diabolical one was most adapted to exasperate the animosities of the people, so often duped by names. I have never detected the active man of faction who first hit on this odious brand for persons, but the period when the word changed its ordinary meaning was early; Charles, in 1642, retorts on the parliamentarians the opprobrious distinction, as "The *true malignant party* which has contrived and countenanced those barbarous tumults." And the royalists pleaded for themselves, that the hateful designation was ill applied to them: "for by *malignity* you denote," said they, "activity in doing evil, whereas we have always been on the suffering side in our persons, credits, and estates;" but the parliamentarians, "grinning a ghastly smile," would reply, that "the royalists would have been *malignant* had they proved successful." The truth is, that *malignancy* meant with both parties any opposition of opinion. At the same period the offensive distinctions of *roundheads* and *cavaliers* supplied the people with party names, who were already provided with so many religious as well as civil causes of quarrel; the cropt heads of the sullen sectaries and the people, were the origin of the derisory nickname; the splendid elegance and the romantic spirit of the royalists long awed the rabble, who in their mockery could brand them by no other appellation than one in which their bearers gloried. In the distracted times of early revolution, any nickname, however vague, will fully answer a purpose, although neither those who are blackened by the odium, nor those who cast it, can define the hateful appellative. When the term of *delinquents* came into vogue, it expressed a degree and species of guilt, says Hume, not exactly known or ascertained. It served, however, the end of those revolutionists who had coined it, by involving any person in, or

colouring any action by, *delinquency*; and many of the nobility and gentry were, without any questions being asked, suddenly discovered to have committed the crime of *delinquency*! Whether honest Fuller be facetious or grave on this period of nicknaming parties I will not decide; but, when he tells us that there was another word which was introduced into our nation at this time, I think at least that the whole passage is an admirable commentary on this party vocabulary. "Contemporary with *malignants* is the word *plunder*, which some make of Latin original, from *planum dare*, to *level*, to *plane* all to nothing! Others of Dutch extraction, as if it were to *plume*, or pluck the feathers of a bird to the bare skin.[48] Sure I am we first heard of it in the Swedish wars; and if the name and thing be sent back from whence it came few English eyes would weep thereat." All England had wept at the introduction of the word. The *rump* was the filthy nickname of an odious faction—the history of this famous appellation, which was at first one of horror, till it afterwards became one of derision and contempt, must be referred to another place. The *rump* became a perpetual whetstone for the loyal wits,[49] till at length its former admirers, the rabble themselves, in town and country, vied with each other in "*burning rumps*" of beef, which were hung by chains on a gallows with a bonfire underneath, and proved how the people, like children, come at length to make a plaything of that which was once their bugbear.

Charles the Second, during the short holiday of the restoration—all holidays seem short!—and when he and the people were in good humour, granted anything to every one,—the mode of "Petitions" got at length very inconvenient, and the king in council declared that this petitioning was "A method set on foot by ill men to promote discontents among the people," and enjoined his loving subjects not to subscribe them. The petitioners, however, persisted—when a new party rose to express their abhorrence of petitioning; both parties nicknamed each other the *petitioners* and the *abhorrers*! Their day was short, but fierce; the *petitioners*, however weak in

their cognomen, were far the bolder of the two, for the commons were with them, and the *abhorrers* had expressed by their term rather the strength of their inclinations than of their numbers. Charles the Second said to a *petitioner* from Taunton, "How *dare* you deliver me such a paper?" "Sir," replied the petitioner from Taunton, "my name is DARE!" A saucy reply, for which he was tried, fined, and imprisoned; when lo! the commons petitioned again to release the *petitioner*! "The very name," says Hume, "by which each party denominated its antagonists discovers the virulence and rancour which prevailed; for besides *petitioner* and *abhorrer*, this year is remarkable for being the epoch of the well-known epithets of *whig* and *tory*." These silly terms of reproach, whig and tory, are still preserved among us, as if the palladium of British liberty was guarded by these exotic names, for they are not English, which the parties so invidiously bestow on each other. They are ludicrous enough in their origin. The friends of the court and the advocates of lineal succession were, by the republican party, branded with the title of *tories*, which was the name of certain Irish robbers;[50] while the court party in return could find no other revenge than by appropriating to the covenanters and the republicans of that class the name of the Scotch beverage of sour milk, whose virtue they considered so expressive of their dispositions, and which is called *whigg*. So ridiculous in their origin were these pernicious nicknames, which long excited feuds and quarrels in domestic life, and may still be said to divide into two great parties this land of political freedom. But nothing becomes obsolete in political factions, and the meaner and more scandalous the name affixed by one party to another the more it becomes not only their rallying cry or their password, but even constitutes their glory. Thus the Hollanders long prided themselves on the humiliating nickname of "Les Gueux:" the protestants of France on the scornful one of the *Huguenots*; the non-conformists in England on the mockery of the *puritan*; and all parties have perpetuated their anger by their inglorious names. Swift was well aware of this truth in

political history: “each party,” says that sagacious observer, “grows proud of that appellation which their adversaries at first intended as a reproach; of this sort were the *Guelphs* and the *Ghibellines*, *Huguenots* and *Cavaliers*.”

Nor has it been only by nicknaming each other by derisory or opprobrious terms that parties have been marked, but they have also worn a livery, and practised distinctive manners. What sufferings did not Italy endure for a long series of years under those fatal party-names of the *Guelphs* and the *Ghibellines*; alternately the victors and the vanquished, the beautiful land of Italy drank the blood of her children. Italy, like Greece, opens a moving picture of the hatreds and jealousies of small republics; her *Bianchi* and her *Neri*, her *Guelphs* and her *Ghibellines*! In Bologna, two great families once shook that city with their divisions; the *Pepoli* adopted the French interests; the *Maluezzi* the Spanish. It was incurring some danger to walk the streets of Bologna, for the *Pepoli* wore their feathers on the right side of their caps, and the *Maluezzi* on the left. Such was the party-hatred of the two great Italian factions, that they carried their rancour even into their domestic habits; at table the *Guelphs* placed their knives and spoons longwise, and the *Ghibellines* across; the one cut their bread across, the other longwise. Even in cutting an orange they could not agree; for the *Guelph* cut his orange horizontally, and the *Ghibelline* downwards. Children were taught these artifices of faction—their hatreds became traditional, and thus the Italians perpetuated the full benefits of their party-spirit from generation to generation.[51]

Men in private life go down to their graves with some unlucky name, not received in baptism, but more descriptive and picturesque; and even ministers of state have winced at a political christening. Malagrida the Jesuit and Jemmy Twitcher were nicknames which made one of our ministers odious, and another contemptible.[52] The Earl of Godolphin caught such fire at that of Volpone, that it drove him into the opposite party, for the

vindictive purpose of obtaining the impolitical prosecution of Sacheverell, who, in his famous sermon, had first applied it to the earl, and unluckily it had stuck to him.

"Faction," says Lord Orford, "is as capricious as fortune; wrongs, oppression, the zeal of real patriots, or the genius of false ones, may sometimes be employed for years in kindling substantial opposition to authority; in other seasons the impulse of a moment, a *ballad*, a *nickname*, a *fashion* can throw a city into a tumult, and shake the foundations of a state."

Such is a slight history of the human passions in politics! We might despair in thus discovering that wisdom and patriotism so frequently originate in this turbid source of party; but we are consoled when we reflect that the most important political principles are immutable: and that they are those which even the spirit of party must learn to reverence.

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47 See Recueil Chronologique et Analytique de tout ce qui a fait en Portugal la Société de Jesus. Vol. ii. sect. 406.

48 *Plunder*, observed Mr. Douce, is pure Dutch or Flemish—*Plunderen*, from *Plunder*, which means *property* of any kind. May tells us it was brought by those officers who had returned from the wars of the Netherlands.

49 One of the best collections of political songs written during the great Civil War, is entitled "The Rump," and has a curious frontispiece representing the mob burning rumps as described above.

50 The "History of the Tories and Rapparees" was a popular Irish chapbook a few years ago, and devoted to the daring acts of these marauders.

51 These curious particulars I found in a manuscript.

52 Lord Shelburne was named "Malagrida," and Lord Sandwich was "Jemmy Twitcher;" a name derived from the chief of Macheath's gang in the *Beggar's Opera*.

THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF A POET.—SHENSTONE VINDICATED.

THE dogmatism of Johnson, and the fastidiousness of Gray, the critic who passed his days amidst "the busy hum of men," and the poet who mused in cloistered solitude, have fatally injured a fine natural genius in Shenstone. Mr. Campbell, with a brother's feeling, has (since the present article was composed) sympathised with the endowments and the pursuits of this poet; but the facts I had collected seemed to me to open a more important view. I am aware how lightly the poetical character of Shenstone is held by some great contemporaries—although this very poet has left us at least one poem of unrivalled originality. Mr. Campbell has regretted that Shenstone not only "affected that arcadianism" which "gives a certain air of masquerade in his pastoral character," adopted by our earlier poets, but also has "rather incongruously blended together the rural swain with the disciple of virtù." All this requires some explanation. It is not only as a poet, possessing the characteristics of poetry, but as a creator in another way, for which I claim the attention of the reader. I have formed a picture of the domestic life of a poet, and the pursuits of a votary of taste, both equally contracted in their endeavours, from the habits, the emotions, and the events which occurred to Shenstone.

Four material circumstances influenced his character, and were productive of all his unhappiness. The neglect he incurred in those poetical

studies to which he had devoted his hopes; his secret sorrows in not having formed a domestic union, from prudential motives, with one whom he loved; the ruinous state of his domestic affairs, arising from a seducing passion for creating a new taste in landscape gardening and an ornamented farm; and finally, his disappointment of that promised patronage, which might have induced him to have become a political writer; for which his inclinations, and, it is said, his talents in early life, were alike adapted: with these points in view, we may trace the different states of his mind, show what he did, and what he was earnestly intent to have done.

Why have the "Elegies" of Shenstone, which forty years ago formed for many of us the favourite poems of our youth, ceased to delight us in mature life? It is perhaps that these Elegies, planned with peculiar felicity, have little in their execution. They form a series of poetical truths, devoid of poetical expression; truths,—for notwithstanding the pastoral romance in which the poet has enveloped himself, the subjects are real, and the feelings could not, therefore, be fictitious.

In a Preface, remarkable for its graceful simplicity, our poet tells us, that "He entered on his subjects occasionally, as particular *incidents in life* suggested, or *dispositions of mind* recommended them to his choice." He shows that "He drew his pictures from the spot, and, he felt very sensibly the affections he communicates." He avers that all those attendants on rural scenery, and all those allusions to rural life, were not the counterfeited scenes of a town poet, any more than the sentiments, which were inspired by Nature. Shenstone's friend Graves, who knew him in early life, and to his last days, informs us that these Elegies were written when he had taken the Leasowes into his own hands;[53] and though his *ferme ornée* engaged his thoughts, he occasionally wrote them, "partly," said Shenstone, "to divert my present impatience, and partly, as it will be a picture of most that passes in my own mind; a portrait which friends may value." This, then, is the

secret charm which acts so forcibly on the first emotions of our youth, at a moment when, not too difficult to be pleased, the reflected delineations of the habits and the affections, the hopes and the delights, with all the domestic associations of this poet, always true to Nature, reflect back that picture of ourselves which we instantly recognise. It is only as we advance in life that we lose the relish of our early simplicity, and that we discover that Shenstone was not endowed with high imagination.

These Elegies, with some other poems, may be read with a new interest when we discover them to form the true Memoirs of Shenstone. Records of querulous but delightful feelings! whose subjects spontaneously offered themselves from passing incidents; they still perpetuate emotions which will interest the young poet and the young lover of taste.

Elegy IV., the first which Shenstone composed, is entitled “Ophelia’s Urn,” and it was no unreal one! It was erected by Graves in Mickleton Church, to the memory of an extraordinary young woman, Utrecia Smith, the literary daughter of a learned but poor clergyman. Utrecia had formed so fine a taste for literature, and composed with such elegance in verse and prose, that an excellent judge declared that “he did not like to form his opinion of any author till he previously knew hers.” Graves had been long attached to her, but from motives of prudence broke off an intercourse with this interesting woman, who sunk under this severe disappointment. When her prudent lover, Graves, inscribed the urn, her friend Shenstone, perhaps more feelingly, commemorated her virtues and her tastes. Such, indeed, was the friendly intercourse between Shenstone and Utrecia, that in Elegy XVIII., written long after her death, she still lingered in his reminiscences. Composing this Elegy on the calamitous close of Somerville’s life, a brother bard, and victim to narrow circumstances, and which he probably contemplated as an image of his own, Shenstone tenderly recollects that he used to read Somerville’s poems to Utrecia:—

Oh, lost Ophelia; smoothly flow'd the day
To feel his music with my flames agree;
To taste the beauties of his melting lay,
To taste, and fancy it was dear to thee!

How true is the feeling! how mean the poetical expression!

The Seventh Elegy describes a vision, where the shadow of Wolsey breaks upon the author:

A graceful form appear'd,
White were his locks, with awful scarlet crown'd.

Even this fanciful subject was not chosen capriciously, but sprung from an incident. Once, on his way to Cheltenham, Shenstone missed his road, and wandered till late at night among the Cotswold Hills on this occasion he appears to have made a moral reflection, which we find in his "Essays." "How melancholy is it to travel late upon any ambitious project on a winter's night, and observe the light of cottages, where all the unambitious people are warm and happy, or at rest in their beds." While the benighted poet, lost among the lonely hills, was meditating on "ambitious projects," the character of Wolsey arose before him; the visionary cardinal crossed his path, and busied his imagination. "Thou," exclaims the poet,

Like a meteor's fire,
Shot'st blazing forth, disdaining dull degrees.
Elegy vii.

And the bard, after discovering all the miseries of unhappy grandeur, and murmuring at this delay to the house of his friend, exclaims—

Oh if these ills the price of power advance,
Check not my speed where social joys invite!

The silent departure of the poetical spectre is fine:

The troubled vision cast a mournful glance,
And sighing, vanish'd in the shades of night.

And to prove that the subject of this elegy thus arose to the poet's fancy, he has himself commemorated the incident that gave occasion to it, in the opening:—

On distant heaths, beneath autumnal skies,
Pensive I saw the circling shades descend;
Weary and faint, I heard the storm arise,
While the sun vanish'd like a faithless friend.

Elegy vii.

The Fifteenth Elegy, composed "in memory of a private family in Worcestershire," is on the extinction of the ancient family of the Penns in the male line.[54] Shenstone's mother was a Penn; and the poet was now the inhabitant of their ancient mansion, an old timber-built house of the age of Elizabeth. The local description was a real scene—"the shaded pool"—"the group of ancient elms"—"the flocking rooks," and the picture of the simple manners of his own ancestors, were realities; the emotions they excited were therefore genuine, and not one of those "mockeries" of amplification from the crowd of verse-writers.

The Tenth Elegy, "To Fortune, suggesting his Motive for repining at her Dispensations," with his celebrated "Pastoral Ballad, in four parts." were

alike produced by what one of the great minstrels of our own times has so finely indicated when he sung—

> The secret woes the world has never known;
> While on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
> And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.

In this Elegy Shenstone repines at the dispensations of Fortune, not for having denied him her higher gifts, nor that she compels him to

> Check the fond LOVE OF ART that fired my veins;

nor that some "dull dotard with boundless wealth" finds his "grating reed" preferred to the bard's, but that the "tawdry shepherdess" of this dull dotard, by her "pride," makes "the rural thane" despise the poet's Delia.

> Must Delia's softness, elegance, and ease,
> Submit to Marian's dress? to Marian's gold?
> Must Marian's robe from distant India please?
> The simple fleece my Delia's limbs infold!
> Ah! what is native worth esteemed of clowns?
> 'Tis thy false glare, O Fortune! thine they see;
> Tis for my Delia's sake I dread thy frowns,
> And my last gasp shall curses breathe on thee!

The Delia of our poet was not an "Iris en air." Shenstone was early in life captivated by a young lady, whom Graves describes with all those mild and serene graces of pensive melancholy, touched by plaintive love-songs and elegies of woe, adapted not only to be the muse but the mistress of a poet. The sensibility of this passion took entire possession of his heart for some

years, and it was in parting from her that he first sketched his exquisite "Pastoral Ballad." As he retreated more and more into solitude, his passion felt no diminution. Dr. Nash informs us that Shenstone acknowledged that it was his own fault that he did not accept the hand of the lady whom he so tenderly loved; but his spirit could not endure to be a perpetual witness of her degradation in the rank of society, by an inconsiderate union with poetry and poverty. That such was his motive, we may infer from a passage in one of his letters. "Love, as it regularly tends to matrimony, requires certain favours from fortune and circumstances to render it proper to be indulged in." There are perpetual allusions to these "secret woes" in his correspondence; for, although he had the fortitude to refuse marriage, he had not the stoicism to contract his own heart in cold and sullen celibacy. He thus alludes to this subject, which so often excited far other emotions than those of humour:—"It is long since I have considered myself as *undone*. The world will not, perhaps, consider me in that light entirely till I have married my maid!"

It is probable that our poet had an intention of marrying his maid. I discovered a pleasing anecdote among the late Mr. Bindley's collections, which I transcribed from the original. On the back of a picture of Shenstone himself, of which Dodsley published a print in 1780, the following energetic inscription was written by the poet on his new-year's gift:—

"This picture belongs to Mary Cutler, given her by her master, William Shenstone, January 1st, 1754, in acknowledgment of her native genius, her magnanimity, her tenderness, and her fidelity.

"W. S."

"The Progress of Taste; or the Fate of Delicacy," is a poem on the temper and studies of the author; and "Economy; a Rhapsody addressed to Young

Poets," abounds with self-touches. If Shenstone created little from the imagination, he was at least perpetually under the influence of real emotions. This is the reason why his truths so strongly operate on the juvenile mind, not yet matured: and thus we have sufficiently ascertained the fact, as the poet himself has expressed it, "that he drew his pictures from the spot, and he felt very sensibly the affections he communicates."

All the anxieties of a poetical life were early experienced by Shenstone. He first published some juvenile productions, under a very odd title, indicative of modesty, perhaps too of pride.[55] And his motto of *Contentus paucis lectoribus*, even Horace himself might have smiled at, for it only conceals the desire of every poet who pants to deserve many! But when he tried at a more elaborate poetical labour, "The Judgment of Hercules," it failed to attract notice. He hastened to town, and he beat about literary coffee-houses; and returned to the country from the chase of Fame, wearied without having started it.

A breath revived him—but a breath o'erthrew.

Even "The Judgment of Hercules" between Indolence and Industry, or Pleasure and Virtue, was a picture of his own feelings; an argument drawn from his own reasonings; indicating the uncertainty of the poet's dubious disposition; who finally by siding with Indolence, lost that triumph which his hero obtained by a directly opposite course.

In the following year begins that melancholy strain in his correspondence which marks the disappointment of the man who had staked too great a quantity of his happiness on the poetical die. This is the critical moment of life when our character is formed by habit, and our fate is decided by choice. Was Shenstone to become an active or contemplative being? He yielded to nature![56]

It was now that he entered into another species of poetry, working with too costly materials, in the magical composition of plants, water, and earth; with these he created those emotions which his more strictly poetical ones failed to excite. He planned a paradise amidst his solitude. When we consider that Shenstone, in developing his fine pastoral ideas in the Leasowes, educated the nation into that taste for landscape-gardening, which has become the model of all Europe, this itself constitutes a claim on the gratitude of posterity.[57] Thus the private pleasures of a man of genius may become at length those of a whole people. The creator of this new taste appears to have received far less notice than he merited. The name of Shenstone does not appear in the Essay on Gardening by Lord Orford: even the supercilious Gray only bestowed a ludicrous image on these pastoral scenes, which, however, his friend Mason has celebrated; and the genius of Johnson, incapacitated by nature to touch on objects of rural fancy, after describing some of the offices of the landscape designer, adds, that "he will not inquire whether they demand any great powers of mind." Johnson, however, conveys to us his own feelings, when he immediately expresses them under the character of a "sullen and surly speculator." The anxious life of Shenstone would, indeed, have been remunerated, could he have read the enchanting eulogium of Wheatley on the Leasowes; which, said he, "is a perfect picture of his mind—simple, elegant, and amiable; and will always suggest a doubt whether the spot inspired his verse, or whether in the scenes which he formed, he only realized the pastoral images which abound in his songs." Yes! Shenstone would have been delighted, could he have heard that Montesquieu, on his return home, adorned his "Château gothique, mais orné de bois charmans, dont j'ai pris l'idée en Angleterre;" and Shenstone, even with his modest and timid nature, had been proud to have witnessed a noble foreigner, amidst memorials dedicated to Theocritus and Virgil, to Thomson and Gesner, raising in his grounds an inscription, in bad English, but in pure taste, to Shenstone himself for having displayed in his writings

“a mind natural,” and in his Leasowes “laid Arcadian greens rural.” Recently Pindemonte has traced the taste of English gardening to Shenstone. A man of genius sometimes receives from foreigners, who are placed out of the prejudices of his compatriots, the tribute of posterity!

Amidst these rural elegancies which Shenstone was raising about him, his muse has pathetically sung his melancholy feelings—

> But did the Muses haunt his cell,
> Or in his dome did Venus dwell?—
> When all the structures shone complete,
> Ah, me! ’twas Damon’s own confession,
> Came Poverty, and took possession.
>
> *The Progress of Taste.*

The poet observes, that the wants of philosophy are contracted, satisfied with “cheap contentment,” but

> Taste alone requires
> Entire profusion! days and nights, and hours
> Thy voice, hydropic Fancy! calls aloud
> For costly draughts.——
>
> *Economy.*

An original image illustrates that fatal want of economy which conceals itself amidst the beautiful appearances of taste:—

> Some graceless mark,
> Some symptom ill-conceal’d, shall soon or late
> Burst like a pimple from the vicious tide
> Of acid blood, proclaiming want’s disease

Amidst the bloom of show.

Economy.

He paints himself:—

Observe Florelio's mien;
Why treads my friend with melancholy step
That beauteous lawn? Why pensive strays his eye
O'er statues, grottos, urns, by critic art
Proportion'd fair? or from his lofty dome
Returns his eye unpleased, disconsolate?

The cause is, "criminal expense," and he exclaims—

Sweet interchange
Of river, valley, mountain, woods, and plains,
How gladsome once he ranged your native turf,
Your simple scenes how raptured! ere EXPENSE
Had lavish'd thousand ornaments, and taught
Convenience to perplex him, Art to pall,
Pomp to deject, and Beauty to displease.

Economy.

While Shenstone was rearing hazels and hawthorns, opening vistas, and winding waters;

And having shown them where to stray,
Threw little pebbles in their way;

while he was pulling down hovels and cowhouses, to compose mottos and inscriptions for garden-seats and urns; while he had so finely obscured with a tender gloom the grove of Virgil, and thrown over, “in the midst of a plantation of yew, a bridge of one arch, built of a dusty-coloured stone, and simple even to rudeness,”[58] and invoked Oberon in some Arcadian scene,

> Where in cool grot and mossy cell
> The tripping fauns and fairies dwell;

the solitary magician, who had raised all these wonders, was, in reality, an unfortunate poet, the tenant of a dilapidated farm-house, where the winds passed through, and the rains lodged, often taking refuge in his own kitchen —

> Far from all resort of mirth,
> Save the cricket on the hearth!

In a letter[59] of the disconsolate founder of landscape gardening, our author paints his situation with all its misery—lamenting that his house is not fit to receive “polite friends, were they so disposed;” and resolved to banish all others, he proceeds:

“But I make it a certain rule, ‘arcere profanum vulgus.’ Persons who will despise you for the want of a good set of chairs, or an uncouth fire-shovel, at the same time that they can’t taste any excellence in a mind that overlooks those things; with whom it is in vain that your mind is furnished, if the walls are naked; indeed one loses much of one’s acquisitions in virtue by an hour’s converse with such as judge of merit by money—yet I am now and then impelled by the social passion to sit half an hour in my kitchen.”

But the solicitude of friends and the fate of Somerville, a neighbour and a poet, often compelled Shenstone to start amidst his reveries; and thus he has preserved his feelings and his irresolutions. Reflecting on the death of Somerville, he writes—

"To be forced to drink himself into pains of the body, in order to get rid of the pains of the mind, is a misery which I can well conceive, because I may, without vanity, esteem myself his equal in point of economy, and consequently ought to have an eye on his misfortunes—(as you kindly hinted to me about twelve o'clock, at the Feathers.)—I should retrench—I will—but you shall not see me—I will not let you know that I took it in good part—I will do it at solitary times as I may."

Such were the calamities of "great taste" with "little fortune;" but in the case of Shenstone, these were combined with the other calamity of "mediocrity of genius."

Here, then, at the Leasowes, with occasional trips to town in pursuit of fame, which perpetually eluded his grasp; in the correspondence of a few delicate minds, whose admiration was substituted for more genuine celebrity; composing diatribes against economy and taste, while his income was diminishing every year; our neglected author grew daily more indolent and sedentary, and withdrawing himself entirely into his own hermitage, moaned and despaired in an Arcadian solitude.[60] The cries and the "secret sorrows" of Shenstone have come down to us—those of his brothers have not always! And shall dull men, because they have minds cold and obscure, like a Lapland year which has no summer, be permitted to exult over this class of men of sensibility and taste, but of moderate genius and without fortune? The passions and emotions of the heart are facts and dates only to those who possess them.

To what a melancholy state was our author reduced, when he thus addressed his friend:—

“I suppose you have been informed that my fever was in a great measure hypochondriacal, and left my nerves so extremely sensible, that even on no very interesting subjects, I could readily *think myself into a vertigo*; I had almost said an *epilepsy*; for surely I was oftentimes near it.”

The features of this sad portrait are more particularly made out in another place.

“Now I am come home from a visit, every little uneasiness is sufficient to introduce my whole train of melancholy considerations, and to make me utterly dissatisfied with the life I now lead, and the life which I foresee I shall lead. I am angry and envious, and dejected and frantic, and disregard all present things, just as becomes a madman to do. I am infinitely pleased (though it is a gloomy joy) with the application of Dr. Swift’s complaint, ‘that he is forced to die in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole.’ My soul is no more fitted to the figure I make, than a cable rope to a cambric needle; I cannot bear to see the advantages alienated, which I think I could deserve and relish so much more than those that have them.”

There are other testimonies in his entire correspondence. Whenever forsaken by his company he describes the horrors around him, delivered up “to winter, silence, and reflection;” ever foreseeing himself “returning to the same series of melancholy hours.” His frame shattered by the whole train of hypochondriacal symptoms, there was nothing to cheer the querulous author, who with half the consciousness of genius, lived neglected and unpatronised. His elegant mind had not the force, by his productions, to draw the celebrity he sighed after, to his hermitage.

Shenstone was so anxious for his literary character, that he contemplated on the posthumous fame which he might derive from the publication of his

letters: see Letter lxxix., *On hearing his letters to Mr. Whistler were destroyed*; the act of a merchant, his brother, who being a *very sensible* man, as Graves describes, yet with the *stupidity* of a Goth, destroyed *the whole correspondence of Shenstone, for "its sentimental intercourse."*—Shenstone bitterly regrets the loss, and says, "I would have given more money for the letters than it is allowable for me to mention with decency. I look upon my letters as some of my *chefs-d'œuvre*—they are the history of my mind for these twenty years past." This, with the loss of Cowley's correspondence, should have been preserved in the article, "of Suppressors and Dilapidators of Manuscripts."

Towards the close of life, when his spirits were exhausted, and "the silly clue of hopes and expectations," as he termed them, was undone, the notice of some persons of rank began to reach him. Shenstone, however, deeply colours the variable state of his own mind—"Recovering from a nervous fever, as I have since discovered by many concurrent symptoms, I seem to anticipate a little of that 'vernal delight' which Milton mentions and thinks

———able to chase

All sadness but despair—

at least I begin to resume my silly clue of hopes and expectations."

In a former letter he had, however, given them up: "I begin to wean myself from all hopes and expectations whatever. I feed my wild-ducks, and I water my carnations. Happy enough if I could extinguish my ambition quite, to indulge the desire of being something more beneficial in my sphere.—Perhaps some few other circumstances would want also to be adjusted."

What were these "hopes and expectations," from which sometimes he weans himself, and which are perpetually revived, and are attributed to "an

ambition he cannot extinguish”? This article has been written in vain, if the reader has not already perceived, that they had haunted him in early life; sickening his spirit after the possession of a poetical celebrity, unattainable by his genius; some expectations too he might have cherished from the talent he possessed for political studies, in which Graves confidently says, that “he would have made no inconsiderable figure, if he had had a sufficient motive for applying his mind to them.” Shenstone has left several proofs of this talent.[61] But his master-passion for literary fame had produced little more than anxieties and disappointments; and when he indulged his pastoral fancy in a beautiful creation on his grounds, it consumed the estate which it adorned. Johnson forcibly expressed his situation: “His death was probably hastened by his anxieties. He was a lamp that spent its oil in blazing. It is said, that if he had lived a little longer, he would have been assisted by a pension.”

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53 This once-celebrated abode of the poet is situated at Hales-Owen, Shropshire.

54 This we learn from Dr. Nash’s History of Worcestershire.

55 While at college he printed, without his name, a small volume of verses, with this title, “Poems upon various Occasions, written for the Entertainment of the Author, and printed for the Amusement of a few Friends, prejudiced in his Favour.” Oxford, 1737. 12mo.—Nash’s “History of Worcestershire,” vol. i. p. 528.

I find this notice of it in W. Lowndes’s Catalogue; 4433 Shenstone (W.) Poems, 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*—(Shenstone took uncommon pains to suppress this book, by collecting and destroying copies wherever he met with them.)—In, Longman’s Bibliotheca Anglo-Poetica, it is valued at 15*l. Oxf.* 1737. Mr. Harris informs me, that about the year 1770, Fletcher, the bookseller, at Oxford, had many copies of this first edition, which he sold at *Eighteen pence* each. These prices are amusing! The prices of books are connected with their history.

56 On this subject Graves makes a very useful observation. “In this decision the happiness of Mr. Shenstone was materially concerned. Whether he determined wisely or not, people of taste

and people of worldly prudence will probably be of very different opinions. I somewhat suspect, that ‘people of worldly prudence’ are not half the fools that ‘people of taste’ insist they are.”

57 Shenstone’s farm was surrounded by winding walks, decorated with vases and statues, varied by wood and water, and occasionally embracing fine views over Frankley and Clent Hills, and the country about Cradley, Dudley, Rawley, and the intermediate places. Some of his vases were inscribed to the memory of relatives and friends. One had a Latin inscription to his cousin Maria, another was dedicated to Somerville his poet-friend. In different parts of his domain he constructed buildings at once useful and ornamental, destined to serve farm-purposes, but to be also grateful to the eye. A Chinese bridge led to a temple beside a lake, and near was a seat inscribed with the popular Shropshire toast to “all friends round the Wrekin,” the spot commanding a distant view of the hill so named. A wild path through a small wood led to an ingeniously constructed root-house, beside which a rivulet ran which helped to form the lake already mentioned; on its banks was a dedicatory urn to the *Genio Loci*. The general effect of the whole place was highly praised in the poet’s time. It was neglected at his death; and its description is now but a record of the past.

58 Wheatley, on “Modern Gardening,” p. 172. Edition 5th.

59 In “Hull’s Collection,” vol. ii. letter ii.

60 Graves was supposed to have glanced at his friend Shenstone in his novel of “*Columella*; or, the Distressed Anchoret.” The aim of this work is to convey all the moral instruction I could wish to offer here to youthful genius. It is written to show the consequence of a person of education and talents retiring to solitude and indolence in the vigour of youth. Nichols’s “Literary Anecdotes,” vol. iii. p. 134. Nash’s “History of Worcestershire,” vol. i. p. 528.

61 See his “Letters” xl. and xli., and more particularly xlii. and xliii., with a new theory of political principles.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE BUILDING OF BLENHEIM.

THE secret history of this national edifice derives importance from its nature, and the remarkable characters involved in the unparalleled transaction. The great architect, when obstructed in the progress of his work by the irregular payments of the workmen, appears to have practised one of his own comic plots to put the debts on the hero himself; while the duke, who had it much at heart to inhabit the palace of his fame, but tutored into wariness under the vigilant and fierce eye of Atossa,[62] would neither approve nor disapprove, silently looked on in hope and in grief, from year to year, as the work proceeded, or as it was left at a stand. At length we find this *comédie larmoyante* wound up by the duchess herself, in an attempt utterly to ruin the enraged and insulted architect![63]

Perhaps this was the first time that it had ever been resolved in parliament to raise a public monument of glory and gratitude—to an individual! The novelty of the attempt may serve as the only excuse for the loose arrangements which followed after parliament had approved of the design, without voting any specific supply for the purpose! The queen always issued the orders at her own expense, and commanded expedition; and while Anne lived, the expenses of the building were included in her majesty's debts, as belonging to the civil list sanctioned by parliament.[64]

When George the First came to the throne, the parliament declared the debt to be the debt of the queen, and the king granted a privy seal as for other debts. The crown and the parliament had hitherto proceeded in perfect union respecting this national edifice. However, I find that the workmen

were greatly in arrears; for when George the First ascended the throne, they gladly accepted a *third* part of their several debts!

The great architect found himself amidst inextricable difficulties. With the fertile invention which amuses in his comedies, he contrived an extraordinary scheme, by which he proposed to make the duke himself responsible for the building of Blenheim!

However much the duke longed to see the magnificent edifice concluded, he showed the same calm intrepidity in the building of Blenheim as he had in its field of action. Aware that if he himself gave any order, or suggested any alteration, he might be involved in the expense of the building, he was never to be circumvented—never to be surprised into a spontaneous emotion of pleasure or disapprobation; on no occasion, he declares, had he even entered into conversation with the architect (though his friend) or with any one acting under his orders, about Blenheim House! Such impenetrable prudence on all sides had often blunted the subdolous ingenuity of the architect and plotter of comedies!

In the absence of the duke, when abroad in 1705, Sir John contrived to obtain from Lord Godolphin, the friend and relative of the Duke of Marlborough, and probably his agent in some of his concerns, a warrant, constituting Vanbrugh *surveyor, with power of contracting on the behalf of the Duke of Marlborough*. How he prevailed on Lord Godolphin to get this appointment does not appear—his lordship probably conceived it was useful, and might assist in expediting the great work, the favourite object of the hero. This warrant, however, Vanbrugh kept entirely to himself; he never mentioned to the duke that he was in possession of any such power; nor, on his return, did he claim to have it renewed.

The building proceeded with the same delays, and the payments with the same irregularity; the veteran now foresaw what happened, that he should

never be the inhabitant of his own house! The public money issued from the Treasury was never to be depended on; and after 1712, the duke took the building upon himself, for the purpose of accommodating the workmen. They had hitherto received what was called “crown pay,” which was high wages and uncertain payment—and they now gladly abated a third of their prices. But though the duke had undertaken to pay the workmen, this could make no alteration in the claims on the Treasury. Blenheim was to be built *for* Marlborough, not *by* him; it was a monument raised by the nation to their hero, not a palace to be built by their mutual contributions.

Whether Marlborough found that his own million might be slowly injured while the Treasury remained still obdurate, or that the architect was still more and more involved, I cannot tell; but in 1715, the workmen appear to have struck, and the old delays and stand-still again renewed. It was then Sir John, for the first time, produced the warrant he had extracted from Lord Godolphin, to lay before the Treasury; adding, however, a memorandum, to prevent any misconception, that the duke was to be considered as the paymaster, the debts incurred devolving on the crown. This part of our secret history requires more development than I am enabled to afford: as my information is drawn from “the Case” of the Duke of Marlborough in reply to Sir John’s depositions, it is possible Vanbrugh may suffer more than he ought in this narration; which, however, incidentally notices his own statements.

A new scene opens! Vanbrugh not obtaining his claims from the Treasury, and the workmen becoming more clamorous, the architect suddenly turns round on the duke, at once to charge him with the whole debt.

The pitiable history of this magnificent monument of public gratitude, from its beginnings, is given by Vanbrugh in his deposition. The great architect represents himself as being comptroller of her majesty’s works; and as such was appointed to prepare a model, which model of Blenheim

House her majesty kept in her palace, and gave her commands to issue money according to the direction of Mr. Travers, the queen's surveyor-general; that the lord treasurer appointed her majesty's own officers to supervise these works; that it was upon defect of money from the Treasury that the workmen grew uneasy; that the work was stopped, till further orders of money from the Treasury; that the queen then ordered enough to secure it from winter weather; that afterwards she ordered more for payment of the workmen; that they were paid in part; and upon Sir John's telling them the queen's resolution to grant them a further supply (*after a stop put to it by the duchess's order*), they went on and incurred the present debt; that this was afterwards brought into the House of Commons as the debt of the crown, not owing from the queen to the Duke of Marlborough, but to the workmen, and this by the queen's officers.

During the uncertain progress of the building, and while the workmen were often in deep arrears, it would seem that the architect often designed to involve the Marlboroughs in its fate and his own; he probably thought that some of their round million might bear to be chipped, to finish his great work, with which, too, their glory was so intimately connected. The famous duchess had evidently put the duke on the defensive; but once, perhaps, was the duke on the point of indulging some generous architectural fancy, when lo! Atossa stepped forwards and "put a stop to the building."

When Vanbrugh at length produced the warrant of Lord Godolphin, empowering him to contract for the duke, this instrument was utterly disclaimed by Marlborough; the duke declares it existed without his knowledge; and that if such an instrument for a moment was to be held valid, no man would be safe, but might be ruined by the act of another!

Vanbrugh seems to have involved the intricacy of his plot, till it fell into some contradictions. The queen he had not found difficult to manage; but after her death, when the Treasury failed in its golden source, he seems to

have sat down to contrive how to make the duke the great debtor. Vanbrugh swears that “He himself looked upon the crown, as engaged to the Duke of Marlborough for the expense; but that he believes the workmen always looked upon the duke as their paymaster.” He advances so far, as to swear that he made a contract with particular workmen, which contract was not unknown to the duke. This was not denied; but the duke in his reply observes, that “he knew not that the workmen were employed for *his* account, or by *his* own agent:”—never having heard till Sir John produced the warrant from Lord Godolphin, that Sir John was “his surveyor!” which he disclaims.

Our architect, however opposite his depositions appear, contrived to become a witness to such facts as tended to conclude the duke to be the debtor for the building; and “in his depositions has taken as much care to have the guilt of perjury without the punishment of it, as any man could do.” He so managed, though he has not sworn to contradictions, that the natural tendency of one part of his evidence presses one way, and the natural tendency of another part presses the direct contrary way. In his former memorial, the main design was to disengage the duke from the debt; in his depositions, the main design was to charge the duke with the debt. Vanbrugh, it must be confessed, exerted not less of his dramatic than his architectural genius in the building of Blenheim!

“The Case” concludes with an eloquent reflection, where Vanbrugh is distinguished as the man of genius, though not, in this predicament, the man of honour. “If at last the charge run into by order of the crown must be upon the duke, yet the infamy of it must go upon another, who was perhaps the only architect in the world capable of building such a house; and the only friend in the world capable of contriving to lay the debt upon one to whom he was so highly obliged.”

There is a curious fact in the depositions of Vanbrugh, by which we might infer that the idea of Blenheim House might have originated with the duke himself; he swears that “in 1704, the duke met him, and told him *he* designed to build a house, and must consult him about a model, &c.; but it was the queen who ordered the present house to be built with all expedition.”

The whole conduct of this national edifice was unworthy of the nation, if in truth the nation ever entered heartily into it. No specific sum had been voted in parliament for so great an undertaking; which afterwards was the occasion of involving all the parties concerned in trouble and litigation; threatened the ruin of the architect; and I think we shall see, by Vanbrugh’s letters, was finished at the sole charge, and even under the superintendence, of the duchess herself! It may be a question, whether this magnificent monument of glory did not rather originate in the spirit of party, in the urgent desire of the queen to allay the pride and jealousies of the Marlboroughs. From the circumstance to which Vanbrugh has sworn, that the duke had designed to have a house built by Vanbrugh, before Blenheim had been resolved on, we may suppose that this intention of the duke’s afforded the queen a suggestion of a national edifice.

Archdeacon Coxe, in his Life of Marlborough, has obscurely alluded to the circumstances attending the building of Blenheim. “The illness of the duke, and the tedious litigation which ensued, caused such delays, that little progress was made in the work at the time of his decease. In the interim a serious misunderstanding arose between the duchess and the architect, which forms the subject of a voluminous correspondence. Vanbrugh was in consequence removed, and the direction of the building confided to other hands, under her own immediate superintendence.”

This “voluminous correspondence” would probably afford “words that burn” of the lofty insolence of Atossa, and “thoughts that breathe” of the

comic wit; it might too relate, in many curious points, to the stupendous fabric itself. If her grace condescended to criticise its parts with the frank roughness she is known to have done to the architect himself, his own defence and explanations might serve to let us into the bewildering fancies of his magical architecture. Of that self-creation for which he was so much abused in his own day as to have lost his real avocation as an architect, and stands condemned for posterity in the volatile bitterness of Lord Orford, nothing is left for us but our own convictions—to behold, and to be for ever astonished!—But "this voluminous correspondence?" Alas! the historian of war and politics overlooks with contempt the little secret histories of art and of human nature!—and "a voluminous correspondence" which indicates so much, and on which not a solitary idea is bestowed, has only served to petrify our curiosity!

Of this quarrel between the famous duchess and Vanbrugh I have only recovered several vivacious extracts from confidential letters of Vanbrugh's to Jacob Tonson. There was an equality of the genius of *invention*, as well as rancour, in her grace and the wit: whether Atossa, like Vanbrugh, could have had the patience to have composed a comedy of five acts I will not determine; but unquestionably she could have dictated many scenes with equal spirit. We have seen Vanbrugh attempting to turn the debts incurred by the building of Blenheim on the duke; we now learn, for the first time, that the duchess, with equal aptitude, contrived a counterplot to turn the debts on Vanbrugh!

"I have the misfortune of losing, for I now see little hopes of ever getting it, near 2000*l.* due to me for many years' service, plague, and trouble, at Blenheim, which that wicked woman of 'Marlborough' is so far from paying me, that the duke being sued by some of the workmen for work done there, she has tried to turn the debt due to them upon me, for which I think she ought to be hanged."

In 1722, on occasion of the duke's death, Vanbrugh gives an account to Tonson of the great wealth of the Marlboroughs, with a caustic touch at his illustrious victims.

"The Duke of Marlborough's treasure exceeds the most extravagant guess. The grand settlement, which it was suspected her grace had broken to pieces, stands good, and hands an immense wealth to Lord Godolphin and his successors. A round million has been moving about in loans on the land-tax, &c. This the Treasury knew before he died, and this was exclusive of his 'land;' his 5000*l.* a year upon the post-office; his mortgages upon a distressed estate; his South-Sea stock; his annuities, and which were not subscribed in, and besides what is in foreign banks; and yet this man could neither pay his workmen their bills, nor his architect his salary.

"He has given his widow (may a Scottish ensign get her!) 10,000*l.* a year *to spoil Blenheim her own way*; 12,000*l.* a year to keep herself clean and go to law; 2000*l.* a year to Lord Rialton for present maintenance; and Lord Godolphin only 5000*l.* a year jointure, if he outlives my lady: this last is a wretched article. The rest of the heap, for these are but snippings, goes to Lord Godolphin, and so on. She will have 40,000*l.* a year in present."

Atossa, as the quarrel heated and the plot thickened, with the maliciousness of Puck, and the haughtiness of an empress of Blenheim, invented the most cruel insult that ever architect endured!—one perfectly characteristic of that extraordinary woman. Vanbrugh went to Blenheim with his lady, in a company from Castle Howard, another magnificent monument of his singular genius.

"We staid two nights in Woodstock; but there was an order to the servants, *under her grace's own hand, not to let me enter Blenheim*! and lest that should not mortify me enough, she having somehow learned that my *wife* was of the company, *sent an express the night before we came there*,

with orders that if *she* came with the Castle Howard ladies, the servants should not suffer her to see either house, gardens, or even to enter the park: so she was forced to sit all day long and keep me company at the inn!"

This was a *coup-de-théâtre* in this joint comedy of Atossa and Vanbrugh! The architect of Blenheim, lifting his eyes towards his own massive grandeur, exiled to a dull inn, and imprisoned with one who required rather to be consoled, than capable of consoling the enraged architect!

In 1725, Atossa still pursuing her hunted prey, had driven it to a spot which she flattered herself would enclose it with the security of a preserve. This produced the following explosion!

"I have been forced into chancery by that B. B. B. the Duchess of Marlborough, where she has got an injunction upon me by her friend the late good chancellor (Earl of Macclesfield), who declared that I was never employed by the duke, and therefore had no demand upon his estate for my services at Blenheim. Since my hands were thus tied up from trying by law to recover my arrear, I have prevailed with Sir Robert Walpole *to help me in a scheme which I proposed to him, by which I got my money in spite of the hussy's teeth. My carrying this point enrages her much*, and the more because it is of considerable weight in my small fortune, which she has heartily endeavoured so to destroy as to throw me into an English Bastile, there to finish my days, as *I began them, in a French one*."

Plot for plot! and the superior claims of one of practised invention are vindicated! The writer, long accustomed to comedy-writing, has excelled the self-taught genius of Atossa. The "scheme" by which Vanbrugh's fertile invention, aided by Sir Robert Walpole, finally circumvented the avaricious, the haughty, and the capricious Atossa, remains untold, unless it is alluded to by the passage in Lord Orford's "Anecdotes of Painting," where he informs us that the "duchess quarrelled with Sir John, and went to law with

him; but though he *proved to be in the right*, or rather *because* he proved to be in the right, she employed Sir Christopher Wren to build the house in St. James's Park."

I have to add a curious discovery respecting Vanbrugh himself, which explains a circumstance in his life not hitherto understood.

In all the biographies of Vanbrugh, from the time of Cibber's Lives of the Poets, the early part of the life of this man of genius remains unknown. It is said he descended from an ancient family in *Cheshire*, which came originally from *France*, though by the name, which properly written would be *Van Brugh*, he would appear to be of *Dutch* extraction. A tale is universally repeated that Sir John once visiting France in the prosecution of his architectural studies, while taking a survey of some fortifications, excited alarm, and was carried to the Bastile: where, to deepen the interest of the story, he sketched a variety of comedies, which he must have communicated to the governor, who, whispering it doubtless as an affair of state to several of the noblesse, these admirers of "sketches of comedies"—English ones no doubt—procured the release of this English Molière. This tale is further confirmed by a very odd circumstance. Sir John built at Greenwich, on a spot still called "Van Brugh's Fields," two whimsical houses; one on the side of Greenwich Park is still called "the Bastile-House," built on its model, to commemorate this imprisonment.

Not a word of this detailed story is probably true! that the *Bastile* was an object which sometimes occupied the imagination of our architect, is probable; for by the letter we have just quoted, we discover from himself the singular incident of Vanbrugh's having been *born in the Bastile*.[65]

Desirous, probably, of concealing his alien origin, this circumstance cast his early days into obscurity. He felt that he was a Briton in all respects but that of his singular birth. The father of Vanbrugh married Sir Dudley

Carleton's daughter. We are told he had "political connexions;" and one of his "political" tours had probably occasioned his confinement in that state-dungeon, where his lady was delivered of her burden of love. This odd fancy of building a "Bastile-House" at Greenwich, a fortified prison! suggested to his first life-writer the fine romance; which must now be thrown aside among those literary fictions the French distinguish by the softening and yet impudent term of "*Anecdotes hasardées!*" with which formerly Varillas and his imitators furnished their pages; lies which looked like facts!

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62 The name by which Pope ruthlessly satirized Sarah Duchess of Marlborough.

63 I draw the materials of this secret history from an unpublished "Case of the Duke of Marlborough and Sir John Vanbrugh," as also from some confidential correspondence of Vanbrugh with Jacob Tonson, his friend and publisher.

64 Parliament voted 500,000*l.* for the building, which was insufficient. The queen added thereto the honour of Woodstock, an appanage of the crown, on the simple condition of rendering at Windsor Castle every year on the anniversary of the victory of Blenheim, a flag adorned with three fleur-de-lys, "as acquittance for all manner of rents, suits and services due to the crown."

65 Cunningham, in his "Lives of the British Architects," does not incline to the conclusions above drawn. He says, "I suspect that Vanbrugh, in saying he began his days in the Bastile, meant only that he was its tenant in early life—at the commencement of his manhood." The same author tells us that Vanbrugh's grandfather fled from Ghent, his native city, to avoid the persecutions of the Duke of Alva, and established himself as a merchant in Walbrook, where his son lived after him, and where John Vanbrugh (afterwards the great architect) was born in the year 1666. His father was at this time Comptroller of the Treasury Chamber. Cunningham thinks the Cheshire part of the genealogy "unlikely to be true."

SECRET HISTORY OF SIR WALTER RAWLEIGH.[66]

RAWLEIGH exercised in perfection incompatible talents, and his character connects the opposite extremes of our nature! His "Book of Life," with its incidents of prosperity and adversity, of glory and humiliation, was as chequered as the novelist would desire for a tale of fiction. Yet in this mighty genius there lies an unsuspected disposition, which requires to be demonstrated, before it is possible to conceive its reality. From his earliest days, probably by his early reading of the romantic incidents of the first Spanish adventurers in the New World, he himself betrayed the genius of an *adventurer*, which prevailed in his character to the latest; and it often involved him in the practice of mean artifices and petty deceptions; which appear like folly in the wisdom of a sage; like ineptitude in the profound views of a politician; like cowardice in the magnanimity of a hero; and degrade by their littleness the grandeur of a character which was closed by a splendid death, worthy the life of the wisest and the greatest of mankind!

The sunshine of his days was in the reign of Elizabeth. From a boy, always dreaming of romantic conquests (for he was born in an age of heroism), and formed by nature for the chivalric gallantry of the court of a maiden queen, from the moment he with such infinite art cast his rich mantle over the miry spot, his life was a progress of glory. All about Rawleigh was as splendid as the dress he wore: his female sovereign, whose eyes loved to dwell on men who might have been fit subjects for "the Faerie Queene" of Spenser, penurious of reward, only recompensed her favourites by suffering them to make their own fortunes on sea and land; and Elizabeth listened to the glowing projects of her hero, indulging that spirit

which could have conquered the world, to have laid the toy at the feet of the sovereign!

This man, this extraordinary being, who was prodigal of his life and fortune on the Spanish Main, in the idleness of peace could equally direct his invention to supply the domestic wants of every-day life, in his project of “an office for address.” Nothing was too high for his ambition, nor too humble for his genius. Pre-eminent as a military and a naval commander, as a statesman and a student, Rawleigh was as intent on forming the character of Prince Henry, as that prince was studious of moulding his own aspiring qualities by the genius of the friend whom he contemplated. Yet the active life of Rawleigh is not more remarkable than his contemplative one. He may well rank among the founders of our literature; for composing on a subject exciting little interest, his fine genius has sealed his unfinished volume with immortality. For magnificence of eloquence, and massiveness of thought, we must still dwell on his pages.[67] Such was the man who was the adored patron of Spenser; whom Ben Jonson, proud of calling other favourites “his sons,” honoured by the title of “his father;” and who left political instructions which Milton deigned to edit.

But how has it happened that, of so elevated a character, Gibbon has pronounced that it was “ambiguous,” while it is described by Hume as “a great but ill-regulated mind!”

There was a peculiarity in the character of this eminent man; he practised the cunning of an *adventurer*—a cunning most humiliating in the narrative! The great difficulty to overcome in this discovery is, how to account for a sage and a hero acting folly and cowardice, and attempting to obtain by circuitous deception what it may be supposed so magnanimous a spirit would only deign to possess himself of by direct and open methods.

Since the present article was written, a letter, hitherto unpublished, appears in the recent edition of Shakspeare which curiously and minutely records one of those artifices of the kind which I am about to narrate at length. When, under Elizabeth, Rawleigh was once in confinement, it appears that seeing the queen passing by, he was suddenly seized with a strange resolution of combating with the governor and his people, declaring that the mere *sight* of the queen had made him desperate, as a confined lover would feel at the sight of his mistress. The letter gives a minute narrative of Sir Walter's astonishing conduct, and carefully repeats the warm romantic style in which he talked of his royal mistress, and his formal resolution to die rather than exist out of her presence.[68] This extravagant scene, with all its cunning, has been most elaborately penned by the ingenious letter-writer, with a hint to the person whom he addresses, to suffer it to meet the eye of their royal mistress, who could not fail of admiring our new "Orlando Furioso," and soon after released this tender prisoner! To me it is evident that the whole scene was got up and concerted for the occasion, and was the invention of Rawleigh himself; the romantic incident he well knew was perfectly adapted to the queen's taste. Another similar incident, in which I have been anticipated in the disclosure of the fact, though not of its nature, was what Sir Toby Matthews obscurely alludes to in his letters, of "the guilty blow he gave himself in the Tower;" a passage which had long excited my attention, till I discovered the curious incident in some manuscript letters of Lord Cecil. Rawleigh was then confined in the Tower for the Cobham conspiracy; a plot so absurd and obscure that one historian has called it a "state-riddle," but for which, so many years after, Rawleigh so cruelly lost his life.

Lord Cecil gives an account of the examination of the prisoners involved in this conspiracy. "One afternoon, whilst divers of us were in the Tower examining some of these prisoners, Sir Walter *attempted to murder himself*; whereof, when we were advertised, we came to him, and found him in some

agony to be unable to endure his misfortunes, and protesting innocency, with carelessness of life; and in that humour *he had wounded himself under the right pap, but no way mortally, being in truth rather a* CUT *than a* STAB, and now very well cured both in body and mind."[69] This feeble attempt at suicide, this "cut rather than stab," I must place among those scenes in the life of Rawleigh so incomprehensible with the genius of the man. If it were nothing but one of those

Fears of the Brave!

we must now open another of the

Follies of the Wise!

Rawleigh returned from the wild and desperate voyage of Guiana, with misery in every shape about him.[70] His son had perished; his devoted Keymis would not survive his reproach; and Rawleigh, without fortune and without hope, in sickness and in sorrow, brooded over the sad thought, that in the hatred of the Spaniard, and in the political pusillanimity of James, he was arriving only to meet inevitable death. With this presentiment, he had even wished to give up his ship to the crew, had they consented to land him in France; but he was probably irresolute in this decision at sea, as he was afterwards at land, where he wished to escape, and refused to fly: the clearest intellect was darkened, and magnanimity itself became humiliated, floating between the sense of honour and of life.

Rawleigh landed in his native county of Devon: his arrival was the common topic of conversation, and he was the object of censure or of commiseration: but his person was not molested, till the fears of James became more urgent than his pity.

The Cervantic Gondomar, whose “quips and quiddities” had concealed the cares of state, one day rushed into the presence of James, breathlessly calling out for “audience!” and compressing his “ear-piercing” message into the laconic abruptness of “piratas! piratas! piratas!” There was agony as well as politics in this cry of Gondomar, whose brother, the Spanish governor, had been massacred in this predatory expedition.[71] The timid monarch, terrified at this tragical appearance of his facetious friend, saw at once the demands of the whole Spanish cabinet, and vented his palliative in a gentle proclamation. Rawleigh having settled his affairs in the west, set off for London to appear before the king, in consequence of the proclamation. A few miles from Plymouth he was met by Sir Lewis Stucley, vice-admiral of Devon, a kinsman and a friend, who, in communication with government, had accepted a sort of *surveillance* over Sir Walter. It is said (and will be credited, when we hear the story of Stucley), that he had set his heart on the *ship*, as a probable good purchase; and on the *person*, against whom, to colour his natural treachery, he professed an old hatred. He first seized on Rawleigh more like the kinsman than the vice-admiral, and proposed travelling together to London, and baiting at the houses of the friends of Rawleigh. The warrant which Stucley in the meanwhile had desired was instantly despatched, and the bearer was one Manoury, a French empiric, who was evidently sent to act the part he did—a part played at all times, and the last title, in French politics, that so often had recourse to this instrument of state, is a *Mouton*!

Rawleigh still, however, was not placed under any harsh restraint: his confidential associate, Captain King, accompanied him; and it is probable, that if Rawleigh had effectuated his escape, he would have conferred a great favour on the government.

They could not save him at London. It is certain that he might have escaped; for Captain King had hired a vessel, and Rawleigh had stolen out

by night, and might have reached it, but irresolutely returned home; another night, the same vessel was ready, but Rawleigh never came! The loss of his honour appeared the greater calamity.

As he advanced in this eventful journey, everything assumed a more formidable aspect. His friends communicated fearful advices; a pursuivant, or king's messenger, gave a more menacing appearance; and suggestions arose in his own mind, that he was reserved to become a victim of state. When letters of commission from the Privy Council were brought to Sir Lewis Stucley, Rawleigh was observed to change countenance, exclaiming with an oath, "Is it possible my fortune should return upon me thus again?" He lamented, before Captain King, that he had neglected the opportunity of escape; and which, every day he advanced inland, removed him the more from any chance.

Rawleigh at first suspected that Manoury was one of those instruments of state who are sometimes employed when open measures are not to be pursued, or when the cabinet have not yet determined on the fate of a person implicated in a state crime; in a word, Rawleigh thought that Manoury was a spy over him, and probably over Stucley too. The first impression in these matters is usually the right one; but when Rawleigh found himself caught in the toils, he imagined that such corrupt agents were to be corrupted. The French empiric was sounded, and found very compliant; Rawleigh was desirous by his aid to counterfeit sickness, and for this purpose invented a series of the most humiliating stratagems. He imagined that a constant appearance of sickness might produce delay, and procrastination, in the chapter of accidents, might end in pardon. He procured vomits from the Frenchman, and, whenever he chose, produced every appearance of sickness; with dimness of sight, dizziness in his head, he reeled about, and once struck himself with such violence against a pillar in the gallery, that there was no doubt of his malady. Rawleigh's servant one

morning entering Stucley's chamber, declared that his master was out of his senses, for that he had just left him in his shirt upon all fours, gnawing the rushes upon the floor. On Stucley's entrance, Rawleigh was raving, and reeling in strong convulsions. Stucley ordered him to be chafed and fomented, and Rawleigh afterwards laughed at this scene with Manoury, observing that he had made Stucley a perfect physician.

But Rawleigh found it required some more visible and alarming disease than such ridiculous scenes had exhibited. The vomits worked so slowly, that Manoury was fearful to repeat the doses. Rawleigh inquired whether the empiric knew of any preparation which could make him look ghastly, without injuring his health. The Frenchman offered a harmless ointment to act on the surface of the skin, which would give him the appearance of a leper. "That will do!" said Rawleigh, "for the lords will be afraid to approach me, and besides it will move their pity." Applying the ointment to his brows, his arms, and his breast, the blisters rose, the skin inflamed, and was covered with purple spots. Stucley concluded that Rawleigh had the plague. Physicians were now to be called in; Rawleigh took the black silk ribbon from his poniard, and Manoury tightened it strongly about his arm, to disorder his pulse; but his pulse beat too strong and regular. He appeared to take no food, while Manoury secretly provided him. To perplex the learned doctors still more, Rawleigh had the urinal coloured by a drug of a strong scent. The physicians pronounced the disease mortal, and that the patient could not be removed into the air without immediate danger. Awhile after, being in his bed-chamber undressed, and no one present but Manoury, Sir Walter held a looking-glass in his hand to admire his spotted face,[72] and observed in merriment to his new confidant, "how they should one day laugh for having thus cozened the king, council, physicians, Spaniards, and all." The excuse Rawleigh offered for this course of poor stratagems, so unworthy of his genius, was to obtain time and seclusion for writing his Apology, or Vindication of his Voyage, which has come down to us in his

“Remains.” “The prophet David did make himself a fool, and suffered spittle to fall upon his beard, to escape from the hands of his enemies,” said Rawleigh in his last speech. Brutus, too, was another example. But his discernment often prevailed over this mockery of his spirit. The king licensed him to reside at his own house on his arrival in London; on which Manoury observed that the king showed by this indulgence that his majesty was favourably inclined towards him; but Rawleigh replied, “They used all these kinds of flatteries to the Duke of Biron, to draw him fairly into prison, and then they cut off his head. I know they have concluded among them that it is expedient that a man should die, to re-assure the traffick which I have broke with Spain.” And Manoury adds, from whose narrative we have all these particulars, that Sir Walter broke out into this rant: “If he could but save himself for this time, he would plot such plots as should make the king think himself happy to send for him again, and restore him to his estate, and would force the King of Spain to write into England in his favour.”

Rawleigh at length proposed a flight to France with Manoury, who declares it was then he revealed to Stucley what he had hitherto concealed, that Stucley might double his vigilance. Rawleigh now perceived that he had two rogues to bribe instead of one, and that they were playing into one another’s hands. Proposals are now made to Stucley through Manoury, who is as compliant as his brother-knave. Rawleigh presented Stucley with a “jewel made in the fashion of hail powdered with diamonds, with a ruby in the midst.” But Stucley observing to his kinsman and friend, that he must lose his office of vice-admiral, which had cost him six hundred pounds, in case he suffered Rawleigh to escape; Rawleigh solemnly assured him that he should be no loser, and that his lady should give him one thousand pounds when they got into France or Holland. About this time the French quack took his leave: the part he had to act was performed: the juggle was complete: and two wretches had triumphed over the sagacity and magnanimity of a sage and a hero, whom misfortune had levelled to folly;

and who, in violating the dignity of his own character, had only equalled himself with vulgar knaves; men who exulted that the circumventer was circumvented; or, as they expressed it, “the great cozener was cozened.” But our story does not here conclude, for the treacheries of Stucley were more intricate. This perfect villain had obtained a warrant of indemnity to authorise his compliance with any offer to assist Rawleigh in his escape; this wretch was the confidant and the executioner of Rawleigh; he carried about him a license to betray him, and was making his profit of the victim before he delivered him to the sacrifice. Rawleigh was still plotting his escape; at Salisbury he had despatched his confidential friend Captain King to London, to secure a boat at Tilbury; he had also a secret interview with the French agent. Rawleigh’s servant mentioned to Captain King, that his boatswain had a ketch[73] of his own, and was ready at his service for “thirty pieces of silver;” the boatswain and Rawleigh’s servant acted Judas, and betrayed the plot to Mr. William Herbert, cousin to Stucley, and thus the treachery was kept among themselves as a family concern. The night for flight was now fixed, but he could not part without his friend Stucley, who had promised never to quit him; and who indeed, informed by his cousin Herbert, had suddenly surprised Rawleigh putting on a false beard. The party met at the appointed place; Sir Lewis Stucley with his son, and Rawleigh disguised. Stucley, in saluting King, asked whether he had not shown himself an honest man? King hoped he would continue so. They had not rowed twenty strokes, before the watermen observed, that Mr. Herbert had lately taken boat, and made towards the bridge, but had returned down the river after them. Rawleigh instantly expressed his apprehensions, and wished to return home; he consulted King—the watermen took fright—Stucley acted his part well; damning his ill-fortune to have a friend whom he would save, so full of doubts and fears, and threatening to pistol the watermen if they did not proceed. Even King was overcome by the earnest conduct of Stucley, and a new spirit was infused into the rowers. As they

drew near Greenwich a wherry crossed them. Rawleigh declared it came to discover them. King tried to allay his fears, and assured him that if once they reached Gravesend, he would hazard his life to get to Tilbury. But in these delays and discussions, the tide was failing; the watermen declared they could not reach Gravesend before morning; Rawleigh would have landed at Purfleet, and the boatswain encouraged him; for there it was thought he could procure horses for Tilbury. Sir Lewis Stucley too was zealous; and declared he was content to carry the cloak-bag on his own shoulders, for half-a-mile, but King declared that it was useless, they could not at that hour get horses to go by land.

They rowed a mile beyond Woolwich, approaching two or three ketches, when the boatswain doubted whether any of these were the one he had provided to furnish them. “We are betrayed!” cried Rawleigh, and ordered the watermen to row back: he strictly examined the boatswain; alas! his ingenuity was baffled by a shuffling villain, whose real answer appeared when a wherry hailed the boat: Rawleigh observed that it contained Herbert’s crew. He saw that all was now discovered. He took Stucley aside; his ingenious mind still suggesting projects for himself to return home in safety, or how Stucley might plead that he had only pretended to go with Rawleigh, to seize on his private papers. They whispered together, and Rawleigh took some things from his pocket, and handed them to Stucley; probably more “rubies powdered with diamonds.”—Some effect was instantaneously produced; for the tender heart of his friend Stucley relented, and he not only repeatedly embraced him with extraordinary warmth of affection, but was voluble in effusions of friendship and fidelity. Stucley persuaded Rawleigh to land at Gravesend, the strange wherry which had dogged them landing at the same time; these were people belonging to Mr. Herbert and Sir William St. John, who, it seems, had formerly shared in the spoils of this unhappy hero. On Greenwich bridge, Stucley advised Captain King that it would be advantageous to Sir Walter, that King should confess

that he had joined with Stucley to betray his master; and Rawleigh lent himself to the suggestion of Stucley, of whose treachery he might still be uncertain; but King, a rough and honest seaman, declared that he would not share in the odium. At the moment he refused, Stucley arrested the captain in the king's name, committing him to the charge of Herbert's men. They then proceeded to a tavern, but Rawleigh, who now viewed the monster in his true shape, observed, "Sir Lewis, these actions will not turn out to your credit;" and on the following day, when they passed through the Tower-gate, Rawleigh, turning to King, observed, "Stucley and my servant Cotterell have betrayed me. You need be in no fear of danger, but as for me, it is I who am the mark that is shot at." Thus concludes the narrative of Captain King. The fate of Rawleigh soon verified the prediction.

This long narrative of treachery will not, however, be complete, unless we wind it up with the fate of the infamous Stucley. Fiction gives perfection to its narratives, by the privilege it enjoys of disposing of its criminals in the most exemplary manner; but the labours of the historian are not always refreshed by this moral pleasure. Retribution is not always discovered in the present stage of human existence, yet history is perhaps equally delightful as fiction, whenever its perfect catastrophes resemble those of romantic invention. The present is a splendid example.

I have discovered the secret history of Sir Lewis Stucley, in several manuscript letters of the times.

Rawleigh, in his admirable address from the scaffold, where he seemed to be rather one of the spectators than the sufferer, declared he forgave Sir Lewis, for he had forgiven all men; but he was bound in charity to caution all men against him, and such as he is! Rawleigh's last and solemn notice of the treachery of his "kinsman and friend" was irrevocably fatal to this wretch. The hearts of the people were open to the deepest impressions of sympathy, melting into tears at the pathetic address of the magnanimous

spirit who had touched them; in one moment Sir Lewis Stucley became an object of execration throughout the nation; he soon obtained a new title, that of “Sir Judas,” and was shunned by every man. To remove the Cain-like mark, which God and men had fixed on him, he published an apology for his conduct; a performance which, at least for its ability, might raise him in our consideration; but I have since discovered, in one of the manuscript letter-writers, that it was written by Dr. Sharpe, who had been a chaplain to Henry Prince of Wales. The writer pleads in Stucley’s justification, that he was a state-agent; that it was lawful to lie for the discovery of treason; that he had a personal hatred towards Rawleigh, for having abridged his father of his share of some prize-money; and then enters more into Rawleigh’s character, who “being desperate of any fortune here, agreeable to the height of his mind, would have made up his fortune elsewhere, upon any terms against his sovereign and his country. Is it not marvel,” continues the personifier of Stucley, “that he was angry with me at his death for bringing him back? Besides, being a man of so great a wit, it was no small grief that a man of mean wit as I should be thought to go beyond him. No? *Sic ars deluditur arte. Neque enim lex justior ulla est quam necis artifices arte perire suâ.* [This apt latinity betrays Dr. Sharpe.] But why did you not execute your commission bravely [openly]?—Why? My commission was to the contrary, to discover his pretensions, and to seize his secret papers,” &c.[74]

But the doctor, though no unskilful writer, here wrote in vain; for what ingenuity can veil the turpitude of long and practised treachery? To keep up appearances, Sir Judas resorted more than usually to court; where, however, he was perpetually enduring rebuffs, or avoided, as one infected with the plague of treachery. He offered the king, in his own justification, to take the sacrament, that whatever he had laid to Rawleigh’s charge was true, and would produce two unexceptionable witnesses to do the like. “Why, then,” replied his majesty, “the more malicious was Sir Walter to utter these

speeches at his death." Sir Thomas Badger, who stood by, observed, "Let the king take off Stucley's head, as Stucley has done Sir Walter's, and let him at his death take the sacrament and his oath upon it, and I'll believe him; but till Stucley loses his head, I shall credit Sir Walter Rawleigh's bare affirmative before a thousand of Stucley's oaths." When Stucley, on pretence of giving an account of his office, placed himself in the audience chamber of the lord admiral, and his lordship passed him without any notice, Sir Judas attempted to address the earl; but with a bitter look his lordship exclaimed—"Base fellow! darest thou, who art the scorn and contempt of men, offer thyself in my presence? Were it not in my own house, I would cudgel thee with my staff for presuming on this sauciness." This annihilating affront Stucley hastened to convey to the king; his majesty answered him—"What wouldst thou have me do? Wouldst thou have me hang him? Of my soul, if I should hang all that speak ill of thee, all the trees of the country would not suffice, so great is the number!"

One of the frequent crimes of that age, ere the forgery of bank-notes existed, was the clipping of gold; and this was one of the private amusements suitable to the character of our Sir Judas. Treachery and forgery are the same crime in a different form. Stucley received out of the exchequer five hundred pounds, as the reward of his *espionnage* and perfidy. It was the price of blood, and was hardly in his hands ere it was turned into the fraudulent coin of "the cheater!" He was seized on in the palace of Whitehall, for diminishing the gold coin. "The manner of the discovery," says the manuscript-writer, "was strange, if my occasions would suffer me to relate the particulars." On his examination he attempted to shift the crime to his own son, who had fled; and on his man, who, being taken, in the words of the letter-writer, was "willing to set the saddle upon the right horse, and accused his master." Manoury, too, the French empiric, was arrested at Plymouth for the same crime, and accused his worthy friend. But such was the interest of Stucley with government, bought, probably, with

his last shilling, and, as one says, with his last shirt, that he obtained his own and his son's pardon, for a crime that ought to have finally concluded the history of this blessed family.[75] A more solemn and tragical catastrophe was reserved for the perfidious Stucley. He was deprived of his place of vice-admiral, and left destitute in the world. Abandoned by all human beings, and most probably by the son whom he had tutored in the arts of villany, he appears to have wandered about, an infamous and distracted beggar. It is possible that even so seared a conscience may have retained some remaining touch of sensibility.

All are men,
Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
THE UNFEELING FOR HIS OWN.

And Camden has recorded, among his historical notes on James the First, that in August, 1620, "Lewis Stucley, who betrayed Sir Walter Rawleigh, died in a manner mad." Such is the catastrophe of one of the most perfect domestic tales; an historical example, not easily paralleled, of moral retribution.

The secret practices of the "Sir Judas" of the court of James the First, which I have discovered, throw light on an old tradition which still exists in the neighbourhood of Affeton, once the residence of this wretched man. The country people have long entertained a notion that a hidden treasure lies at the bottom of a well in his grounds, guarded by some supernatural power: a tradition no doubt originating in this man's history, and an obscure allusion to the gold which Stucley received for his bribe, or the other gold which he clipped, and might have there concealed. This is a striking instance of the many historical facts which, though entirely unknown or forgotten, may be often discovered to lie hid, or disguised, in popular traditions.

66 Rawleigh, as was much practised to a much later period, wrote his name various ways. I have discovered at least how it was pronounced in his time—thus, *Rawly*. This may be additionally confirmed by the Scottish poet Drummond, who spells it (in his conversations with Ben Jonson) *Raughley*. The translation of Ortelius' "Epitome of the Worlde," 1603, is dedicated to Sir Walter *Rawleigh*. See vol. ii. p. 261, art. "Orthography of Proper Names." It was also written *Rawly* by his contemporaries. He sometimes wrote it *Ralegh*, the last syllable probably pronounced *ly*, or *lay*. *Ralegh* appears on his official seal.

67 I shall give in the article "Literary Unions" a curious account how "Rawleigh's History of the World" was composed, which has hitherto escaped discovery.

68 It is narrated in a letter to Sir Robert Cecil from Mr. (afterwards Sir) Arthur Gorges, and runs as follows:—"Upon a report of her majesty's being at Sir George Carew's, Sir W. Ralegh having gazed and sighed a long time at his study window, from whence he might discern the barges and boats about the Blackfriars stairs, suddenly brake out into a great distemper, and sware that his enemies had on purpose brought her majesty thither to break his gall in sunder with Tantalus's torments, that when she went away he might see death before his eyes; with many such like conceits. And, as a man transported with passion, he sware to Sir George Carew that he would disguise himself, and get into a pair of oars to ease his mind but with a sight of the queen, or else he protested his heart would break." This of course the gaoler refused, and so they fell to fighting, "scrambling and brawling like madmen," until parted by Gorges. Sir Walter followed up his absurdity by another letter to Cecil, couched in the language of romance, in which he declares that, while the queen "was yet near at hand, that I might hear of her once in two or three days my sorrows were the less, but now my heart is cast into the depth of all misery."

69 These letters were written by Lord Cecil to Sir Thomas Parry, our ambassador in France, and were transcribed from the copy-book of Sir Thomas Parry's correspondence which is preserved in the Pepysian library at Cambridge.

70 He had undertaken the expedition immediately upon his release from the Tower in 1617. The king had never pardoned him, and his release was effected by bribing powerful court

favourites, who worked upon the avarice of James I. by leading him to hope for the possession of Guiana, which, though discovered by the Spaniards, had never been conquered by them; and which Rawleigh promised to colonise.

71 This occurred during the attack on the town of St. Thomas; a settlement of the Spaniards near the gold mines. It ended disastrously to Rawleigh: his ships mutinied; and he never recovered his ill-fortune; but sailed to Newfoundland, and thence, after a second mutiny, returned to Plymouth.

72 A friend informs me, that he saw recently at a print-dealer's a *painted portrait of Sir Walter Rawleigh, with the face thus spotted*. It is extraordinary that any artist should have chosen such a subject for his pencil; but should this be a portrait of the times, it shows that this strange stratagem had excited public attention.

73 A small coasting-vessel, made round at stem and stern like the Dutch boats. The word is still used in some English counties to denote a *tub*.

74 Stucley's Humble Petition, touching the bringing up Sir W. Rawleigh, 4to. 1618; republished in Somers' Tracts, vol. iii. 751.

75 The anecdotes respecting Stucley I have derived from manuscript letters, and they were considered to be of so dangerous a nature, that the writer recommends secrecy, and requests, after reading, that "they may be burnt." With such injunctions I have generally found that the letters were the more carefully preserved.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF THE LAST HOURS OF SIR WALTER RAWLEIGH.

THE close of the life of Sir Walter Rawleigh was as extraordinary as many parts of his varied history; the promptitude and sprightliness of his genius, his carelessness of life, and the equanimity of this great spirit in quitting the world, can only be paralleled by a few other heroes and sages. Rawleigh was both! But it is not simply his dignified yet active conduct on the scaffold, nor his admirable speech on that occasion, circumstances by which many great men are judged, when their energies are excited for a moment to act so great a part, before the eyes of the world assembled at their feet; it is not these only which claim our notice.

We may pause with admiration on the real grandeur of Rawleigh's character, not from a single circumstance, however great, but from a tissue of continued little incidents, which occurred from the moment of his condemnation till he laid his head on the block. Rawleigh was a man of such mark, that he deeply engaged the attention of his contemporaries; and to this we owe the preservation of several interesting particulars of what he did and what he said, which have entered into his life; but all has not been told in the published narratives. Contemporary writers in their letters have set down every fresh incident, and eagerly caught up his sense, his wit, and, what is more delightful, those marks of the natural cheerfulness of his invariable presence of mind: nor could these have arisen from any affectation or parade, for we shall see that they served him even in his last tender farewell to his lady, and on many unpremeditated occasions.

I have drawn together into a short compass all the facts which my researches have furnished, not omitting those which are known, concerning the feelings and conduct of Rawleigh at these solemn moments of his life;

to have preserved only the new would have been to mutilate the statue, and to injure the whole by an imperfect view.

Rawleigh one morning was taken out of his bed, in a fit of fever, and unexpectedly hurried, not to his trial, but to a sentence of death. The story is well known.—Yet pleading with “a voice grown weak by sickness and an ague he had at that instant on him,” he used every means to avert his fate: he did, therefore, value the life he could so easily part with. His judges, there, at least, respected their state criminal, and they addressed him in a tone far different from that which he had fifteen years before listened to from Coke. Yelverton, the attorney-general, said—“Sir Walter Rawleigh hath been as a star at which the world have gazed; but stars may fall, nay, they must fall, when they trouble the sphere where they abide.” And the lord chief-justice noticed Rawleigh’s great work:—“I know that you have been valiant and wise, and I doubt not but you retain both these virtues, for now you shall have occasion to use them. Your book is an admirable work; I would give you counsel, but I know you can apply unto yourself far better than I am able to give you.” But the judge ended with saying, “execution is granted.” It was stifling Rawleigh with roses! the heroic sage felt as if listening to fame from the voice of death.

He declared that now being old, sickly, and in disgrace, and “certain were he allowed to live, to go to it again, life was wearisome to him, and all he entreated was to have leave to speak freely at his farewell, to satisfy the world that he was ever loyal to the king, and a true lover of the commonwealth; for this he would seal with his blood.”

Rawleigh, on his return to his prison, while some were deploring his fate, observed that “the world itself is but a larger prison, out of which some are daily selected for execution.”

That last night of his existence was occupied by writing what the letter-writer calls “a remembrancer to be left with his lady, to acquaint the world with his sentiments, should he be denied their delivery from the scaffold, as he had been at the bar of the King’s Bench.” His lady visited him that night, and amidst her tears acquainted him that she had obtained the favour of disposing of his body; to which he answered smiling, “It is well, Bess, that thou mayst dispose of that, dead, thou hadst not always the disposing of when it was alive.” At midnight he entreated her to leave him. It must have been then, that, with unshaken fortitude, Rawleigh sat down to compose those verses on his death, which being short, the most appropriate may be repeated.

Even such is Time, that takes on trust
  Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust;
  Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days!

He has added two other lines expressive of his trust in his resurrection. Their authenticity is confirmed by the writer of the present letter, as well as another writer, enclosing “half a dozen verses, which Sir Walter made the night before his death, to take his farewell of poetry, wherein he had been a scribbler even from his youth.” The enclosure is not now with the letter. Chamberlain, the writer, was an intelligent man of the world, but not imbued with any deep tincture of literature. On the same night Rawleigh wrote this distich on the candle burning dimly:—

Cowards fear to die; but courage stout,
Rather than live in snuff, will be put out.

At this solemn moment, before he lay down to rest, and at the instant of parting from his lady, with all his domestic affections still warm, to express his feelings in verse was with him a natural effusion, and one to which he had long been used. It is peculiar in the fate of Rawleigh, that having before suffered a long imprisonment with an expectation of a public death, his mind had been accustomed to its contemplation, and had often dwelt on the event which was now passing. The soul, in its sudden departure, and its future state, is often the subject of his few poems; that most original one of "The Farewell,"

> Go, soul! the body's guest,
> Upon a thankless errand, &c.

is attributed to Rawleigh, though on uncertain evidence. But another, entitled "The Pilgrimage," has this beautiful passage:—

> Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,
> My staff of truth to walk upon,
> My scrip of joy immortal diet;
> My bottle of salvation;
> My gown of glory, Hope's true gage,
> And thus I'll take my pilgrimage—
>
> Whilst my soul, like a quiet palmer,
> Travelleth towards the land of Heaven—

Rawleigh's cheerfulness was so remarkable, and his fearlessness of death so marked, that the Dean of Westminster, who attended him, at first wondering at the hero, reprehended the lightness of his manner, but Rawleigh gave God thanks that he had never feared death, for it was but an

opinion and an imagination; and as for the manner of death, he would rather die so than of a burning fever; and that some might have made shows outwardly, but he felt the joy within. The dean says, that he made no more of his death than if he had been to take a journey: “Not,” said he, “but that I am a great sinner, for I have been a soldier, a seaman, and a courtier.” The writer of a manuscript letter tells us, that the dean declared he died not only religiously, but he found him to be a man as ready and as able to give as to take instruction.

On the morning of his death he smoked, as usual, his favourite tobacco, and when they brought him a cup of excellent sack, being asked how he liked it, Rawleigh answered—“As the fellow, that, drinking of St. Giles’s bowl, as he went to Tyburn, said, ‘that was good drink if a man might tarry by it.’”[76] The day before, in passing from Westminster Hall to the Gate-house, his eye had caught Sir Hugh Beeston in the throng, and calling on him, Rawleigh requested that he would see him die to-morrow. Sir Hugh, to secure himself a seat on the scaffold, had provided himself with a letter to the sheriff, which was not read at the time, and Sir Walter found his friend thrust by, lamenting that he could not get there. “Farewell!” exclaimed Rawleigh, “I know not what shift you will make, but I am sure to have a place.” In going from the prison to the scaffold, among others who were pressing hard to see him, one old man, whose head was bald, came very forward, insomuch that Rawleigh noticed him, and asked “whether he would have aught of him?” The old man answered—“Nothing but to see him, and to pray God for him.” Rawleigh replied—“I thank thee, good friend, and I am sorry I have no better thing to return thee for thy good will.” Observing his bald head, he continued, “but take this night-cap (which was a very rich wrought one that he wore), for thou hast more need of it now than I.”

His dress, as was usual with him, was elegant, if not rich.[77] Oldys describes it, but mentions, that "he had a wrought nightcap under his hat;" this we have otherwise disposed of; he wore a ruff-band, a black wrought velvet night-gown over a hare-coloured satin doublet, and a black wrought waistcoat; black cut taffety breeches, and ash-coloured silk stockings.

He ascended the scaffold with the same cheerfulness as he had passed to it; and observing the lords seated at a distance, some at windows, he requested they would approach him, as he wished that they should all witness what he had to say. The request was complied with by several. His speech is well known; but some copies contain matters not in others. When he finished, he requested Lord Arundel that the king would not suffer any libels to defame him after death.—"And now I have a long journey to go, and must take my leave." "He embraced all the lords and other friends with such courtly compliments, as if he had met them at some feast," says a letter-writer. Having taken off his gown, he called to the headsman to show him the axe, which not being instantly done, he repeated, "I prithee let me see it, dost thou think that I am afraid of it?" He passed the edge lightly over his finger, and smiling, observed to the sheriff, "This is a sharp medicine, but a sound cure for all diseases," and kissing it laid it down. Another writer has, "This is that that will cure all sorrows." After this he went to three several corners of the scaffold, and kneeling down, desired all the people to pray for him, and recited a long prayer to himself. When he began to fit himself for the block, he first laid himself down to try how the block fitted him; after rising up, the executioner kneeled down to ask his forgiveness, which Rawleigh with an embrace gave, but entreated him not to strike till he gave a token by lifting up his hand, "*and then, fear not, but strike home!*" When he laid his head down to receive the stroke, the executioner desired him to lay his face towards the east. "It was no great matter which way a man's head stood, so that the heart lay right," said Rawleigh; but these were not his last words. He was once more to speak in

this world with the same intrepidity he had lived in it—for, having lain some minutes on the block in prayer, he gave the signal; but the executioner, either unmindful, or in fear, failed to strike, and Rawleigh, after once or twice putting forth his hands, was compelled to ask him, “Why dost thou not strike? Strike! man!” In two blows he was beheaded; but from the first his body never shrunk from the spot by any discomposure of his posture, which, like his mind, was immovable.

“In all the time he was upon the scaffold, and before,” says one of the manuscript letter-writers, “there appeared not the least alteration in him, either in his voice or countenance; but he seemed as free from all manner of apprehension as if he had been come thither rather to be a spectator than a sufferer; nay, the beholders seemed much more sensible than did he, so that he hath purchased here in the opinion of men such honour and reputation, as it is thought his greatest enemies are they that are most sorrowful for his death, which they see is like to turn so much to his advantage.”

The people were deeply affected at the sight, and so much, that one said that “we had not such another head to cut off;” and another “wished the head and brains to be upon Secretary Naunton’s shoulders.” The observer suffered for this; he was a wealthy citizen, and great newsmonger, and one who haunted Paul’s Walk. Complaint was made, and the citizen was summoned to the Privy Council. He pleaded that he intended no disrespect to Mr. Secretary, but only spoke in reference to the old proverb, that “two heads were better than one!” His excuse was allowed at the moment; but when afterwards called on for a contribution to St. Paul’s Cathedral, and having subscribed a hundred pounds, the Secretary observed to him, that “two are better than one, Mr. Wiemark!” Either from fear or charity, the witty citizen doubled his subscription.[78]

Thus died this glorious and gallant cavalier, of whom Osborne says, “His death was managed by him with so high and religious a resolution, as if a

Roman had acted a Christian, or rather a Christian a Roman."[79]

After having read the preceding article, we are astonished at the greatness, and the variable nature of this extraordinary man and this happy genius. With Gibbon, who once meditated to write his life, we may pause, and pronounce "his character ambiguous;" but we shall not hesitate to decide that Rawleigh knew better how to die than to live. "His glorious hours," says a contemporary, "were his arraignment and execution;" but never will be forgotten the intermediate years of his lettered imprisonment; the imprisonment of the learned may sometimes be their happiest leisure.

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76 In the old time, when prisoners were conveyed from Newgate to Tyburn, they stopped about midway at the "Old Hospital," at St. Giles's-in-the-fields, "and," says Stow, "were presented with a great bowl of ale, thereof to drink at their pleasure, as to be their last refreshment in this life."

77 Rawleigh's love of dress is conspicuous in the early portraits of him we possess, and particularly so in the one engraved by Lodge.

78 The general impression was so much in disfavour of this judicial murder, that James thought it politic to publish an 8vo pamphlet, in 1618, entitled, "A Declaration of the Demeanor and Cariage of Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight, as well in his Voyage, as in and sithence his Returne: and of the true motives and inducements which occasioned his Maiestie to proceed in doing justice upon him, as hath beene done." It takes the whole question apologetically of the licence given him to Guiana, "as his Majestie's honour was in a manner engaged, not to deny unto his people the adventure and hope of such great riches" as the mines of that island might yield. It afterwards details his proceedings there, which are declared criminal, dangerous to his Majesty's allies, and an abuse of his commission. It ends by defending his execution, "because he could not by law be judicially called in question, for that his former attainder of treason is the highest and last worke of the law (whereby hee was *civiliter mortuus*) his Maiestie was enforced (except attainders should become priviledges for all subsequent offences) to resolve to have him executed upon his former attainder."

79 The chief particulars in this narrative are drawn from two manuscript letters of the day, in the Sloane Collection, under their respective dates, Nov. 3, 1618, Larkin to Sir Thos. Pickering; Oct. 13, 1618, Chamberlain's letters.

LITERARY UNIONS.

SECRET HISTORY OF RAWLEIGH'S HISTORY OF THE WORLD, AND VASARI'S LIVES.

A UNION of talents, differing in their qualities, might carry some important works to a more extended perfection. In a work of great enterprise, the aid of a friendly hand may be absolutely necessary to complete the labours of the projector, who may have neither the courage, the leisure, nor all necessary acquisitions for performing the favourite task which he has otherwise matured. Many great works, commenced by a master-genius, have remained unfinished, or have been deficient for want of this friendly succour. The public would have been grateful to Johnson, had he united in his dictionary the labours of some learned etymologist. Speed's Chronicle owes most of its value, as it does its ornaments, to the hand of Sir Robert Cotton, and other curious researchers, who contributed entire portions. Goguet's esteemed work of the "Origin of the Arts and Sciences" was greatly indebted to the fraternal zeal of a devoted friend. The still valued books of the Port Royal Society were all formed by this happy union. The

secret history of many eminent works would show the advantages which may be derived from that combination of talents, differing in their nature. Cumberland's masterly versions of the fragments of the Greek dramatic poets would never have been given to the poetical world, had he not accidentally possessed the manuscript notes of his relative, the learned Bentley. This treasure supplied that research in the most obscure works, which the volatile studies of Cumberland could never have explored; a circumstance which he concealed from the world, proud of the Greek erudition which he thus cheaply possessed. Yet by this literary union, Bentley's vast erudition made those researches which Cumberland could not; and Cumberland gave the nation a copy of the domestic drama of Greece, of which Bentley was incapable.

There is a large work, which is still celebrated, of which the composition has excited the astonishment even of the philosophic Hume, but whose secret history remains yet to be disclosed. This extraordinary volume is "The History of the World by Rawleigh." I shall transcribe Hume's observations, that the reader may observe the literary phenomenon. "They were struck with the extensive genius of the man, who being educated amidst naval and military enterprises, *had surpassed in the pursuits of literature, even those of the most recluse and sedentary lives*; and they admired his unbroken magnanimity, which at his age, and under his circumstances, could engage him to undertake and execute so great a work, as his History of the World." Now when the truth is known, the wonderful in this literary mystery will disappear, except in the eloquent, the grand, and the pathetic passages interspersed in that venerable volume. We may, indeed, pardon the astonishment of our calm philosopher, when we consider the recondite matter contained in this work, and recollect the little time which this adventurous spirit, whose life was passed in fabricating his own fortune, and in perpetual enterprise, could allow to such erudite pursuits. Where could Rawleigh obtain that familiar acquaintance with the rabbins,

of whose language he was probably entirely ignorant? His numerous publications, the effusions of a most active mind, though excellent in their kind, were evidently composed by one who was not abstracted in curious and remote inquiries, but full of the daily business and the wisdom of human life. His confinement in the Tower, which lasted several years, was indeed sufficient for the composition of this folio volume, and of a second which appears to have occupied him. But in that imprisonment it singularly happened that he lived among literary characters with most intimate friendship. There he joined the Earl of Northumberland, the patron of the philosophers of his age, and with whom Rawleigh pursued his chemical studies; and Serjeant Hoskins, a poet and a wit, and the poetical "father" of Ben Jonson, who acknowledged that "It was Hoskins who had polished him;" and that Rawleigh often consulted Hoskins on his literary works, I learn from a manuscript. But however literary the atmosphere of the Tower proved to Rawleigh, no particle of Hebrew, and perhaps little of Grecian lore, floated from a chemist and a poet. The truth is, that the collection of the materials of this history was the labour of several persons, who have not all been discovered. It has been ascertained that Ben Jonson was a considerable contributor; and there was an English philosopher from whom Descartes, it is said even by his own countrymen, borrowed largely—Thomas Hariot, whom Anthony Wood charges with infusing into Rawleigh's volume philosophical notions, while Rawleigh was composing his History of the World. But if Rawleigh's *pursuits surpassed even those of the most recluse and sedentary lives*, as Hume observes, we must attribute this to a "Dr. Robert Burrel, Rector of Northwald, in the county of Norfolk, who was a great favourite of Sir Walter Rawleigh, and had been his chaplain. All, or the greatest part of the drudgery of Sir Walter's History for criticisms, chronology, and reading Greek and Hebrew authors, was performed by him for Sir Walter."[80] Thus a simple fact, when discovered, clears up the whole mystery; and we learn how that knowledge was

acquired, which, as Hume sagaciously detected, required “a recluse and sedentary life,” such as the studies and the habits of a country clergyman would have been in a learned age.

The secret history of another work, still more celebrated than the History of the World, by Sir Walter Rawleigh, will doubtless surprise its numerous admirers.

Without the aid of a friendly hand, we should probably have been deprived of the delightful History of Artists by Vasari: although a mere painter and goldsmith, and not a literary man, Vasari was blessed with the nice discernment of one deeply conversant with art, and saw rightly what was to be done, when the idea of the work was suggested by the celebrated Paulus Jovius as a supplement to his own work of the “Eulogiums of Illustrious Men.” Vasari approved of the project; but on that occasion judiciously observed, not blinded by the celebrity of the literary man who projected it, that “It would require the assistance of an artist to collect the materials, and arrange them in their proper order; for although Jovius displayed great knowledge in his observations, yet he had not been equally accurate in the arrangement of his facts in his book of Eulogiums.” Afterwards, when Vasari began to collect his information, and consulted Paulus Jovius on the plan, although that author highly approved of what he saw, he alleged his own want of leisure and ability to complete such an enterprise; and this was fortunate: we should otherwise have had, instead of the rambling spirit which charms us in the volumes of Vasari, the verbose babble of a declaimer. Vasari, however, looked round for the assistance he wanted; a circumstance which Tiraboschi has not noticed: like Hogarth, he required a literary man for his scribe. I have discovered the name of the chief writer of the Lives of the Painters, who wrote under the direction of Vasari, and probably often used his own natural style, and conveyed to us those reflections which surely come from their source. I shall give the

passage, as a curious instance where the secret history of books is often detected in the most obscure corners of research. Who could have imagined that in a collection of the lives *de' Santi e Beati dell' Ordine de' Predicatori*, we are to look for the writer of Vasari's lives? Don Serafini Razzi, the author of this ecclesiastical biography, has this reference: "Who would see more of this may turn to the Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects, *written for the greater part by Don Silvano Razzi*, my brother, for the Signor Cavaliere M. Giorgio Vasari, his great friend."[81]

The discovery that Vasari's volumes were not entirely written by himself, though probably under his dictation, and unquestionably, with his communications, as we know that Dr. Morell wrote the "Analysis of Beauty" for Hogarth, will perhaps serve to clear up some unaccountable mistakes or omissions which appear in that series of volumes, written at long intervals, and by different hands. Mr. Fuseli has alluded to them in utter astonishment; and cannot account for Vasari's "incredible dereliction of reminiscence, which prompted him to transfer what he had rightly ascribed to Giorgione in one edition to the elder Parma in the subsequent ones." Again: "Vasari's memory was either so treacherous, or his rapidity in writing so inconsiderate, that his account of the Capella Sistina, and the stanze of Raffaello, is a mere heap of errors and unpardonable confusion." Even Bottari, his learned editor, is at a loss how to account for his mistakes. Mr. Fuseli finely observes—"He has been called the Herodotus of our art; and if the main simplicity of his narrative, and the desire of heaping anecdote on anecdote, entitle him in some degree to that appellation, we ought not to forget that the information of every day adds something to the authenticity of the Greek historian, whilst every day furnishes matter to question the credibility of the Tuscan." All this strongly confirms the suspicion that Vasari employed different hands at different times to write out his work. Such mistakes would occur to a new writer, not always conversant with the subject he was composing on, and the disjointed

materials of which were often found in a disordered state. It is, however, strange that neither Bottari nor Tiraboschi appears to have been aware that Vasari employed others to write for him; we see that from the first suggestion of the work he had originally proposed that Paulus Jovius should hold the pen for him.

The principle illustrated in this article might be pursued; but the secret history of two great works so well known is as sufficient as twenty others of writings less celebrated. The literary phenomenon which had puzzled the calm inquiring Hume to cry out "a miracle!" has been solved by the discovery of a little fact on Literary Unions, which derives importance from this circumstance.[82]

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80 I draw my information from a very singular manuscript in the Lansdowne collection, which I think has been mistaken for a boy's ciphering book, of which it has much the appearance, No. 741, fo. 57, as it stands in the auctioneer's catalogue. It appears to be a collection closely written, extracted out of Anthony Wood's papers; and as I have discovered in the manuscript numerous notices not elsewhere preserved, I am inclined to think that the transcriber copied them from that mass of Anthony Wood's papers, of which more than one sackful was burnt at his desire before him when dying. If it be so, this MS. is the only register of many curious facts.

Ben Jonson has been too freely censured for his own free censures, and particularly for one he made on Sir Walter Rawleigh, who, he told Drummond, "esteemed more fame than conscience. *The best wits in England were employed in making his History;* Ben himself had written a piece to him of the Punic War, which he altered and set in his book." Jonson's powerful advocate, Mr. Gifford, has not alleged a word in the defence of our great bard's free conversational strictures; the secret history of Rawleigh's great work had never been discovered; on this occasion, however, Jonson only spoke what he knew to be true—and there may have been other truths, in those conversations which were set down at random by Drummond, who may have chiefly recollected the satirical touches.

81 I find this quotation in a sort of polemical work of natural philosophy, entitled “Saggio di Storia Litteraria Fiorentina del Secolo XVII. da Giovanne Clemente Nelli,” Lucca, 1759, p. 58. Nelli also refers to what he had said on this subject in his *Piante ad alzati di S.M. del Fiore*, p. vi. e vii.; a work on architecture. See Brunet; and Haym, *Bib. Ital. de Libri rari*.

82 Mr. Patrick Fraser Tytler, in his recent biography of Sir Walter Rawleigh, a work of vigorous research and elegant composition, has dedicated to me a supernumerary article in his Appendix, entitled *Mr. D’Israeli’s Errors*!

He has inferred from the present article, that I denied that Rawleigh was the writer of his own great work!—because I have shown how great works may be advantageously pursued by the aid of “Literary Union.” It is a monstrous inference! The chimera which plays before his eyes is his own contrivance; he starts at his own phantasmagoria, and leaves me, after all, to fight with his shadow.

Mr. Tytler *has not contradicted a single statement of mine*. I have carefully read his article and my own, and I have made no alteration.

I may be allowed to add that there is much redundant matter in the article of Mr. Tytler; and, to use the legal style, there is much “impertinence,” which, with a little candour and more philosophy, he would strike his pen through, as sound lawyers do on these occasions.

OF A BIOGRAPHY PAINTED.

There are objects connected with literary curiosity, whose very history, though they may never gratify our sight, is literary; and the originality of

their invention, should they excite imitation, may serve to constitute a class. I notice a book-curiosity of this nature.

This extraordinary volume may be said to have contained the travels and adventures of Charles Magius, a noble Venetian; and this volume, so precious, consisted only of eighteen pages, composed of a series of highly-finished miniature paintings on vellum, some executed by the hand of Paul Veronese. Each page, however, may be said to contain many chapters; for, generally, it is composed of a large centre-piece, surrounded by ten small ones, with many apt inscriptions, allegories, and allusions; the whole exhibiting romantic incidents in the life of this Venetian nobleman. But it is not merely as a beautiful production of art that we are to consider it; it becomes associated with a more elevated feeling in the occasion which produced it. The author, who is himself the hero, after having been long calumniated, resolved to set before the eyes of his accusers the sufferings and adventures he could perhaps have but indifferently described: and instead of composing a tedious volume for his justification, invented this new species of pictorial biography. The author minutely described the remarkable situations in which fortune had placed him; and the artists, in embellishing the facts he furnished them with to record, emulated each other in giving life to their truth, and putting into action, before the spectator, incidents which the pen had less impressively exhibited. This unique production may be considered as a model to represent the actions of those who may succeed more fortunately by this new mode of perpetuating their history; discovering, by the aid of the pencil, rather than by their pen, the forms and colours of an extraordinary life.

It was when the Ottomans (about 1571) attacked the Isle of Cyprus, that this Venetian nobleman was charged by his republic to review and repair the fortifications. He was afterwards sent to the pope to negociate an alliance: he returned to the senate to give an account of his commission. Invested

with the chief command, at the head of his troops, Magius threw himself into the island of Cyprus, and after a skilful defence, which could not prevent its fall, at Famagusta he was taken prisoner by the Turks, and made a slave. His age and infirmities induced his master, at length, to sell him to some Christian merchants; and after an absence of several years from his beloved Venice, he suddenly appeared, to the astonishment and mortification of a party who had never ceased to calumniate him; while his own noble family were compelled to preserve an indignant silence, having had no communications with their lost and enslaved relative. Magius now returned to vindicate his honour, to reinstate himself in the favour of the senate, and to be restored to a venerable parent amidst his family; to whom he introduced a fresh branch, in a youth of seven years old, the child of his misfortunes, who, born in trouble, and a stranger to domestic endearments, was at one moment united to a beloved circle of relations.

I shall give a rapid view of some of the pictures of this Venetian nobleman's life. The whole series has been elaborately drawn up by the Duke de la Vallière, the celebrated book-collector, who dwells on the detail with the curiosity of an amateur.[83]

In a rich frontispiece, a Christ is expiring on the cross; Religion, leaning on a column, contemplates the Divinity, and Hope is not distant from her. The genealogical tree of the house of Magius, with an allegorical representation of Venice, its nobility, power, and riches: the arms of Magius, in which is inserted a view of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, of which he was made a knight; his portrait, with a Latin inscription: "I have passed through arms and the enemy, amidst fire and water, and the Lord conducted me to a safe asylum, in the year of grace 1571." The portrait of his son, aged seven years, finished with the greatest beauty, and supposed to have come from the hand of Paul Veronese; it bears this inscription: "Overcome by violence and artifice, almost dead before his birth, his mother was at

length delivered of him, full of life, with all the loveliness of infancy; under the divine protection, his birth was happy, and his life with greater happiness shall be closed with good fortune."

A plan of the Isle of Cyprus, where Magius commanded, and his first misfortune happened, his slavery by the Turks.—The painter has expressed this by an emblem of a tree shaken by the winds and scathed by the lightning; but from the trunk issues a beautiful green branch shining in a brilliant sun, with this device—"From this fallen trunk springs a branch full of vigour."

The missions of Magius to raise troops in the province of La Puglia.—In one of these Magius is seen returning to Venice; his final departure,—a thunderbolt is viewed falling on his vessel—his passage by Corfu and Zante, and his arrival at Candia.

His travels to Egypt.—The centre figure represents this province raising its right hand extended towards a palm-tree, and the left leaning on a pyramid, inscribed "Celebrated throughout the world for her wonders." The smaller pictures are the entrance of Magius into the port of Alexandria; Rosetta, with a caravan of Turks and different nations; the city of Grand Cairo, exterior and interior, with views of other places; and finally, his return to Venice.

His journey to Rome.—The centre figure an armed Pallas seated on trophies, the Tyber beneath her feet, a globe in her hands, inscribed *Quod rerum victrix ac domina*,—"Because she is the Conqueress and Mistress of the World." The ten small pictures are views of the cities in the pope's dominion. His first audience at the conclave forms a pleasing and fine composition.

His travels into Syria.—The principal figure is a female, emblematical of that fine country; she is seated in the midst of a gay orchard, and embraces

a bundle of roses, inscribed *Mundi deliciæ*—"The delight of the universe." The small compartments are views of towns and ports, and the spot where Magius collected his fleet.

His pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where he was made a knight of the Holy Sepulchre.—The principal figure represents Devotion, inscribed *Ducit*—"It is she who conducts me." The compartments exhibit a variety of objects, with a correctness of drawing which is described as belonging to the class, and partaking of the charms of the pencil of Claude Lorraine. His vessel is first viewed in the roadstead at Venice beat by a storm; arrives at Zante to refresh; enters the port of Simiso; there having landed, he and his companions are proceeding to the town on asses, for Christians were not permitted to travel in Turkey on horses. In the church at Jerusalem the bishop, in his pontifical habit, receives him as a knight of the Holy Sepulchre, arraying him in the armour of Godfrey of Bouillon, and placing his sword in the hands of Magius. His arrival at Bethlehem, to see the cradle of the Lord—and his return by Jaffa with his companions, in the dress of pilgrims; the groups are finely contrasted with the Turks mingling amongst them.

The taking of the city of Famagusta, and his slavery.—The middle figure, with a dog at its feet, represents Fidelity, the character of Magius, who ever preferred it to his life or his freedom, inscribed *Captivat*—"She has reduced me to slavery." Six smaller pictures exhibit the different points of the island of Cyprus where the Turks effected their descents. Magius retreating to Famagusta, which he long defended, and where his cousin, a skilful engineer, was killed. The Turks compelled to raise the siege, but return with greater forces—the sacking of the town and the palace, where Magius was taken.—One picture exhibits him brought before a bashaw, who has him stripped, to judge of his strength and fix his price, when, after examination, he is sent among other slaves. He is seen bound and tied up among his

companions in misfortune—again he is forced to labour, and carries a cask of water on his shoulders.—In another picture, his master, finding him weak of body, conducts him to a slave-merchant to sell him. In another we see him leading an ass loaded with packages; his new master, finding him loitering on his way, showers his blows on him, while a soldier is seen purloining one of the packages from the ass. Another exhibits Magius sinking with fatigue on the sands, while his master would raise him up by an unsparing use of the bastinado. The varied details of these little paintings are pleasingly executed.

The close of his slavery.—The middle figure kneeling to Heaven, and a light breaking from it, inscribed, "He breaks my chains," to express the confidence of Magius. The Turks are seen landing with their pillage and their slaves.—In one of the pictures are seen two ships on fire; a young lady of Cyprus preferring death to the loss of her honour and the miseries of slavery, determined to set fire to the vessel in which she was carried; she succeeded, and the flames communicated to another.

His return to Venice.—The painter for his principal figure has chosen a Pallas, with a helmet on her head, the ægis on one arm, and her lance in the other, to describe the courage with which Magius had supported his misfortunes, inscribed *Reducit*—"She brings me back." In the last of the compartments he is seen at the custom-house at Venice; he enters the house of his father; the old man hastens to meet him, and embraces him.

One page is filled by a single picture, which represents the senate of Venice, with the Doge on his throne; Magius presents an account of his different employments, and holds in his hand a scroll, on which is written, *Quod commisisti perfeci; quod restat agendum, pare fide complectar*—"I have done what you committed to my care; and I will perform with the same fidelity what remains to be done." He is received by the senate with

the most distinguished honours, and is not only justified, but praised and honoured.

The most magnificent of these paintings is the one attributed to Paul Veronese. It is described by the Duke de la Vallière as almost unparalleled for its richness, its elegance, and its brilliancy. It is inscribed *Pater meus et fratres mei dereliquerunt me; Dominus autem assumpsit me!*—"My father and my brothers abandoned me; but the Lord took me under his protection." This is an allusion to the accusation raised against him in the open senate when the Turks took the Isle of Cyprus, and his family wanted either the confidence or the courage to defend Magius. In the front of this large picture, Magius leading his son by the hand, conducts him to be reconciled with his brothers and sisters-in-law, who are on the opposite side; his hand holds this scroll, *Vos cogitastis de me malum; sed Deus convertit illud in bonum*—"You thought ill of me; but the Lord has turned it to good." In this he alludes to the satisfaction he had given the senate, and to the honours they had decreed him. Another scene is introduced, where Magius appears in a magnificent hall at a table in the midst of all his family, with whom a general reconciliation has taken place: on his left hand are gardens opening with an enchanting effect, and magnificently ornamented, with the villa of his father, on which flowers and wreaths seem dropping on the roof, as if from heaven. In the perspective, the landscape probably represents the rural neighbourhood of Magius's early days.

Such are the most interesting incidents which I have selected from the copious description of the Duke de la Vallière. The idea of this production is new: an autobiography in a series of remarkable scenes, painted under the eye of the describer of them, in which, too, he has preserved all the fulness of his feelings and his minutest recollections; but the novelty becomes interesting from the character of the noble Magius, and the romantic fancy which inspired this elaborate and costly curiosity. It was not, indeed,

without some trouble that I have drawn up this little account; but while thus employed, I seemed to be composing a very uncommon romance.

83 The Duke's description is not to be found, as might be expected, in his own valued catalogue, but was a contribution to Gaignat's, ii. 16, where it occupies fourteen pages. This singular work sold at Gaignat's sale for 902 livres. It was then the golden age of literary curiosity, when the rarest things were not ruinous; and that price was even then considered extraordinary, though the work was an unique. It must consist of about 180 subjects, by Italian artists.

CAUSE AND PRETEXT.

It is an important principle in morals and in politics, not to mistake the cause for the pretext, nor the pretext for the cause, and by this means to distinguish between the concealed and the ostensible motive. On this principle, history might be recomposed in a new manner; it would not often describe *circumstances* and *characters* as they usually appear. When we mistake the characters of men, we mistake the nature of their actions; and we shall find in the study of secret history, that some of the most important events in modern history were produced from very different motives than their ostensible ones. Polybius, the most philosophical writer of the ancients, has marked out this useful distinction of *cause* and *pretext*, and aptly illustrates the observation by the facts which he explains. Amilcar, for

instance, was the first author and contriver of the second Punic war, though he died ten years before the commencement of it. “A statesman,” says the wise and grave historian, “who knows not how to trace the origin of events, and discern the different sources from whence they take their rise, may be compared to a physician who neglects to inform himself of the causes of those distempers which he is called in to cure. Our pains can never be better employed than in searching out the causes of events; for the most trifling incidents give birth to matters of the greatest moment and importance.” The latter part of this remark of Polybius points out another principle which has been often verified by history, and which furnished the materials of the little book of “Grands Evénemens par les petites Causes.”

Our present inquiry concerns “cause and pretext.”

Leo X. projected an alliance of the sovereigns of Christendom against the Turks. The avowed object was to oppose the progress of the Ottomans against the Mamelukes of Egypt, who were more friendly to the Christians; but the concealed motive with his holiness was to enrich himself and his family with the spoils of Christendom, and to aggrandise the papal throne by war; and such, indeed, the policy of these pontiffs had always been in those mad crusades which they excited against the East.

The Reformation, excellent as its results have proved in the cause of genuine freedom, originated in no purer source than human passions and selfish motives: it was the progeny of avarice in Germany, of novelty in France, and of love in England. The latter is elegantly alluded to by Gray—

> And gospel-light first beam’d from Bullen’s eyes.

The Reformation is considered by the Duke of Nevers, in a work printed in 1590, as it had been by Francis I., in his Apology in 1537, as a *coup-d’état* of Charles V. towards universal monarchy. The duke says, that the emperor

silently permitted Luther to establish his principles in Germany, that they might split the confederacy of the elective princes, and by this division facilitate their more easy conquest, and play them off one against another, and by these means to secure the imperial crown hereditary in the house of Austria. Had Charles V. not been the mere creature of his politics, and had he felt any zeal for the Catholic cause, which he pretended to fight for, never would he have allowed the new doctrines to spread for more than twenty years without the least opposition.

The famous League in France was raised for "religion and the relief of public grievances;" such was the pretext! After the princes and the people had alike become its victims, this "league" was discovered to have been formed by the pride and the ambition of the Guises, aided by the machinations of the Jesuits against the attempts of the Prince of Condé to dislodge them from their "seat of power." While the Huguenots pillaged, burnt, and massacred, declaring in their manifestoes that they were only fighting to *release the king*, whom they asserted was a prisoner of the Guises, the Catholics repaid them with the same persecution and the same manifestoes, declaring that they only wished *to liberate the Prince of Condé*, who was the prisoner of the Huguenots. The people were led on by the cry of "religion;" but this civil war was not in reality so much Catholic against Huguenot, as Guise against Condé. A parallel event occurred between our Charles I. and the Scotch Covenanters; and the king expressly declared, in "a large declaration, concerning the late tumults in Scotland," that "religion is only *pretended*, and used by them as a cloak to palliate their *intended rebellion*," which he demonstrated by the facts he alleged. There was a revolutionary party in France, which, taking the name of *Frondeurs*, shook that kingdom under the administration of Cardinal Mazarin, and held out for their pretext the public freedom. But that faction, composed of some of the discontented French princes and the mob, was entirely organized by Cardinal de Retz, who held them in hand, to check or to spur them as the

occasion required, from a mere personal pique against Mazarin, who had not treated that vivacious genius with all the deference he exacted. This appears from his own Memoirs.

We have smiled at James I. threatening the States-general by the English ambassador, about Vorstius, a Dutch professor, who had espoused the doctrines of Arminius against those of the contra-remonstrants, or Calvinists; the ostensible subject was religious, or rather metaphysical-religious doctrines, but the concealed one was a struggle for predominance between the Pensionary Barnevelt, assisted by the French interest, and the Prince of Orange, supported by the English. “These were the real sources,” says Lord Hardwicke, a statesman and a man of letters, deeply conversant with secret and public history, and a far more able judge than Diodati the Swiss divine, and Brandt the ecclesiastical historian, who in the synod of Dort could see nothing but what appeared in it, and gravely narrated the idle squabbles on phrases concerning predestination or grace. Hales, of Eaton, who was secretary to the English ambassador at this synod, perfectly accords with the account of Lord Hardwicke. “Our synod,” writes that judicious observer, “goes on like a watch; the main wheels upon which the whole business turns are least in sight; for all things of moment are acted in private sessions; *what is done in public is only for show and entertainment*.”

The *cause* of the persecution of the Jansenists was the jealousy of the Jesuits; the *pretext* was *la grace suffisante*. The learned La Croze observes, that the same circumstance occurred in the affair of Nestorius and the church of Alexandria; the pretext was orthodoxy, the cause was the jealousy of the church of Alexandria, or rather the fiery and turbulent Cyril, who personally hated Nestorius. The opinions of Nestorius, and the council which condemned them, were the same in effect. I only produce this remote fact to prove that ancient times do not alter the truth of our principle.

When James II. was so strenuous an advocate for *toleration* and *liberty of conscience* in removing the Test Act, this enlightened principle of government was only a *pretext* with that monk-ridden monarch; it is well known that the *cause* was to introduce and make the Catholics predominant in his councils and government. The result, which that eager and blind politician hurried on too fast, and which therefore did not take place, would have been that "liberty of conscience" would soon have become an "overt act of treason" before an inquisition of his Jesuits!

In all political affairs drop the *pretexts* and strike at the *causes*; we may thus understand what the heads of parties may choose to conceal.

POLITICAL FORGERIES AND FICTIONS.

A WRITER, whose learning gives value to his eloquence, in his Bampton Lectures has censured, with that liberal spirit so friendly to the cause of truth, the calumnies and rumours of parties, which are still industriously retailed, though they have been often confuted. Forged documents are still referred to, or tales unsupported by evidence are confidently quoted. Mr. Heber's subject confined his inquiries to theological history; he has told us that "Augustin is not ashamed, in his dispute with Faustus, to take advantage of the popular slanders against the followers of Manes, though his own experience (for he had himself been of that sect) was sufficient to detect this falsehood." The Romanists, in spite of satisfactory answers, have

continued to urge against the English protestant the romance of Parker's consecration;[84] while the protestant persists in falsely imputing to the catholic public formularies the systematic omission of the second commandment. "The calumnies of Rimius and Stinstra against the Moravian brethren are cases in point," continues Mr. Heber. "No one now believes them, yet they once could deceive even Warburton!" We may also add the obsolete calumny of Jews crucifying boys—of which a monument raised to Hugh of Lincoln perpetuates the memory, and which a modern historian records without any scruple of doubt; several authorities, which are cited on this occasion, amount only to the single one of Matthew Paris, who gives it as a popular rumour. Such accusations usually happened when the Jews were too rich and the king was too poor![85]

The falsehoods and forgeries raised by parties are overwhelming! It startles a philosopher, in the calm of his study, when he discovers how writers, who, we may presume, are searchers after truth, should, in fact, turn out to be searchers after the grossest fictions. This alters the habits of the literary man: it is an unnatural depravity of his pursuits—and it proves that the personal is too apt to predominate over the literary character.

I have already touched on the main point of the present article in the one on "Political Nicknames." I have there shown how political calumny appears to have been reduced into an art; one of its branches would be that of converting forgeries and fictions into historical authorities.

When one nation is at war with another, there is no doubt that the two governments connive at, and often encourage, the most atrocious libels on each other, to madden the people to preserve their independence, and contribute cheerfully to the expenses of the war. France and England formerly complained of Holland—the Athenians employed the same policy against the Macedonians and Persians. Such is the origin of a vast number of supposititious papers and volumes, which sometimes, at a remote date,

confound the labours of the honest historian, and too often serve the purposes of the dishonest, with whom they become authorities. The crude and suspicious libels which were drawn out of their obscurity in Cromwell's time against James the First have overloaded the character of that monarch, yet are now eagerly referred to by party writers, though in their own days they were obsolete and doubtful. During the civil wars of Charles the First such spurious documents exist in the forms of speeches which were never spoken; of letters never written by the names subscribed; printed declarations never declared; battles never fought, and victories never obtained! Such is the language of Rushworth, who complains of this evil spirit of party forgeries, while he is himself suspected of having rescinded or suppressed whatever was not agreeable to his patron Cromwell. A curious, and perhaps a necessary list might be drawn up of political forgeries of our own, which have been sometimes referred to as genuine, but which are the inventions of wits and satirists! Bayle ingeniously observes, that at the close of every century such productions should be branded by a skilful discriminator, to save the future inquirer from errors he can hardly avoid. "How many are still kept in error by the satires of the sixteenth century! Those of the present age will be no less active in future ages, for they will still be preserved in public libraries."

The art and skill with which some have fabricated a forged narrative render its detection almost hopeless. When young Maitland, the brother to the secretary, in order to palliate the crime of the assassination of the Regent Murray, was employed to draw up a pretended conference between him, Knox, and others, to stigmatise them by the odium of advising to dethrone the young monarch, and to substitute the regent for their sovereign, Maitland produced so dramatic a performance, by giving to each person his peculiar mode of expression, that this circumstance long baffled the incredulity of those who could not in consequence deny the truth of a narrative apparently so correct in its particulars! "The fiction of the

warming-pan enclosing the young Pretender brought more adherents to the cause of the Whigs than the Bill of Rights," observes Lord John Russell.

Among such party narratives, the horrid tale of the bloody Colonel Kirk has been worked up by Hume with all his eloquence and pathos; and, from its interest, no suspicion has arisen of its truth. Yet, so far as it concerns Kirk, or the reign of James the Second, or even English history, it is, as Ritson too honestly expresses it, "an impudent and a bare-faced lie!" The simple fact is told by Kennet in a few words: he probably was aware of the nature of this political fiction. Hume was not, indeed, himself the fabricator of the tale; but he had not any historical authority. The origin of this fable was probably a pious fraud of the Whig party, to whom Kirk had rendered himself odious; at that moment stories still more terrifying were greedily swallowed, and which, Ritson insinuates, have become a part of the history of England. The original story, related more circumstantially, though not more affectingly, nor perhaps more truly, may be found in Wanley's "Wonders of the Little World,"[86] which I give, relieving it from the tediousness of old Wanley.

A governor of Zealand, under the bold Duke of Burgundy, had in vain sought to seduce the affections of the beautiful wife of a citizen. The governor imprisons the husband on an accusation of treason; and when the wife appeared as the suppliant, the governor, after no brief eloquence, succeeded as a lover, on the plea that her husband's life could only be spared by her compliance. The woman, in tears and in aversion, and not without a hope of vengeance only delayed, lost her honour! Pointing to the prison, the governor told her, "If you seek your husband, enter there, and take him along with you!" The wife, in the bitterness of her thoughts, yet not without the consolation that she had snatched her husband from the grave, passed into the prison; there in a cell, to her astonishment and horror, she beheld the corpse of her husband laid out in a coffin, ready for burial!

Mourning over it, she at length returned to the governor, fiercely exclaiming, “You have kept your word! you have restored to me my husband! and be assured the favour shall be repaid!” The inhuman villain, terrified in the presence of his intrepid victim, attempted to appease her vengeance, and more, to win her to his wishes. Returning home, she assembled her friends, revealed her whole story, and under their protection she appealed to Charles the Bold, a strict lover of justice, and who now awarded a singular but an exemplary catastrophe. The duke first commanded that the criminal governor should instantly marry the woman whom he had made a widow, and at the same time sign his will, with a clause importing that should he die before his lady he constituted her his heiress. All this was concealed from both sides, rather to satisfy the duke than the parties themselves. This done, the unhappy woman was dismissed alone! The governor was conducted to the prison to suffer the same death he had inflicted on the husband of his wife; and when this lady was desired once more to enter the prison, she beheld her second husband headless in his coffin as she had her first! Such extraordinary incidents in so short a period overpowered the feeble frame of the sufferer; she died—leaving a son, who inherited the rich accession of fortune so fatally obtained by his injured and suffering mother.

Such is the tale of which the party story of Kirk appeared to Ritson to have been a *rifacimento*; but it is rather the foundation than the superstructure. This critic was right in the general, but not in the particular. It was not necessary to point out the present source, when so many others of a parallel nature exist. This tale, universally told, Mr. Douce considers as the origin of *Measure for Measure*, and was probably some traditional event; for it appears sometimes with a change of names and places, without any of incident. It always turns on a soldier, a brother or a husband, executed; and a wife, a sister, a deceived victim, to save them from death. It was, therefore, easily transferred to Kirk, and Pomfret’s poem of “Cruelty

and Lust" long made the story popular. It could only have been in this form that it reached the historian, who, it must be observed, introduces it as a "story *commonly told* of him;" but popular tragic romances should not enter into the dusty documents of a history of England, and much less be particularly specified in the index! Belleforest, in his old version of the tale, has even the circumstance of the "captain, who having seduced the wife under the promise to save her husband's life, exhibited him soon afterwards *through the window of her apartment suspended on a gibbet*." This forms the horrid incident in the history of "the bloody Colonel," and served the purpose of a party, who wished to bury him in odium. Kirk was a soldier of fortune, and a loose liver, and a great blusterer, who would sometimes threaten to decimate his own regiment, but is said to have forgotten the menace the next day. Hateful as such military men will always be, in the present instance Colonel Kirk has been shamefully calumniated by poets and historians, who suffer themselves to be duped by the forgeries of political parties![87]

While we are detecting a source of error into which the party feelings of modern historians may lead them, let us confess that they are far more valuable than the ancient; for to us at least the ancients have written history without producing authorities! Modern historians must furnish their readers with the truest means to become their critics, by providing them with their authorities; and it is only by judiciously appreciating these that we may confidently accept their discoveries. Unquestionably the ancients have often introduced into their histories many tales similar to the story of Kirk—popular or party forgeries! The mellifluous copiousness of Livy conceals many a tale of wonder; the graver of Tacitus etches many a fatal stroke; and the secret history of Suetonius too often raises a suspicion of those whispers, *Quid rex in aurem reginæ dixerit, quid Juno fabulata sit cum Jove*. It is certain that Plutarch has often told, and varied too in the telling, the same story, which he has applied to different persons. A critic in the

Ritsonian style has said of the grave Plutarch, *Mendax ille Plutarchus qui vitas oratorum, dolis et erroribus consutas, olim conscribillavit*.[88] "That lying Plutarch, who formerly scribbled the lives of the orators, made up of falsities and blunders!" There is in Italian a scarce book, of a better design than execution, of the Abbate Lancellotti, *Farfalloni degli Antichi Historici*. —"Flim-flams of the Ancients." Modern historians have to dispute their passage to immortality step by step; and however fervid be their eloquence, their real test as to value must be brought to the humble references in their margin. Yet these must not terminate our inquiries; for in tracing a story to its original source we shall find that fictions have been sometimes grafted on truths or hearsays, and to separate them as they appeared in their first stage is the pride and glory of learned criticism.

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84 Absurdly reported to have taken place at a meeting in the Nag's-head Tavern, Cheapside.

85 M. Michel published in Paris, in 1834, a collection of poems and ballads concerning Hugh of Lincoln, which were all very popular at home and abroad in the Middle Ages. One of these, preserved in an Anglo-Norman MS. in the Bibliothèque Royale at Paris, was evidently constructed to be sung by the people soon after the event, which is stated to have happened in the reign of our Henry III.; but there are many ballads comparatively modern which show how carefully the story was kept before the populace; and may be seen in the collections of Bishop Percy, Jameson, Motherwell, &c.

86 Book iii. ch. 29, sec. 18.

87 A story still more absurd was connected with the name of Colonel Lunsford, a soldier who consistently defended Charles I., and was killed in 1643. It is related by Echard as reported of him, that he would kill and eat the children of the opposite party. This horridly grotesque imputation has been preserved in the political ballads and poetry of the day. Cleveland ridicules it in one of his poems, where he makes a Roundhead declare—

"He swore he saw, when Lunsford fell,

A child’s arm in his pocket.”

88 Taylor, Annot. ad Lysiam.

EXPRESSION OF SUPPRESSED OPINION.

A PEOPLE denied the freedom of speech or of writing have usually left some memorials of their feelings in that silent language which addresses itself to the eye. Many ingenious inventions have been contrived to give vent to their suppressed indignation. The voluminous grievance which they could not trust to the voice or the pen they have carved in wood, or sculptured on stone; and have sometimes even facetiously concealed their satire among the playful ornaments designed to amuse those of whom they so fruitlessly complained! Such monuments of the suppressed feelings of the multitude are not often inspected by the historian—their minuteness escapes all eyes but those of the philosophical antiquary; nor are these satirical appearances always considered as grave authorities, which unquestionably they will be found to be by a close observer of human nature. An entertaining history of the modes of thinking, or the discontents of a people, drawn from such dispersed efforts in every æra, would cast a new light of secret history over many dark intervals.

Did we possess a secret history of the Saturnalia, it would doubtless have afforded some materials for the present article. In those revels of venerable

radicalism, when the senate was closed, and the *Pileus*, or cap of liberty, was triumphantly worn, all things assumed an appearance contrary to what they were; and human nature, as well as human laws, might be said to have been *parodied*. Among so many whimsical regulations in favour of the licentious rabble, there was one which forbad the circulation of money; if any one offered the coin of the state, it was to be condemned as an act of madness, and the man was brought to his senses by a penitential fast for that day. An ingenious French antiquary seems to have discovered a class of wretched medals, cast in lead or copper, which formed the circulating medium of these mob lords, who, to ridicule the idea of *money*, used the basest metals, stamping them with grotesque figures, or odd devices—such as a sow; a chimerical bird; an imperator in his car, with a monkey behind him; or an old woman's head, *Acca Laurentia*, either the traditional old nurse of Romulus, or an old courtesan of the same name, who bequeathed the fruits of her labours to the Roman people! As all things were done in mockery, this base metal is stamped with S. C., to ridicule the *Senatûs consulto*, which our antiquary happily explains,[89] in the true spirit of this government of mockery, *Saturnalium consulto*, agreeing with the legend of the reverse, inscribed in the midst of four *tali*, or bones, which they used as dice, *Qui ludit arram det, quod satis sit*—"Let them who play give a pledge, which will be sufficient." This mock-money served not only as an expression of the native irony of the radical gentry of Rome during their festival, but, had they spoken their mind out, meant a ridicule of money itself; for these citizens of equality have always imagined that society might proceed without this contrivance of a medium which served to represent property in which they themselves must so little participate.

A period so glorious for exhibiting the suppressed sentiments of the populace as were these *Saturnalia*, had been nearly lost for us, had not some notions been preserved by Lucian; for we glean but sparingly from the solemn pages of the historian, except in the remarkable instance which

Suetonius has preserved of the arch-mime who followed the body of the Emperor Vespasian at his funeral. This officer, as well as a similar one who accompanied the general to whom they granted a triumph, and who was allowed the unrestrained licentiousness of his tongue, were both the organs of popular feeling, and studied to gratify the rabble, who were their real masters. On this occasion the arch-mime, representing both the exterior personage and the character of Vespasian, according to custom, inquired the expense of the funeral? He was answered, "ten millions of sesterces!" In allusion to the love of money which characterised the emperor, his mock representative exclaimed, "Give me the money, and, if you will, throw my body into the Tiber!"

All these mock offices and festivals among the ancients I consider as organs of the suppressed opinions and feelings of the populace, who were allowed no other, and had not the means of the printing ages to leave any permanent records. At a later period, before the discovery of the art which multiplies with such facility libels or panegyrics, when the people could not speak freely against those rapacious clergy who sheared the fleece and cared not for the sheep, many a secret of popular indignation was confided not to books (for they could not read), but to pictures and sculptures, which are books which the people can always read. The sculptors and illuminators of those times no doubt shared in common the popular feelings, and boldly trusted to the paintings or the carvings which met the eyes of their luxurious and indolent masters their satirical inventions. As far back as in 1300, we find in Wolfius[90] the description of a picture of this kind, in a MS. of Æsop's Fables found in the Abbey of Fulda, among other emblems of the corrupt lives of the churchmen. The present was a wolf, large as life, wearing a monkish cowl, with a shaven crown, preaching to a flock of sheep, with these words of the apostle in a label from his mouth—"God is my witness how I long for you all in my bowels!" And underneath was inscribed—"This hooded wolf is the hypocrite of whom is said in the

Gospel, ‘Beware of false prophets!’” Such exhibitions were often introduced into articles of furniture. A cushion was found in an old abbey, in which was worked a fox preaching to geese, each goose holding in his bill his praying beads! In the stone wall, and on the columns of the great church at Strasburg, was once viewed a number of wolves, bears, foxes, and other mischievous animals, carrying holy water, crucifixes, and tapers; and others more indelicate. These, probably as old as the year 1300, were engraven in 1617 by a protestant; and were not destroyed till 1685, by the pious rage of the catholics, who seemed at length to have rightly construed these silent lampoons; and in their turn broke to pieces the protestant images, as the others had done the papistical dolls. The carved seats and stalls in our own cathedrals exhibit subjects not only strange and satirical, but even indecent.91 At the time they built churches they satirised the ministers; a curious instance how the feelings of the people struggle to find a vent. It is conjectured that rival orders satirised each other, and that some of the carvings are caricatures of certain monks. The margins of illuminated manuscripts frequently contain ingenious caricatures, or satirical allegories. In a magnificent chronicle of Froissart I observed several. A wolf, as usual, in a monk’s frock and cowl, stretching his paw to bless a cock, bending its head submissively to the wolf: or a fox with a crosier, dropping beads, which a cock is picking up; to satirise the blind devotion of the bigots; perhaps the figure of the cock alluded to our Gallic neighbours. A cat in the habit of a nun, holding a platter in its paws to a mouse approaching to lick it; alluding to the allurements of the abbesses to draw young women into their convents; while sometimes I have seen a sow in an abbess’s veil, mounted on stilts: the sex marked by the sow’s dugs. A pope sometimes appears to be thrust by devils into a cauldron; and cardinals are seen roasting on spits! These *ornaments* must have been generally executed by the monks themselves; but these more ingenious members of the ecclesiastical order appear to have sympathised with the people, like the

curates in our church, and envied the pampered abbot and the purple bishop. Churchmen were the usual objects of the suppressed indignation of the people in those days; but the knights and feudal lords have not always escaped from the “curses not loud, but deep,” of their satirical pencils.

As the Reformation, or rather the Revolution, was hastening, this custom became so general, that in one of the dialogues of Erasmus, where two Franciscans are entertained by their host, it appears that such satirical exhibitions were hung up as common furniture in the apartments of inns. The facetious genius of Erasmus either invents or describes one which he had seen of an ape in the habit of a Franciscan sitting by a sick man’s bed, dispensing ghostly counsel, holding up a crucifix in one hand, while with the other he is filching a purse out of the sick man’s pocket. Such are “the straws” by which we may always observe from what corner the wind rises! Mr. Dibdin has recently informed us, that Geyler, whom he calls “the herald of the Reformation,” preceding Luther by twelve years, had a stone chair or pulpit in the cathedral at Strasburg, from which he delivered his lectures, or rather rolled the thunders of his anathemas against the monks. This stone pulpit was constructed under his own superintendence, and is covered with very indecent figures of monks and nuns, expressly designed by him to expose their profligate manners. We see Geyler doing what for centuries had been done!

In the curious folios of Sauval, the Stowe of France, there is a copious chapter, entitled “*Hérétiques, leurs attentats*.” In this enumeration of their attempts to give vent to their suppressed indignation, it is very remarkable that, *preceding the time of Luther*, the minds of many were perfectly *Lutheran* respecting the idolatrous worship of the Roman Church; and what I now notice would have rightly entered into that significant *Historia Reformationis ante Reformationem*, which was formerly projected by continental writers.

Luther did not consign the pope's decretals to the flames till 1520—this was the first open act of reformation and insurrection, for hitherto he had submitted to the court of Rome. Yet in 1490, thirty years preceding this great event, I find a priest burnt for having snatched the host in derision from the hands of another celebrating mass. Twelve years afterwards, 1502, a student repeated the same deed, trampling on it; and in 1523, the resolute death of Anne de Bourg, a counsellor in the parliament of Paris, to use the expression of Sauval, "corrupted the world." It is evident that the Huguenots were fast on the increase. From that period I find continued accounts which prove that the Huguenots of France, like the Puritans of England, were most resolute iconoclasts. They struck off the heads of Virgins and little Jesuses, or blunted their daggers by chipping the wooden saints, which were then fixed at the corners of streets. Every morning discovered the scandalous treatment they had undergone in the night. Then their images were painted on the walls, but these were heretically scratched and disfigured: and, since the saints could not defend themselves, a royal edict was published in their favour, commanding that all holy paintings in the streets should not be allowed short of ten feet from the ground! They entered churches at night, tearing up or breaking down the *prians*, the *bénitoires*, the crucifixes, the colossal *ecce-homos*, which they did not always succeed in dislodging for want of time or tools. Amidst these battles with wooden adversaries, we may smile at the frequent solemn processions instituted to ward off the vengeance of the parish saint; the wooden was expiated by a silver image, secured by iron bars and attended by the king and the nobility, carrying the new saint, with prayers that he would protect himself from the heretics!

In an early period of the Reformation, an instance occurs of the art of concealing what we wish only the few should comprehend, at the same time that we are addressing the public. Curious collectors are acquainted with "The Olivetan Bible;" this was the first translation published by the

protestants, and there seems no doubt that Calvin was the chief, if not the only translator; but at that moment not choosing to become responsible for this new version, he made use of the name of an obscure relative, Robert Pierre Olivetan. Calvin, however, prefixed a Latin preface, remarkable for delivering positions very opposite to those tremendous doctrines of absolute predestination which, in his theological despotism, he afterwards assumed. De Bure describes this first protestant Bible not only as rare, but, when found, as usually imperfect, much soiled and dog-eared, as the well-read first edition of Shakspeare, by the perpetual use of the multitude. But a curious fact has escaped the detection both of De Bure and Beloe; at the end of the volume are found *ten verses*, which, in a concealed manner, authenticate the translation; and which no one, unless initiated into the secret, could possibly suspect. The verses are not poetical, but I give the first sentence:—

Lecteur entends, si vérité adresse
Viens donc ouyr instament sa promesse
Et vif parler———&c.

The first letters of every word of these *ten verses* form a perfect distich, containing information important to those to whom the Olivetan Bible was addressed.

Les Vaudois, peuple évangélique,
Ont mis ce thrésor en publique.

An anagram would have been too inartificial a contrivance to have answered the purpose of concealing from the world at large this secret. There is an adroitness in the invention of the initial letters of all the words through these ten verses. They contained a communication necessary to

authenticate the version, but which, at the same time, could not be suspected by any person not intrusted with the secret.

When the art of medal-engraving was revived in Europe, the spirit we are now noticing took possession of those less perishable and more circulating vehicles. Satiric medals were almost unknown to the ancient mint, notwithstanding those of the Saturnalia, and a few which bear miserable puns on the unlucky names of some consuls. Medals illustrate history, and history reflects light on medals; but we should not place such unreserved confidence on medals as their advocates, who are warm in their favourite study. It has been asserted that medals are more authentic memorials than history itself; but a medal is not less susceptible of the bad passions than a pamphlet or an epigram. Ambition has its vanity, and engraves a dubious victory; and Flattery will practise its art, and deceive us in gold! A calumny or a fiction on metal may be more durable than on a fugitive page; and a libel has a better chance of being preserved when the artist is skilful, than simple truths when miserably executed. Medals of this class are numerous, and were the precursors of those political satires exhibited in caricature prints.92 There is a large collection of wooden cuts about the time of Calvin, where the Romish religion is represented by the most grotesque forms which the ridicule of the early Reformers could invent. More than a thousand figures attest the exuberant satire of the designers. This work is equally rare and costly.93

Satires of this species commenced in the freedom of the Reformation; for we find a medal of Luther in a monk's habit, satirically bearing for its reverse Catherine de Bora, the nun whom this monk married; the first step of his personal reformation! Nor can we be certain that Catherine was not more concerned in that great revolution than appears in the voluminous Lives we have of the great reformer. However, the reformers were as great sticklers for medals as the "papelins." Of Pope John VIII., an effeminate

voluptuary, we have a medal with his portrait, inscribed *Pope Joan!* and another of Innocent X., dressed as a woman holding a spindle; the reverse, his famous mistress, Donna Olympia, dressed as a Pope, with the tiara on her head, and the keys of St. Peter in her hands![94]

When, in the reign of Mary, England was groaning under Spanish influence, and no remonstrance could reach the throne, the queen's person and government were made ridiculous to the people's eyes by prints or pictures "representing her majesty naked, meagre, withered, and wrinkled, with every aggravated circumstance of deformity that could disgrace a female figure, seated in a regal chair; a crown on her head, surrounded with M. R. and A. in capitals, accompanied by small letters; *Maria Regina Angliæ!* a number of Spaniards were sucking her to skin and bone, and a specification was added of the money, rings, jewels, and other presents with which she had secretly gratified her husband Philip."[95] It is said that the queen suspected some of her own council of this invention, who alone were privy to these transactions. It is, however, in this manner that the voice which is suppressed by authority comes at length in another shape to the eye.

The age of Elizabeth, when the Roman pontiff and all his adherents were odious to the people, produced a remarkable caricature, and ingenious invention—a gorgon's head! A church bell forms the helmet; the ornaments, instead of the feathers, are a wolf's head in a mitre devouring a lamb, an ass's head with spectacles reading, a goose holding a rosary: the face is made out with a fish for the nose, a chalice and water for the eye, and other priestly ornaments for the shoulder and breast, on which rolls of parchment pardons hang.[96]

A famous bishop of Munster, Bernard de Galen, who, in his charitable violence for converting protestants, got himself into such celebrity that he appears to have served as an excellent *sign-post* to the inns in Germany,

was the true church militant: and his figure was exhibited according to the popular fancy. His head was half mitre and half helmet; a crosier in one hand and a sabre in the other; half a rochet and half a cuirass: he was made performing mass as a dragoon on horseback, and giving out the charge when he ought the *Ite, missa est!* He was called the *converter!* and the "Bishop of Munster" became popular as a sign-post in German towns; for the people like fighting men, though they should even fight against themselves.

It is rather curious to observe of this new species of satire, so easily distributed among the people, and so directly addressed to their understandings, that it was made the vehicle of national feeling. Ministers of state condescended to invent the devices. Lord Orford says that *caricatures on cards* were the invention of George Townshend in the affair of Byng, which was soon followed by a pack. I am informed of an ancient pack of cards which has caricatures of all the Parliamentarian Generals, which might be not unusefully shuffled by a writer of secret history.[97] We may be surprised to find the grave Sully practising this artifice on several occasions. In the civil wars of France the Duke of Savoy had taken by surprise Saluces, and struck a medal; on the reverse a centaur appears shooting with a bow and arrow, with the legend *Opportune!* But when Henry the Fourth had reconquered the town, he published another, on which Hercules appears killing the centaur, with the word *Opportunius*. The great minister was the author of this retort![98] A medal of the Dutch ambassador at the court of France, Van Beuninghen, whom the French represent as a haughty burgomaster, but who had the vivacity of a Frenchman and the haughtiness of a Spaniard, as Voltaire characterises him, is said to have been the occasion of the Dutch war in 1672; but wars will be hardly made for an idle medal. Medals may, however, indicate a preparatory war. Louis the Fourteenth was so often compared to the sun at its meridian, that some of his creatures may have imagined that, like the sun, he could dart into any

part of Europe as he willed, and be as cheerfully received.[99] The Dutch minister, whose Christian name was *Joshua*, however, had a medal struck of Joshua stopping the sun in his course, inferring that this miracle was operated by his little republic. The medal itself is engraven in Van Loon's voluminous *Histoire Médallique du Pays Bas*, and in Marchand's *Dictionnaire Historique*, who labours to prove against twenty authors that the Dutch ambassador was not the inventor; it was not, however, unworthy of him, and it conveyed to the world the high feeling of her power which Holland had then assumed. Two years after the noise about this medal the republic paid dear for the device; but thirty years afterwards this very burgomaster concluded a glorious peace, and France and Spain were compelled to receive the mediation of the Dutch Joshua with the French Sun.[100] In these vehicles of national satire, it is odd that the phlegmatic Dutch, more than any other nation, and from the earliest period of their republic, should have indulged freely, if not licentiously. It was a republican humour. Their taste was usually gross. We owe to them, even in the reign of Elizabeth, a severe medal on Leicester, who, having retired in disgust from the government of their provinces, struck a medal with his bust, reverse a dog and sheep,

Non gregem, sed ingratos invitus desero;

on which the angry juvenile states struck another, representing an ape and young ones; reverse, Leicester near a fire,

Fugiens fumum, incidit in ignem.

Another medal, with an excellent portrait of Cromwell, was struck by the Dutch. The Protector, crowned with laurels, is on his knees, laying his head in the lap of the commonwealth, but loosely exhibiting himself to the

French and Spanish ambassadors with gross indecency: the Frenchman, covered with *fleur de lis*, is pushing aside the grave Don, and disputes with him the precedence—*Retire-toy; l'honneur appartient au roy mon maitre, Louis le Grand*. Van Loon is very right in denouncing this same medal, so grossly flattering to the English, as most detestable and indelicate! But why does Van Loon envy us this lumpish invention? why does the Dutchman quarrel with his own cheese? The honour of the medal we claim, but the invention belongs to his country. The Dutch went on commenting in this manner on English affairs from reign to reign. Charles the Second declared war against them in 1672 for a malicious medal, though the States-General offered to break the die, by purchasing it of the workman for one thousand ducats; but it served for a pretext for a Dutch war, which Charles cared more about than the *mala bestia* of his exergue. Charles also complained of a scandalous picture which the brothers de Witt had in their house, representing a naval battle with the English. Charles the Second seems to have been more sensible to this sort of national satire than we might have expected in a professed wit; a race, however, who are not the most patient in having their own sauce returned to their lips. The king employed Evelyn to write a history of the Dutch war, and "enjoined him *to make it a little keen*, for the Hollanders had very unhandsomely abused him in their pictures, books, and libels." The Dutch continued their career of conveying their national feeling on English affairs more triumphantly when their Stadtholder ascended an English throne. The birth of the Pretender is represented by the chest which Minerva gave to the daughters of Cecrops to keep, and which, opened, discovered an infant with a serpent's tail: *Infantemque vident apporrectumque draconem*; the chest perhaps alluding to the removes of the warming-pan; and, in another, James and a Jesuit flying in terror, the king throwing away a crown and sceptre, and the Jesuit carrying a child; *Ite missa est*, the words applied from the mass.[101] But in these contests of national feeling, while the grandeur of Louis the

Fourteenth did not allow of these ludicrous and satirical exhibitions, and while the political idolatry which his forty Academicians paid to him exhausted itself in the splendid fictions of a series of famous medals, amounting to nearly four hundred, it appears that we were not without our reprisals; for I find Prosper Marchand, who writes as a Hollander, censuring his own country for having at length adulated the grand monarque by a complimentary medal. He says—"The English cannot be reproached with a similar *debonaireté*." After the famous victories of Marlborough, they indeed inserted in a medal the head of the French monarch and the English queen, with this inscription, *Ludovicus Magnus, Anna Major*. Long ere this one of our queens had been exhibited by ourselves with considerable energy. On the defeat of the Armada, Elizabeth, Pinkerton tells us, struck a medal representing the English and Spanish fleets, *Hesperidum regem devicit virgo*. Philip had medals dispersed in England of the same impression, with this addition, *Negatur. Est meretrix vulgi.* These the queen suppressed, but published another medal, with this legend:—

Hesperidum regem devicit virgo; negatur,
Est meretrix vulgi; res eo deterior.

An age fertile in satirical prints was the eventful æra of Charles the First: they were showered from all parties, and a large collection of them would admit of a critical historical commentary, which might become a vehicle of the most curious secret history. Most of them are in a bad style, for they are allegorical; yet that these satirical exhibitions influenced the eyes and minds of the people is evident from an extraordinary circumstance. Two grave collections of historical documents adopted them. We are surprised to find prefixed to Rushworth's and Nalson's historical collections two such political prints! Nalson's was an act of retributive justice; but he seems to have been aware that satire in the shape of pictures is a language very

attractive to the multitude, for he has introduced a caricature print in the solemn folio of the Trial of Charles the First.[102] Of the happiest of these political prints is one by Taylor the Water-poet, not included in his folio, but prefixed to his "Mad Fashions, Odd Fashions, or the Emblems of these Distracted Times." It is the figure of a man whose eyes have left their sockets, and whose legs have usurped the place of his arms; a horse on his hind legs is drawing a cart; a church is inverted; fish fly in the air; a candle burns with the flame downwards; and the mouse and rabbit are pursuing the cat and the fox!

The animosities of national hatred have been a fertile source of these vehicles of popular feeling—which discover themselves in severe or grotesque caricatures. The French and the Spaniards mutually exhibit one another under the most extravagant figures. The political caricatures of the French in the seventeenth century are numerous. The *badauds* of Paris amused themselves for their losses by giving an emetic to a Spaniard, to make him render up all the towns his victories had obtained: seven or eight Spaniards are seen seated around a large turnip, with their frizzled mustachios, their hats *en pot-à-beurre*; their long rapiers, with their pummels down to their feet, and their points up to their shoulders; their ruffs stiffened by many rows, and pieces of garlick stuck in their girdles. The Dutch were exhibited in as great variety as the uniformity of frogs would allow. We have largely participated in the vindictive spirit which these grotesque emblems keep up among the people; they mark the secret feelings of national pride. The Greeks despised foreigners, and considered them only as fit to be slaves;[103] the ancient Jews, inflated with a false idea of their small territory, would be masters of the world: the Italians placed a line of demarcation for genius and taste, and marked it by their mountains. The Spaniards once imagined that the conferences of God with Moses on Mount Sinai were in the Spanish language. If a Japanese become the friend of a foreigner, he is considered as committing treason to his emperor, and

rejected as a false brother in a country which, we are told, is figuratively called *Tenka*, or the Kingdom under the Heavens. John Bullism is not peculiar to Englishmen; and patriotism is a noble virtue when it secures our independence without depriving us of our humanity.

The civil wars of the League in France, and those in England under Charles the First, bear the most striking resemblance; and in examining the revolutionary scenes exhibited by the graver in the famous *Satire Ménippée*, we discover the foreign artist revelling in the *caricature* of his ludicrous and severe exhibition; and in that other revolutionary period of *La Fronde*, there was a mania for *political songs*; the curious have formed them into collections; and we not only have "the Rump Songs" of Charles the First's times, but have repeated this kind of evidence of the public feeling at many subsequent periods.104 *Caricatures* and *political songs* might with us furnish a new sort of history; and perhaps would preserve some truths, and describe some particular events not to be found in more grave authorities.

89 Baudelot de Dairval, *de l'Utilité des Voyages*, ii. 645. There is a work, by Ficoroni, on these lead *coins* or *tickets*. They are found in the cabinets of the curious medallist. Pinkerton, in referring to this entertaining work, regrets that "such curious remains have almost escaped the notice of medallists, and have not yet been arranged in one class, or named. A special work on them would be highly acceptable." The time has perhaps arrived when antiquaries may begin to be philosophers, and philosophers antiquaries! The unhappy separation of erudition from philosophy, and of philosophy from erudition, has hitherto thrown impediments in the progress of the human mind and the history of man.

90 Lect. Mem. i. ad. an. 1300.

91 Many specimens may be seen in Carter's curious volumes on "Ancient Architecture and Painting."

92 The series published during the wars in the Low Countries are the most remarkable, and may be seen in the volumes by Van Loon.

93 Mr. Douce possessed a portion of this very curious collection: for a complete one De Bure asked about twenty pounds.

94 The Roman satirists also invented a tale to ridicule what they dared not openly condemn, in which it was asserted that a play called *The Marriage of the Pope* was enacted before Cromwell, in which the Donna having obtained the key of Paradise from Innocent, insists on that of Purgatory also, that she may not be sent there when he is wearied of her. “The wedding” is then kept by a ball of monks and nuns, delighted to think they may one day marry also. Such was the means the Romans took to notify their sense of the degradation of the pope.

95 Warton’s “Life of Sir Thomas Pope,” p. 58.

96 This ancient caricature, so descriptive of the popular feelings, is tolerably given in Malcolm’s history of “Caricaturing,” plate ii. fig. 1.

97 This pack was probably executed in Holland in the time of Charles the Second. There are other sets of political cards of the same reign, particularly one connected with the so-called “popish plots,” and the murder of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey. The South-Sea Bubble was made the subject of a similar pack, after it had exploded.

98 The royal house of Navarre was fancifully derived by the old heraldic writers from Hispalus, the son of Hercules; and the pageant provided by the citizens of Avignon to greet his entrance there in 1600, was entirely composed in reference thereto, and Henry indicated in its title, *L’Hercule Gaulois Triumphant*.

99 He took for a device and motto on his shield on the occasion of tilting-matches and court festivities, a representation of the sun in splendour, and the words, *Nec Pluribus Impar*.

100 The history of this medal is useful in more than one respect; and may be found in Prosper Marchand.

101 Another represents the young prince holding the symbol of the Romish faith in his right hand, and crowning himself with the left; Truth opens a door below and discovers Father Petre,

as the guiding influence of all.

102 It represents Cromwell as an armed monster, carrying the three kingdoms captive at his feet in a triumphal car driven by the devil over the body of liberty, and the decapitated Charles I. The state of the people is emblematized by a bird flying from its cage to be devoured by a hawk; and sheep breaking from the fold to be set on by ravening wolves.

103 A passage may be found in Aristotle's Politics, vol. i. c. 3-7; where Aristotle advises Alexander to govern the Greeks like his *subjects*, and the barbarians like *slaves*; for that the one he was to consider as companions, and the other as creatures of an inferior race.

104 The following may be mentioned as the most important of these collections:—

"Rome rhymed to Death." 1683.

"A Collection of the newest and most ingenious Poems, Songs, Catches, &c, against Popery." 1689.

"Poems on Affairs of State." 1703-7.

"Whig and Tory; or, Wit on both sides." 1712.

"Political Merriment; or, Truths told to some Tune." 1714.

AUTOGRAPHS.105

THE art of judging of the characters of persons by their handwriting can only have any reality when the pen, acting without restraint, becomes an

instrument guided by, and indicative of, the natural dispositions. But regulated as the pen is now too often by a mechanical process, which the present race of writing-masters seem to have contrived for their own convenience, a whole school exhibits a similar handwriting; the pupils are forced in their automatic motions, as if acted on by the pressure of a steam-engine; a bevy of beauties will now write such fac-similes of each other, that in a heap of letters presented to the most sharp-sighted lover to select that of his mistress—though, like Bassanio among the caskets, his happiness should be risked on the choice—he would despair of fixing on the right one, all appearing to have come from the same rolling-press. Even brothers of different tempers have been taught by the same master to give the same form to their letters, the same regularity to their line, and have made our handwritings as monotonous as are our characters in the present habits of society. The true physiognomy of writing will be lost among our rising generation: it is no longer a face that we are looking on, but a beautiful mask of a single pattern; and the fashionable handwriting of our young ladies is like the former tight-lacing of their mothers' youthful days, when every one alike had what was supposed to be a fine shape!

Assuredly nature would prompt every individual to have a distinct sort of writing, as she has given a peculiar countenance—a voice—and a manner. The flexibility of the muscles differs with every individual, and the hand will follow the direction of the thoughts and the emotions and the habits of the writers. The phlegmatic will portray his words, while the playful haste of the volatile will scarcely sketch them; the slovenly will blot and efface and scrawl, while the neat and orderly-minded will view themselves in the paper before their eyes. The merchant's clerk will not write like the lawyer or the poet. Even nations are distinguished by their writing; the vivacity and variableness of the Frenchman, and the delicacy and suppleness of the Italian, are perceptibly distinct from the slowness and strength of pen discoverable in the phlegmatic German, Dane, and Swede. When we are in

grief, we do not write as we should in joy. The elegant and correct mind, which has acquired the fortunate habit of a fixity of attention, will write with scarcely an erasure on the page, as Fenelon, and Gray, and Gibbon; while we find in Pope's manuscripts the perpetual struggles of correction, and the eager and rapid interlineations struck off in heat. Lavater's notion of handwriting is by no means chimerical; nor was General Paoli fanciful, when he told Mr. Northcote that he had decided on the character and dispositions of a man from his letters, and the handwriting.

Long before the days of Lavater, Shenstone in one of his letters said, "I want to see Mrs. Jago's handwriting, that I may judge of her temper." One great truth must however be conceded to the opponents of *the physiognomy of writing*; general rules only can be laid down. Yet the vital principle must be true that the handwriting bears an analogy to the character of the writer, as all voluntary actions are characteristic of the individual. But many causes operate to counteract or obstruct this result. I am intimately acquainted with the handwritings of five of our great poets. The first in early life acquired among Scottish advocates a handwriting which cannot be distinguished from that of his ordinary brothers; the second, educated in public schools, where writing is shamefully neglected, composes his sublime or sportive verses in a school-boy's ragged scrawl, as if he had never finished his tasks with the writing-master; the third writes his highly-wrought poetry in the common hand of a merchant's clerk, from early commercial avocations; the fourth has all that finished neatness which polishes his verses; while the fifth is a specimen of a full mind, not in the habit of correction or alteration; so that he appears to be printing down his thoughts, without a solitary erasure. The handwriting of the *first* and *third* poets, not indicative of their character, we have accounted for; the others are admirable specimens of characteristic autographs.[106]

Oldys, in one of his curious notes, was struck by the distinctness of character in the handwritings of several of our kings. He observed nothing further than the mere fact, and did not extend his idea to the art of judging of the natural character by the writing. Oldys has described these handwritings with the utmost correctness, as I have often verified. I shall add a few comments.

“Henry the Eighth wrote a strong hand, but as if he had seldom a good pen.”—The vehemence of his character conveyed itself into his writing; bold, hasty, and commanding, I have no doubt the assertor of the Pope’s supremacy and its triumphant destroyer split many a good quill.

“Edward the Sixth wrote a fair legible hand.”—We have this promising young prince’s diary, written by his own hand; in all respects he was an assiduous pupil, and he had scarcely learnt to write and to reign when we lost him.

“Queen Elizabeth writ an upright hand, like the bastard Italian.” She was indeed a most elegant caligrapher, whom Roger Ascham[107] had taught all the elegancies of the pen. The French editor of the little autographical work I have noticed has given the autograph of her name, which she usually wrote in a very large tall character, and painfully elaborate. He accompanies it with one of the Scottish Mary, who at times wrote elegantly, though usually in uneven lines; when in haste and distress of mind, in several letters during her imprisonment which I have read, much the contrary. The French editor makes this observation: ”Who could believe that these writings are of the same epoch? The first denotes asperity and ostentation; the second indicates simplicity, softness, and nobleness. The one is that of Elizabeth, queen of England; the other that of her cousin, Mary Stuart. The difference of these two handwritings answers most evidently to that of their characters.”

“James the First writ a poor ungainly character, all awry, and not in a straight line.” James certainly wrote a slovenly scrawl, strongly indicative of that personal negligence which he carried into all the little things of life; and Buchanan, who had made him an excellent scholar, may receive the disgrace of his pupil’s ugly scribble, which sprawls about his careless and inelegant letters.

“Charles the First wrote a fair open Italian hand, and more correctly perhaps than any prince we ever had.” Charles was the first of our monarchs who intended to have domiciliated taste in the kingdom, and it might have been conjectured from this unfortunate prince, who so finely discriminated the manners of the different painters, which are in fact their handwritings, that he would not have been insensible to the elegancies of the pen.

“Charles the Second wrote a little fair running hand, as if wrote in haste, or uneasy till he had done.” Such was the writing to have been expected from this illustrious vagabond, who had much to write, often in odd situations, and could never get rid of his natural restlessness and vivacity.

“James the Second writ a large fair hand.” It is characterised by his phlegmatic temper, as an exact detailer of occurrences, and the matter-of-business genius of the writer.

“Queen Anne wrote a fair round hand;” that is the writing she had been taught by her master, probably without any alteration of manner naturally suggested by herself; the copying hand of a common character.[108]

The subject of autographs associates itself with what has been dignified by its professors as caligraphy, or the art of beautiful writing. As I have something curious to communicate on that subject considered professionally, it shall form our following article.

105 A small volume which I met with at Paris, entitled “L’Art de juger du Caractère des Hommes sur leurs Ecritures,” is curious for its illustrations, consisting of *twenty-four plates, exhibiting fac-similes of the writing of eminent and other persons*, correctly taken from the original autographs. Since this period both France and Germany have produced many books devoted to the use of the curious in autographs. In our own country J.T. Smith published a curious collection of fac-similes of letters, chiefly from literary characters.

106 It will be of interest to the reader to note the names of these poets in the consecutive order they are alluded to. They are Scott, Byron, Rogers, Moore, and Campbell.

107 He was also the tutor of Lady Jane Grey, and the author of one of our earliest and best works on education.

108 Since this article was written, Nichols has published a cleverly-executed series of autographs of royal, noble, and illustrious persons of Great Britain, in which the reader may study the accuracy of the criticism above given.

THE HISTORY OF WRITING-MASTERS.

THERE is a very apt letter from James the First to Prince Henry when very young, on the neatness and fairness of his handwriting. The royal father suspecting that the prince’s tutor, Mr., afterwards Sir Adam, Newton, had helped out the young prince in the composition, and that in this specimen of caligraphy he had relied also on the pains of Mr. Peter Bales, the great writing-master, for touching up his letters, his majesty shows a laudable

anxiety that the prince should be impressed with the higher importance of the one over the other. James shall himself speak. “I confess I long to receive a letter from you that may be wholly yours, as well matter as form; as well formed by your mind as drawn by your fingers; for ye may remember, that in my book to you I warn you to beware with (of) that kind of wit that may fly out at the end of your fingers; not that I commend not a fair handwriting; *sed hoc facito, illud non omittito*: and the other is *multo magis præcipuum*.” Prince Henry, indeed, wrote with that elegance which he borrowed from his own mind; and in an age when such minute elegance was not universal among the crowned heads of Europe. Henry IV., on receiving a letter from Prince Henry, immediately opened it, a custom not usual with him, and comparing the writing with the signature, to decide whether it were of one hand, Sir George Carew, observing the French King’s hesitation, called Mr. Douglas to testify to the fact; on which Henry the Great, admiring an art in which he had little skill, and looking on the neat elegance of the writing before him, politely observed, “I see that in writing fair, as in other things, the elder must yield to the younger.”

Had this anecdote of neat writing reached the professors of caligraphy, who in this country have put forth such painful panegyrics on the art, these royal names had unquestionably blazoned their pages. Not indeed that these penmen require any fresh inflation; for never has there been a race of professors in any art who have exceeded in solemnity and pretensions the practitioners in this simple and mechanical craft. I must leave to more ingenious investigators of human nature to reveal the occult cause which has operated such powerful delusions on these “Vive la Plume!” men, who have been generally observed to possess least intellectual ability in proportion to the excellence they have obtained in their own art. I suspect this maniacal vanity is peculiar to the writing-masters of England; and I can only attribute the immense importance which they have conceived of their art to the perfection to which they have carried the art of short-hand writing;

an art which was always better understood, and more skilfully practised, in England than in any other country. It will surprise some when they learn that the artists in verse and colours, poets and painters, have not raised loftier pretensions to the admiration of mankind. Writing-masters, or caligraphers, have had their engraved “effigies,” with a Fame in flourishes, a pen in one hand and a trumpet in the other; and fine verses inscribed, and their very lives written! They have compared

The nimbly-turning of their silver quill

to the beautiful in art and the sublime in invention; nor is this wonderful, since they discover the art of writing, like the invention of language, in a divine original; and from the tablets of stone which the Deity himself delivered, they trace their German broad text, or their fine running-hand. One, for “the bold striking of those words, *Vive la Plume*,” was so sensible of the reputation that this last piece of command of hand would give the book which he thus adorned, and which his biographer acknowledges was the product of about a minute,—(but then how many years of flourishing had that single minute cost him!)—that he claims the glory of an artist; observing,—

We seldom find
The *man of business* with the *artist* join’d.

Another was flattered that his *writing* could impart immortality to the most wretched compositions!—

And any lines prove pleasing, when you write.

Sometimes the caligrapher is a sort of hero:—

To you, you rare commander of the quill,
Whose wit and worth, deep learning, and high skill,
Speak you the honour of Great Tower Hill!

The last line became traditionally adopted by those who were so lucky as to live in the neighbourhood of this Parnassus. But the reader must form some notion of that charm of caligraphy which has so bewitched its professors, when,

Soft, bold, and free, your manuscripts still please.

How justly bold in SNELL'S improving hand
The pen at once joins freedom with command!
With softness strong, with ornaments not vain,
Loose with proportion, and with neatness plain;
Not swell'd, not full, complete in every part,
And artful most, when not affecting art.

And these describe those pencilled knots and flourishes, "the angels, the men, the birds, and the beasts," which, as one of them observed, he could

Command
Even by the *gentle motion of his hand*,

all the *speciosa miracula* of caligraphy;

Thy *tender strokes*, inimitably fine,
Crown with perfection every *flowing line*;
And to each *grand performance* add a grace,
As *curling hair* adorns a beauteous face:

In every page *new fancies* give delight,

And *sporting round the margin* charm the sight.

One Massey, a writing-master, published in 1763, “The Origin and Progress of Letters.” The great singularity of this volume is “a new species of biography never attempted before in English.” This consists of the lives of “English Penmen,” otherwise writing-masters! If some have foolishly enough imagined that the sedentary lives of authors are void of interest from deficient incident and interesting catastrophe, what must they think of the barren labours of those who, in the degree they become eminent, to use their own style, in the art of “dish, dash, long-tail fly,” the less they become interesting to the public; for what can the most skilful writing-master do but wear away his life in leaning over his pupil’s copy, or sometimes snatch a pen to decorate the margin, though he cannot compose the page? Montaigne has a very original notion on writing-masters: he says that some of those caligraphers who had obtained promotion by their excellence in the art, afterwards *affected to write carelessly, lest their promotion should be suspected to have been owing to such an ordinary acquisition*!

Massey is an enthusiast, fortunately for his subject. He considers that there are *schools of writing*, as well as of painting or sculpture; and expatiates with the eye of fraternal feeling on “a natural genius, a tender stroke, a grand performance, a bold striking freedom, and a liveliness in the sprigged letters, and pencilled knots and flourishes;” while this Vasari of writing-masters relates the controversies and the libels of many a rival pen-nibber. “George Shelley, one of the most celebrated worthies who have made a shining figure in the commonwealth of English caligraphy, born I suppose of obscure parents, because brought up in Christ’s Hospital, yet under the humble blue-coat he laid the foundation of his caligraphic excellence and lasting fame, for he was elected writing-master to the hospital.” Shelley published his “Natural Writing;” but, alas! Snell, another

blue-coat, transcended the other. He was a genius who would "bear no brother near the throne."—"I have been informed that there were jealous heart-burnings, if not bickerings, between him and Col. Ayres, another of our *great reformers* in the writing commonweal, both eminent men, yet, *like* our most celebrated poets *Pope and Addison*, or, to carry the comparison still higher, like *Cæsar and Pompey*, one could bear no superior, and the other no equal." Indeed, the great Snell practised a little stratagem against Mr. Shelley, for which, if writing-masters held courts-martial, this hero ought to have appeared before his brothers. In one of his works he procured a number of friends to write letters, in which Massey confesses "are some satyrical strokes upon Shelley," as if he had arrogated too much to himself in his book of "Natural Writing." They find great fault with pencilled knots and sprigged letters. Shelley, who was an advocate for ornaments in fine penmanship, which Snell utterly rejected, had parodied a well-known line of Herbert's in favour of his favourite decorations:—

> A *Knot* may take him who from *letters* flies,
> And turn *delight* into an *exercise*.

These reflections created ill-blood, and even an open difference amongst several of the *superior artists in writing*. The commanding genius of Snell had a more terrific contest when he published his "Standard Rules," pretending to have *demonstrated* them as Euclid would. "This proved a bone of contention, and occasioned a terrific quarrel between Mr. Snell and Mr. Clark. This quarrel about 'Standard Rules' ran so high between them, that they could scarce forbear *scurrilous language* therein, and a treatment of each other unbecoming *gentlemen*! Both sides in this dispute had their abettors; and to say which had the most truth and reason, *non nostrum est tantas componere lites*; perhaps *both parties might be too fond of their own schemes*. They should have left them to people to choose which they liked

best." A candid politician is our Massey, and a philosophical historian too; for he winds up the whole story of this civil war by describing its result, which happened as all such great controversies have ever closed. "Who now-a-days takes those *Standard Rules*, either one or the other, for their *guide* in writing?" This is the finest lesson ever offered to the furious heads of parties, and to all their men; let them meditate on the nothingness of their "Standard Rules," by the fate of Mr. Snell.

It was to be expected, when once these writing-masters imagined that they were artists, that they would be infected with those plague-spots of genius—envy, detraction, and all the *jalousie du métier*. And such to this hour we find them! An extraordinary scene of this nature has long been exhibited in my neighbourhood, where two doughty champions of the quill have been posting up libels in their windows respecting the inventor of *a new art of writing*, the Carstairian, or the Lewisian? When the great German philosopher asserted that he had discovered the method of fluxions before Sir Isaac, and when the dispute grew so violent that even the calm Newton sent a formal defiance in set terms, and got even George the Second to try to arbitrate (who would rather have undertaken a campaign), the method of fluxions was no more cleared up than the present affair between our two heroes of the quill.

A recent instance of one of these egregious caligraphers may be told of the late Tomkins. This vainest of writing-masters dreamed through life that penmanship was one of the fine arts, and that a writing-master should be seated with his peers in the Academy! He bequeathed to the British Museum his *opus magnum*—a copy of Macklin's Bible, profusely embellished with the most beautiful and varied decorations of his pen; and as he conceived that both the workman and the work would alike be darling objects with posterity, he left something immortal with the legacy, his fine bust, by Chantrey, unaccompanied by which they were not to receive the

unparalleled gift! When Tomkins applied to have his bust, our great sculptor abated the usual price, and, courteously kind to the feelings of the man, said that he considered Tomkins as an artist! It was the proudest day of the life of our writing-master!

But an eminent artist and wit now living, once looking on this fine bust of Tomkins, declared, that "this man had died for want of a dinner!"—a fate, however, not so lamentable as it appeared! Our penman had long felt that he stood degraded in the scale of genius by not being received at the Academy, at least among the class of *engravers*; the next approach to academic honour he conceived would be that of appearing as a *guest* at their annual dinner. These invitations are as limited as they are select, and all the Academy persisted in considering Tomkins *as a writing-master*! Many a year passed, every intrigue was practised, every remonstrance was urged, every stratagem of courtesy was tried; but never ceasing to deplore the failure of his hopes, it preyed on his spirits, and the luckless caligrapher went down to his grave—without dining at the Academy! This authentic anecdote has been considered as "satire improperly directed"—by some friend of Mr. Tomkins—but the criticism is much too grave! The foible of Mr. Tomkins as a writing-master presents a striking illustration of the class of men here delineated. I am a mere historian—and am only responsible for the veracity of this fact. That "Mr. Tomkins lived in familiar intercourse with the Royal Academicians of his day, and was a frequent guest at their private tables," and moreover was a most worthy man, I believe—but is it less true that he was ridiculously mortified by being never invited to the Academic dinner, on account of his caligraphy? He had some reason to consider that his art was of the exalted class to which he aspired to raise it, when this friend concludes his eulogy of this writing-master thus—"Mr. Tomkins, as an artist, stood foremost in his own profession, and his name will be handed down to posterity with the *Heroes* and *Statesmen*, whose

excellences his *penmanship* has contributed to illustrate and to commemorate." I always give the *Pour* and the *Contre*!

Such men about such things have produced public contests, *combats a l'outrance*, where much ink was spilled by the knights in a joust of goose-quills; these solemn trials have often occurred in the history of writing-masters, which is enlivened by public defiances, proclamations, and judicial trials by umpires! The prize was usually a golden pen of some value. One as late as in the reign of Anne took place between Mr. German and Mr. More. German having courteously insisted that Mr. More should set the copy, he thus set it, ingeniously quaint!

> As more, and MORE, our understanding clears,
>
> So more and more our ignorance appears.

The result of this pen-combat was really lamentable; they displayed such an equality of excellence that the umpires refused to decide, till one of them espied that Mr. German had omitted the tittle of an i! But Mr. More was evidently a man of genius, not only by his couplet, but in his "Essay on the Invention of Writing," where occurs this noble passage: "Art with me is of no party. A noble emulation I would cherish, while it proceeded neither from, nor to malevolence. Bales had his Johnson, Norman his Mason, Ayres his Matlock and his Shelley; yet Art the while was no sufferer. The busybody who officiously employs himself in creating misunderstandings between artists, may be compared to a turn-stile, which stands in every man's way, yet hinders nobody; and he is the slanderer who gives ear to the slander."[109]

Among these knights of the "Plume volante," whose chivalric exploits astounded the beholders, must be distinguished Peter Bales in his joust with David Johnson. In this tilting-match the guerdon of caligraphy was won by

the greatest of caligraphers; its *arms* were assumed by the victor, *azure, a pen or*; while the "golden pen," carried away in triumph, was painted with a hand over the door of the caligrapher. The history of this renowned encounter was only traditionally known, till with my own eyes I pondered on this whole trial of skill in the precious manuscript of the champion himself; who, like Cæsar, not only knew how to win victories, but also to record them. Peter Bales was a hero of such transcendent eminence, that his name has entered into our history. Holinshed chronicles one of his curiosities of microscopic writing at a time when the taste prevailed for admiring writing which no eye could read! In the compass of a silver penny this caligrapher put more things than would fill several of these pages. He presented Queen Elizabeth with the manuscript set in a ring of gold covered with a crystal; he had also contrived a magnifying glass of such power, that, to her delight and wonder, her majesty read the whole volume, which she held on her thumb-nail, and "commended the same to the lords of the council and the ambassadors;" and frequently, as Peter often heard, did her majesty vouchsafe to wear this caligraphic ring.[110]

"Some will think I labour on a cobweb"—modestly exclaimed Bales in his narrative, and his present historian much fears for himself! The reader's gratitude will not be proportioned to my pains, in condensing such copious pages into the size of a "silver penny," but without its worth!

For a whole year had David Johnson affixed a challenge "To any one who should take exceptions to this my writing and teaching." He was a young friend of Bales, daring and longing for an encounter; yet Bales was magnanimously silent, till he discovered that he was "doing much less in writing and teaching" since this public challenge was proclaimed! He then set up his counter-challenge, and in one hour afterwards Johnson arrogantly accepted it, "in a most despiteful and disgraceful manner." Bales's challenge was delivered "in good terms." "To all Englishmen and

strangers." It was to write for a gold pen of twenty pounds value in all kinds of hands, "best, straightest, and fastest," and most kind of ways; "a full, a mean, a small, with line, and without line; in a slow set hand, a mean facile hand, and a fast running hand;" and further, "to write truest and speediest, most secretary and clerk-like, from a man's mouth, reading or pronouncing, either English or Latin."

Young Johnson had the hardihood now of turning the tables on his great antagonist, accusing the veteran Bales of arrogance. Such an absolute challenge, says he, was never witnessed by man, "without exception of any in the world!" And a few days after meeting Bales, "of set purpose to affront and disgrace him what he could, showed Bales a piece of writing of secretary's hand, which he had very much laboured in fine abortive parchment,"[111] uttering to the challenger these words: "Mr. Bales, give me one shilling out of your purse, and if within six months you better, or equal this piece of writing, I will give you forty pounds for it." This legal deposit of the shilling was made, and the challenger, or appellant, was thereby bound by law to the performance.

The day before the trial a printed declaration was affixed throughout the city, taunting Bales's "proud poverty," and his pecuniary motives, as "a thing ungentle, base, and mercenary, and not answerable to the dignity of the golden pen!" Johnson declares he would maintain his challenge for a thousand pounds more, but for the respondent's inability to perform a thousand groats. Bales retorts on the libel; declares it as a sign of his rival's weakness, "yet who so bold as blind Bayard, that hath not a word of Latin to cast at a dog, or say Bo! to a goose!"

On Michaelmas day, 1595, the trial opened before five judges: the appellant and the respondent appeared at the appointed place, and an ancient gentleman was intrusted with "the golden pen." In the first trial, for the manner of teaching scholars, after Johnson had taught his pupil a

fortnight, he would not bring him forward! This was awarded in favour of Bales.

The second, for secretary and clerk-like writing, dictating to them both in English and in Latin, Bales performed best, being first done; written straightest without line, with true orthography: the challenger himself confessing that he wanted the Latin tongue, and was no clerk!

The third and last trial for fair writing in sundry kinds of hands, the challenger prevailed for the beauty and most "authentic proportion," and for the superior variety of the Roman hand. In the court hand the respondent exceeded the appellant, and likewise in the set text; and in bastard secretary was also somewhat perfecter.

At length Bales, perhaps perceiving an equilibrium in the judicial decision, to overwhelm his antagonist presented what he distinguishes as his "masterpiece," composed of secretary and Roman hand four ways varied, and offering the defendant to let pass all his previous advantages if he could better this specimen of caligraphy! The challenger was silent! At this moment some of the judges perceiving that the decision must go in favour of Bales, in consideration of the youth of the challenger, lest he might be disgraced to the world, requested the other judges not to pass judgment in public. Bales assures us, that he in vain remonstrated; for by these means the winning of the golden pen might not be so famously spread as otherwise it would have been. To Bales the prize was awarded. But our history has a more interesting close; the subtle Machiavelism of the first challenger!

When the great trial had closed, and Bales, carrying off the golden pen, exultingly had it painted and set up for his sign, the baffled challenger went about reporting that *he* had *won* the golden pen, but that the defendant had obtained the same by "plots and shifts, and other base and cunning

practices.” Bales vindicated his claim, and offered to show the world his “masterpiece” which had acquired it. Johnson issued an “Appeal to all Impartial Penmen,” which he spread in great numbers through the city for ten days, a libel against the judges and the victorious defendant! He declared that there had been a subtle combination with one of the judges concerning the place of trial; which he expected to have been “before penmen,” but not before a multitude like a stage-play, and shouts and tumults, with which the challenger had hitherto been unacquainted. The judges were intended to be twelve; but of the five, four were the challenger’s friends, honest gentlemen, but unskilled in judging of most hands; and he offered again forty pounds to be allowed in six months to equal Bales’s masterpiece. And he closes his “appeal” by declaring that Bales had lost in several parts of the trial, neither did the judges deny that Bales possessed himself of the golden pen by a trick! Before judgment was awarded, alleging the sickness of his wife to be extreme, he desired she might have *a sight of the golden pen to comfort her*! The ancient gentleman who was the holder, taking the defendant’s word, allowed the golden pen to be carried to the sick wife; and Bales immediately pawned it, and afterwards, to make sure work, sold it at a great loss, so that when the judges met for their definite sentence, nor pen nor pennyworth was to be had! The judges being ashamed of their own conduct, were compelled to give such a verdict as suited the occasion.

Bales rejoins: he publishes to the universe the day and the hour when the judges brought the golden pen to his house, and while he checks the insolence of this Bobadil, to show himself no recreant, assumes the golden pen for his sign.

Such is the shortest history I could contrive of this chivalry of the pen; something mysteriously clouds over the fate of the defendant; Bales’s

history, like Cæsar's, is but an *ex-parte* evidence. Who can tell whether he has not slurred over his defeats, and only dwelt on his victories?

There is a strange phrase connected with the art of the caligrapher, which I think may be found in most, if not in all modern languages, *to write like an angel*! Ladies have been frequently compared with angels; they are *beautiful* as angels, and *sing* and *dance* like angels; but, however intelligible these are, we do not so easily connect penmanship with the other celestial accomplishments. This fanciful phrase, however, has a very human origin. Among those learned Greeks who emigrated to Italy, and afterwards into France, in the reign of Francis I., was one Angelo *Vergecio*, whose beautiful caligraphy excited the admiration of the learned. The French monarch had a Greek fount cast, modelled by his writing. The learned Henry Stephens, who, like our Porson for correctness and delicacy, was one of the most elegant writers of Greek, had learnt the practice from our *Angelo*. His name became synonymous for beautiful writing, and gave birth to the vulgar proverb or familiar phrase *to write like an angel*!

109 I have not met with More's book, and am obliged to transcribe this from the Biog. Brit.

110 Howes, in his Chronicle under date 1576, has thus narrated the story:—"A strange piece of work, and almost incredible, was brought to pass by an Englishman from within the city of London, and a clerk of the Chancery, named Peter Bales, who by his industry and practice of his pen contrived and writ, within the compass of a penny, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, a prayer to God, a prayer for the queen, his posy, his name, the day of the month, the year of our Lord, and the reign of the queen: and at Hampton Court he presented the same to the queen's majesty."

111 This was written in the reign of Elizabeth. Holyoke notices "virgin-perchment made of an *abortive skin; membrana virgo*." Peacham, on "Drawing," calls parchment simply *an abortive*.

THE ITALIAN HISTORIANS.

It is remarkable that the country which has long lost its political independence may be considered as the true parent of modern history. The greater part of their historians have abstained from the applause of their contemporaries, while they have not the less elaborately composed their posthumous folios, consecrated solely to truth and posterity! The true principles of national glory are opened by the grandeur of the minds of these assertors of political freedom. It was their indignant spirit, seeking to

console its injuries by confiding them to their secret manuscripts, which raised up this singular phenomenon in the literary world.

Of the various causes which produced such a lofty race of patriots, one is prominent. The proud recollections of their Roman fathers often troubled the dreams of the sons. The petty rival republics, and the petty despotic principalities, which had started up from some great families, who at first came forward as the protectors of the people from their exterior enemies or their interior factions, at length settled into a corruption of power; a power which had been conferred on them to preserve liberty itself! These factions often shook, by their jealousies, their fears, and their hatreds, that divided land, which groaned whenever they witnessed the "Ultramontanes" descending from their Alps and their Apennines. Petrarch, in a noble invective, warmed by Livy and ancient Rome, impatiently beheld the French and the Germans passing the mounts. "Enemies," he cries, "so often conquered prepare to strike with swords which formerly served us to raise our trophies: shall the mistress of the world bear chains forged by hands which she has so often bound to their backs?" Machiavel, in his "Exhortations to Free Italy from the Barbarians," rouses his country against their changeable masters, the Germans, the French, and the Spaniards; closing with the verse of Petrarch, that short shall be the battle for which virtue arms to show the world—

che l' antico valore
Ne gl' Italici cuor non è ancor morto.

Nor has this sublime patriotism declined even in more recent times; I cannot resist from preserving in this place a sonnet by Filicaja, which I could never read without participating in the agitation of the writer for the ancient glory of his degenerated country! The energetic personification of

the close perhaps surpasses even his more celebrated sonnet, preserved in Lord Byron's notes to the fourth canto of "Childe Harold."

Dov' è ITALIA, il tuo braccio? e a che ti servi
Tu dell' altrui? non è s' io scorgo il vero,
Di chi t' offende il defensor men fero:
Ambe nemici sono, ambo fur servi.
Così dunque l' onor, così conservi
Gli avanzi tu del glorioso Impero?
Cosi al valor, cosi al valor primiero
Che a te fede giurò, la fede osservi?
Or va; repudia il valor prisco, e sposa
L' ozio, e fra il sangue, i gemiti, e le strida
Nel periglio maggior dormi e riposa!
Dormi, Adultera vil! fin che omicida
Spada ultrice ti svegli, e sonnacchiosa,
E nuda in braccio al tuo fedel t'uccida!

Oh, Italy! where is thine arm? What purpose serves
So to be helped by others? Deem I right,
Among offenders thy defender stands?
Both *are* thy enemies—both *were* thy servants!
Thus dost thou honour—thus dost thou preserve
The mighty boundaries of the glorious empire?
And thus to Valour, to thy pristine Valour
That swore its faith to thee, thy faith thou keep'st?
Go! and divorce thyself from thy old Valiance,
And marry Idleness: and midst the blood,
The heavy groans and cries of agony,
In thy last danger sleep, and seek repose!
Sleep, vile Adulteress! the homicidal sword

Vengeful shall waken thee! and lull'd to slumber,

While naked in thy minion's arms, shall strike!

Among the domestic contests of Italy the true principles of political freedom were developed; and in that country we may find the origin of that PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY which includes so many important views and so many new results unknown to the ancients.

Machiavel seems to have been the first writer who discovered the secret of what may be called *comparative history*. He it was who first sought in ancient history for the materials which were to illustrate the events of his own times, by fixing on analogous facts, similar personages, and parallel periods. This was enlarging the field of history, and opening a new combination for philosophical speculation. His profound genius advanced still further; he not only explained modern by ancient history, but he deduced those results or principles founded on this new sort of evidence which guided him in forming his opinions. History had hitherto been, if we except Tacitus, but a story well told; and by writers of limited capacity, the detail and number of facts had too often been considered as the only valuable portion of history. An erudition of facts is not the philosophy of history; an historian unskilful in the art of applying his facts amasses impure ore, which he cannot strike into coin. The chancellor D'Aguesseau, in his instructions to his son on the study of history, has admirably touched on this distinction. "Minds which are purely historical mistake a fact for an argument; they are so accustomed to satisfy themselves by repeating a great number of facts and enriching their memory, that they become incapable of reasoning on principles. It often happens that the result of their knowledge breeds confusion and universal indecision; for their facts, often contradictory, only raise up doubts. The superfluous and the frivolous occupy the place of what is essential and solid, or at least so overload and darken it that we must sail with them in a sea of trifles to get to firm land.

Those who only value the philosophical part of history fall into an opposite extreme; they judge of what has been done by that which should be done; while the others always decide on what should be done by that which has been: the first are the dupes of their reasoning, the second of the facts which they mistake for reasoning. We should not separate two things which ought always to go in concert, and mutually lend an aid, *reason and example*! Avoid equally the contempt of some philosophers for the science of facts, and the distaste or the incapacity which those who confine themselves to facts often contract for whatever depends on pure reasoning. True and solid philosophy should direct us in the study of history, and the study of history should give perfection to philosophy." Such was the enlightened opinion, as far back as at the beginning of the seventeenth century, of the studious chancellor of France, before the more recent designation of *Philosophical History* was so generally received, and so familiar on our title-pages.

From the moment that the Florentine secretary conceived the idea that the history of the Roman people, opening such varied spectacles of human nature, served as a point of comparison to which he might perpetually recur to try the analogous facts of other nations and the events passing under his own eye, a new light broke out and ran through the vast extents of history. The maturity of experience seemed to have been obtained by the historian in his solitary meditation. Livy in the grandeur of Rome, and Tacitus in its fated decline, exhibited for Machiavel a moving picture of his own republics—the march of destiny in all human governments! The text of Livy and Tacitus revealed to him many an imperfect secret—the fuller truth he drew from the depth of his own observations on his own times. In Machiavel's "Discourses on Livy" we may discover the foundations of our *Philosophical History*.

The example of Machiavel, like that of all creative genius, influenced the character of his age, and his history of Florence produced an emulative

spirit among a new dynasty of historians.

The Italian historians have proved themselves to be an extraordinary race, for they devoted their days to the composition of historical works which they were certain could not see the light during their lives! They nobly determined that their works should be posthumous, rather than be compelled to mutilate them for the press. These historians were rather the saints than the martyrs of history; they did not always personally suffer for truth, but during their protracted labour they sustained their spirit by anticipating their glorified after-state.

Among these Italian historians must be placed the illustrious Guicciardini, the friend of Machiavel. No perfect edition of this historian existed till recent times. The history itself was posthumous; nor did his nephew venture to publish it till twenty years after the historian's death. He only gave the first sixteen books, and these castrated. The obnoxious passages consisted of some statements relating to the papal court, then so important in the affairs of Europe; some account of the origin and progress of the papal power; some eloquent pictures of the abuses and disorders of that corrupt court; and some free caricatures on the government of Florence. The precious fragments were fortunately preserved in manuscript, and the Protestants procured transcripts which they published separately, but which were long very rare.[112] All the Italian editions continued to be reprinted in the same truncated condition, and appear only to have been reinstated in the immortal history so late as in 1775! Thus, it required two centuries before an editor could venture to give the world the pure and complete text of the manuscript of the lieutenant-general of the papal army, who had been so close and so indignant an observer of the Roman cabinet.

Adriani, whom his son entitles *gentiluomo Fiorentino*, the writer of the pleasing dissertation "on the Ancient Painters noticed by Pliny," prefixed to his friend Vasari's biographies, wrote as a continuation of Guicciardini, a

history of his own times in twenty-two books, of which Denina gives the highest character for its moderate spirit, and from which De Thou has largely drawn, and commends for its authenticity. Our author, however, did not venture to publish his history during his lifetime: it was after his death that his son became the editor.

Nardi, of a noble family and high in office, famed for a translation of Livy which rivals its original in the pleasure it affords, in his retirement from public affairs wrote a history of Florence, which closes with the loss of the liberty of his country in 1531. It was not published till fifty years after his death; even then the editors suppressed many passages which are found in manuscript in the libraries of Florence and Venice, with other historical documents of this noble and patriotic historian.

About the same time the senator Philip Nerli was writing his "*Commentarj de' fatti civili*," which had occurred in Florence. He gave them with his dying hand to his nephew, who presented the MSS. to the Grand Duke; yet, although this work is rather an apology than a crimination of the Medici family for their ambitious views and their overgrown power, probably some state-reason interfered to prevent the publication, which did not take place till 150 years after the death of the historian!

Bernardo Segni composed a history of Florence still more valuable, which shared the same fate as that of Nerli. It was only after his death that his relatives accidentally discovered this history of Florence, which the author had carefully concealed during his lifetime. He had abstained from communicating to any one the existence of such a work while he lived, that he might not be induced to check the freedom of his pen, nor compromise the cause and the interests of truth. His heirs presented it to one of the Medici family, who threw it aside. Another copy had been more carefully preserved, from which it was printed in 1713, about 150 years after it had been written. It appears to have excited great curiosity, for Lenglet du

Fresnoy observes that the scarcity of this history is owing to the circumstance "of the Grand Duke having bought up the copies." Du Fresnoy, indeed, has noticed more than once this sort of address of the Grand Duke; for he observes on the Florentine history of Bruto that the work was not common, the Grand Duke having bought up the copies to suppress them. The author was even obliged to fly from Italy for having delivered his opinions too freely on the house of the Medici. This honest historian thus expresses himself at the close of his work:—"My design has but one end—that our posterity may learn by these notices the root and the causes of so many troubles which we have suffered, while they expose the malignity of those men who have raised them up or prolonged them, as well as the goodness of those who did all which they could to turn them away."

It was the same motive, the fear of offending the great personages or their families, of whom these historians had so freely written, which deterred Benedetto Varchi from publishing his well-known "Storie Fiorentine," which was not given to the world till 1721, a period which appears to have roused the slumbers of the literary men of Italy to recur to their native historians. Varchi, who wrote with so much zeal the history of his fatherland, is noticed by Nardi as one who never took an active part in the events he records; never having combined with any party, and living merely as a spectator. This historian closes the narrative of a horrid crime of Peter Lewis Farnese with this admirable reflection: "I know well this story, with many others which I have freely exposed, may hereafter prevent the reading of my history; but also I know, that besides what Tacitus has said on this subject, the great duty of an historian is not to be more careful of the reputation of persons than is suitable with truth, which is to be preferred to all things, however detrimental it may be to the writer."[113]

Such was that free manner of thinking and of writing which prevailed in these Italian historians, who, often living in the midst of the ruins of popular

freedom, poured forth their injured feelings in their secret pages; without the hope, and perhaps without the wish, of seeing them published in their lifetime: a glorious example of self-denial and lofty patriotism!

Had it been inquired of these writers why they did not publish their histories, they might have answered, in nearly the words of an ancient sage, “Because I am not permitted to write as I would; and I would not write as I am permitted.” We cannot imagine that these great men were in the least insensible to the applause they denied themselves; they were not of tempers to be turned aside; and it was the highest motive which can inspire an historian, a stern devotion to truth, which reduced them to silence, but not to inactivity! These Florentine and Venetian historians, ardent with truth, and profound in political sagacity, were writing these legacies of history solely for their countrymen, hopeless of their gratitude! If a Frenchman[114] wrote the English history, that labour was the aliment of his own glory; if Hume and Robertson devoted their pens to history, the motive of the task was less glorious than their work; but here we discover a race of historians, whose patriotism alone instigated their secret labour, and who substituted for fame and fortune that mightier spirit, which, amidst their conflicting passions, has developed the truest principles, and even the errors, of Political Freedom!

None of these historians, we have seen, published their works in their lifetime. I have called them the saints of history, rather than the martyrs. One, however, had the intrepidity to risk this awful responsibility, and he stands forth among the most illustrious and ill-fated examples of HISTORICAL MARTYRDOM!

This great historian is Giannone, whose civil history of the kingdom of Naples is remarkable for its profound inquiries concerning the civil and ecclesiastical constitution, the laws and customs of that kingdom. With some interruptions from his professional avocations at the bar, twenty years

were consumed in writing this history. Researches on ecclesiastical usurpations, and severe strictures on the clergy, are the chief subjects of his bold and unreserved pen. These passages, curious, grave, and indignant, were afterwards extracted from the history by Vernet, and published in a small volume, under the title of “Anecdotes Ecclésiastiques,” 1738. When Giannone consulted with a friend on the propriety of publishing his history, his critic, in admiring the work, predicted the fate of the author. “You have,” said he, “placed on your head a crown of thorns, and of very sharp ones.” The historian set at nought his own personal repose, and in 1723 this elaborate history saw the light. From that moment the historian never enjoyed a day of quiet! Rome attempted at first to extinguish the author with his work; all the books were seized on; and copies of the first edition are of extreme rarity. To escape the fangs of inquisitorial power, the historian of Naples flew from Naples on the publication of his immortal work. The fugitive and excommunicated author sought an asylum at Vienna, where, though he found no friend in the emperor, Prince Eugene and other nobles became his patrons. Forced to quit Vienna, he retired to Venice, when a new persecution arose from the jealousy of the state-inquisitors, who one night landed him on the borders of the pope’s dominions. Escaping unexpectedly with his life to Geneva, he was preparing a supplemental volume to his celebrated history, when, enticed by a treacherous friend to a catholic village, Giannone was arrested by an order of the King of Sardinia; his manuscripts were sent to Rome, and the historian imprisoned in a fort. It is curious that the imprisoned Giannone wrote a vindication of the rights of the King of Sardinia, against the claims of the court of Rome. This powerful appeal to the feelings of this sovereign was at first favourably received; but, under the secret influence of Rome, the Sardinian monarch, on the extraordinary plea that he kept Giannone as a prisoner of state that he might preserve him from the papal power, ordered that the vindicator of his rights should be more closely confined than

before; and, for this purpose, transferred his state-prisoner to the citadel of Turin, where, after twelve years of persecution and of agitation, our great historian closed his life!

Such was the fate of this historical martyr, whose work the catholic Haym describes as *opera scritta con molto fuoco e troppa libertà*. He hints that this history is only paralleled by De Thou's great work. This Italian history will ever be ranked among the most philosophical. But, profound as was the masculine genius of Giannone, such was his love of fame, that he wanted the intrepidity requisite to deny himself the delight of giving his history to the world, though some of his great predecessors had set him a noble and dignified example.

One more observation on these Italian historians. All of them represent man in his darkest colours; their drama is terrific; the actors are monsters of perfidy, of inhumanity, and inventors of crimes which seem to want a name! They were all "princes of darkness;" and the age seemed to afford a triumph of Manicheism! The worst passions were called into play by all parties. But if something is to be ascribed to the manners of the times, much more may be traced to that science of politics, which sought for mastery in an undefinable struggle of ungovernable political power; in the remorseless ambition of the despots, and the hatreds and jealousies of the republics. These Italian historians have formed a perpetual satire on the contemptible simulation and dissimulation, and the inexpiable crimes of that system of politics, which has derived a name from one of themselves—the great, may we add, the calumniated, MACHIAVEL?

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112 They were printed at Basle in 1569—at London in 1595—in Amsterdam, 1663. How many attempts to echo the voice of suppressed truth—*Haym's Bib. Ital.* 1803.

113 My friend, Mr. Merivale, whose critical research is only equalled by the elegance of his taste, has supplied me with a note which proves but too well that even writers who compose

uninfluenced by party feelings, may not, however, be sufficiently scrupulous in weighing the evidence of the facts which they collect. Mr. Merivale observes, “The strange and improbable narrative with which Varchi has the misfortune of closing his history, should not have been even hinted at without adding, that it is denounced by other writers as a most impudent forgery, invented years after the occurrence is supposed to have happened, by the ‘Apostate’ bishop Petrus Paulus Vergerius.” See its refutation in Amiani, “Hist. di Fano,” ii. 149, et seq. 160.

“Varchi’s character as an historian cannot but suffer greatly from his having given it insertion on such authority. The responsibility of an author for the truth of what he relates should render us very cautious of giving credit to the writers of memoirs not intended to see the light till a distant period. The credibility of Vergerius, as an acknowledged libeller of Pope Paul III. and his family, appears still more conclusively from his article in Bayle, note K.” It must be added, that the calumny of Vergerius may be found in Wolfius’s Lect. Mem. ii. 691, in a tract *de Idolo Lauretano*, published 1556. Varchi is more particular in his details of this monstrous tale. Vergerius’s libels, universally read at the time though they were collected afterwards, are now not to be met with, even in public libraries. Whether there was any truth in the story of Peter Lewis Farnese I know not; but crimes of as monstrous a dye occur in the authentic Guicciardini. The story is not yet forgotten, since in the last edition of Haym’s *Biblioteca Italiana*, the best edition is marked as that which at p. 639 contains “*la sceleratezza di Pier Lewis Farnese*.” I am of opinion that Varchi believed the story, by the solemnity of his proposition. Whatever be its truth, the historian’s feeling was elevated and intrepid.

114 Rapin.

OF PALACES BUILT BY MINISTERS.

OUR ministers and court favourites, as well as those on the Continent, practised a very impolitical custom, and one likely to be repeated, although it has never failed to cast a popular odium on their names, exciting even the envy of their equals—in the erection of palaces for themselves, which outvied those of their sovereign; and which, to the eyes of the populace, appeared as a perpetual and insolent exhibition of what they deemed the ill-earned wages of peculation, oppression, and court-favour. We discover the seduction of this passion for ostentation, this haughty sense of their power, and this self-idolatry, even among the most prudent and the wisest of our ministers; and not one but lived to lament over this vain act of imprudence. To these ministers the noble simplicity of Pitt will ever form an admirable contrast; while his personal character, as a statesman, descends to posterity unstained by calumny.

The houses of Cardinal Wolsey appear to have exceeded the palaces of the sovereign in magnificence; and potent as he was in all the pride of pomp, the "great cardinal" found rabid envy pursuing him so close at his heels, that he relinquished one palace after the other, and gave up as gifts to the monarch what, in all his overgrown greatness, he trembled to retain for himself. The state satire of that day was often pointed at this very circumstance, as appears in Skelton's "Why come ye not to Court?" and Roy's "Rede me, and be not wrothe."[115] Skelton's railing rhymes leave their bitter teeth in his purple pride; and the style of both these satirists, if we use our own orthography, shows how little the language of the common people has varied during three centuries.

Set up a wretch on high
In a throne triumphantly;
Make him a great state

And he will play check-mate
With royal majesty——
The King's Court
Should have the excellence,
But Hampton Court
Hath the pre-eminence;
And Yorke Place[116]
With my Lord's grace,
To whose magnificence
Is all the confluence,
Suits, and supplications;
Embassies of all nations.

Roy, in contemplating the palace, is maliciously reminded of the butcher's lad, and only gives plain sense in plain words.

Hath the Cardinal any gay mansion?
Great palaces without comparison,
  Most glorious of outward sight,
And within decked point-device,[117]
More like unto a paradise
  Than an earthly habitation.
He cometh then of some noble stock?
His father could match a bullock,
  A butcher by his occupation.

Whatever we may now think of the structure, and the low apartments of Wolsey's PALACE, it is described not only in his own times, but much later, as of unparalleled magnificence; and indeed Cavendish's narrative of the Cardinal's entertainment of the French ambassadors gives an idea of the

ministerial prelate's imperial establishment very puzzling to the comprehension of a modern inspector. Six hundred persons, I think, were banqueted and slept in an abode which appears to us so mean, but which Stowe calls "so stately a palace." To avoid the odium of living in this splendid edifice, Wolsey presented it to the king, who, in recompense, suffered the Cardinal occasionally to inhabit this wonder of England, in the character of keeper of the king's palace;[118] so that Wolsey only dared to live in his own palace by a subterfuge! This perhaps was a tribute which ministerial haughtiness paid to popular feeling, or to the jealousy of a royal master.

I have elsewhere shown the extraordinary elegance and prodigality of expenditure of Buckingham's residences; they were such as to have extorted the wonder even of Bassompierre, and unquestionably excited the indignation of those who lived in a poor court, while our gay and thoughtless minister alone could indulge in the wanton profusion.

But Wolsey and Buckingham were ambitious and adventurous; they rose and shone the comets of the political horizon of Europe. The Roman tiara still haunted the imagination of the Cardinal: and the egotistic pride of having out-rivalled Richelieu and Olivarez, the nominal ministers but the real sovereigns of Europe, kindled the buoyant spirits of the gay, the gallant, and the splendid Villiers. But what "folly of the wise" must account for the conduct of the profound Clarendon, and the sensible Sir Robert Walpole, who, like the other two ministers, equally became the victims of this imprudent passion for the ostentatious pomp of a palace. This magnificence looked like the vaunt of insolence in the eyes of the people, and covered the ministers with a popular odium.

Clarendon House is now only to be viewed in a print; but its story remains to be told. It was built on the site of Grafton-street; and when afterwards purchased by Monk, the Duke of Albemarle, he left his title to

that well-known street. It was an edifice of considerable extent and grandeur. Clarendon reproaches himself in his Life for “his weakness and vanity” in the vast expense incurred in this building, which he acknowledges had “more contributed to that gust of envy that had so violently shaken him, than any misdemeanour that he was thought to have been guilty of.” It ruined his estate; but he had been encouraged to it by the royal grant of the land, by that passion for building to which he owns “he was naturally too much inclined,” and perhaps by other circumstances, among which was the opportunity of purchasing the stones which had been designed for the rebuilding of St. Paul’s; but the envy it drew on him, and the excess of the architect’s proposed expense, had made his life “very uneasy, and near insupportable.” The truth is, that when this palace was finished, it was imputed to him as a state-crime; all the evils in the nation, which were then numerous, pestilence, conflagration, war, and defeats, were discovered to be in some way connected with Clarendon House, or, as it was popularly called, either Dunkirk House, or Tangier Hall, from a notion that it had been erected with the golden bribery which the chancellor had received for the sale of Dunkirk and Tangiers.[119] He was reproached with having profaned the sacred stones dedicated to the use of the church. The great but unfortunate master of this palace, who, from a private lawyer, had raised himself by alliance even to royalty, the father-in-law of the Duke of York, it was maliciously suggested, had persuaded Charles the Second to marry the Infanta of Portugal, knowing (but how Clarendon obtained the knowledge his enemies have not revealed) that the Portuguese princess was not likely to raise any obstacle to the inheritance of his own daughter to the throne. At the Restoration, among other enemies, Clarendon found that the royalists were none of the least active; he was reproached by them for preferring those who had been the cause of their late troubles. The same reproach was incurred on the restoration of the Bourbons. It is perhaps more political to maintain active men, who have obtained power, than to reinstate

inferior talents, who at least have not their popularity. This is one of the parallel cases which so frequently strike us in exploring political history; and the *ultras* of Louis the Eighteenth were only the *royalists* of Charles the Second. There was a strong popular delusion carried on by the wits and the *Misses* who formed the court of Charles the Second, that the government was as much shared by the Hydes as the Stuarts. We have in the state-poems, an unsparing lampoon, entitled "Clarendon's House-warming;" but a satire yielding nothing to it in severity I have discovered in manuscript; and it is also remarkable for turning chiefly on a pun of the family name of the Earl of Clarendon. The witty and malicious rhymer, after making Charles the Second demand the Great Seal, and resolve to be his own chancellor, proceeds, reflecting on the great political victim:

Lo! his whole ambition already divides
The sceptre between the Stuarts and the Hydes.
Behold in the depth of our plague and wars,
He built him a palace out-braves the stars;
Which house (we Dunkirk, he Clarendon, names)
Looks down with shame upon St. James;
But 'tis not his golden globe that will save him,
Being less than the custom-house farmers gave him;
His chapel for consecration calls,
Whose sacrilege plundered the stones from Paul's.
When Queen Dido landed she bought as much ground
As the *Hyde* of a lusty fat bull would surround;
But when the said *Hyde* was cut into thongs,
A city and kingdom to *Hyde* belongs;
So here in court, church, and country, far and wide,
Here's nought to be seen but *Hyde! Hyde! Hyde!*
Of old, and where law the kingdom divides,

’Twas our Hydes of land, ’tis now land of Hydes!

Clarendon House was a palace, which had been raised with at least as much fondness as pride; and Evelyn tells us that the garden was planned by himself and his lordship; but the cost, as usual, trebled the calculation, and the noble master grieved in silence amidst this splendid pile of architecture.[120] Even when in his exile the sale was proposed to pay his debts, and secure some provision for his younger children, he honestly tells us that “he remained so infatuated with the delight he had enjoyed, that though he was deprived of it, he hearkened very unwillingly to the advice.” In 1683 Clarendon House met its fate, and was abandoned to the brokers, who had purchased it for its materials. An affecting circumstance is recorded by Evelyn on this occasion. In returning to town with the Earl of Clarendon, the son of the great earl, “in passing by the glorious palace his father built but a few years before, which they were now demolishing, being sold to certain undertakers,[121] I turned my head the contrary way till the coach was gone past by, lest I might minister occasion of speaking of it, which must needs have grieved him, that in so short a time this pomp was fallen.” A feeling of infinite delicacy, so perfectly characteristic of Evelyn!

And now to bring down this subject to times still nearer. We find that Sir Robert Walpole had placed himself exactly in the situation of the great minister we have noticed; we have his confession to his brother Lord Walpole, and to his friend Sir John Hynde Cotton. The historian of this minister observes, that his magnificent building at Houghton drew on him great obloquy. On seeing his brother’s house at Wolterton, Sir Robert expressed his wishes that he had contented himself with a similar structure. In the reign of Anne, Sir Robert, sitting by Sir John Hynde Cotton, alluding to a sumptuous house which was then building by Harley, observed, that to construct a great house was a high act of imprudence in any minister! It was a long time after, when he had become prime minister, that he forgot the

whole result of the present article, and pulled down his family mansion at Houghton to build its magnificent edifice; it was then Sir John Hynde Cotton reminded him of the reflection which he had made some years ago: the reply of Sir Robert is remarkable—"Your recollection is too late; I wish you had reminded me of it before I began building, for then it might have been of service to me!"

The statesman and politician then are susceptible of all the seduction of ostentation and the pride of pomp! Who would have credited it? But bewildered with power, in the magnificence and magnitude of the edifices which their colossal greatness inhabits, they seem to contemplate on its image!

Sir Francis Walsingham died and left nothing to pay his debts, as appears by a curious fact noticed in the anonymous life of Sir Philip Sidney prefixed to the *Arcadia*, and evidently written by one acquainted with the family history of his friend and hero. The chivalric Sidney, though sought after by court beauties, solicited the hand of the daughter of Walsingham, although, as it appears, she could have had no other portion than her own virtues and her father's name. "And herein," observes our anonymous biographer, "he was exemplary to all gentlemen not to carry their love in their purses." On this he notices this secret history of Walsingham:

"This is that Sir Francis who impoverished himself to enrich the state, and indeed made England his heir; and was so far from building up of fortune by the benefit of his place, that he demolished that fine estate left him by his ancestors to purchase dear intelligence from all parts of Christendom. He had a key to unlock the pope's cabinet; and, as if master of some invisible whispering-place, all the secrets of Christian princes met at his closet. Wonder not then if he bequeathed no great wealth to his daughter, being *privately interred* in the choir of Paul's, as *much indebted to his creditors* though not so much as our nation is indebted to his memory."

Some curious inquirer may afford us a catalogue of great ministers of state who have voluntarily declined the augmentation of their private fortune, while they devoted their days to the noble pursuits of patriotic glory! The labour of this research will be great, and the volume small!

115 Skelton's satire is accessible to the reader in the Rev. Alexander Dyce's edition of the poet's works. Roy's poem was printed abroad about 1525, and is of extreme rarity, as the cardinal spared no labour and expense to purchase and destroy all the copies. A second edition was printed at Wesel in 1546. Its author, who had been a friar, was ultimately burned in Portugal for heresy.

116 The palace of Wolsey, as Archbishop of York, which he had furnished in the most sumptuous manner; after his disgrace it became a royal residence under the name of Whitehall. —Note in Dyce's ed. of Skelton's Works.

117 *Point-device*, a term explained by Mr. Douce. He thinks that it is borrowed from the labours of the needle, as we have *point-lace*, so *point-device*, i. e., *point*, a stitch, and *devise*, devised or invented; applied to describe anything uncommonly exact, or worked with the nicety and precision of *stitches made or devised by the needle*.—*Illustrations of Shakspeare*, i. 93. But Mr. Gifford has since observed that the origin of the expression is, perhaps, yet to be sought for: he derives it from a mathematical phrase, *à point devisé*, or *a given point*, and hence exact, correct, &c.—*Ben Jonson*, vol. iv. 170. See, for various examples, Mr. Nares's Glossary, art. *Point-devise*.

118 Lyson's "Environs," v. 58

119 Burnet says, "Others called it *Holland House*, because he was believed to be no friend to the war: so it was given out that he had money from the Dutch."

120 At the gateway of the Three Kings Inn, near Dover-street, in Piccadilly, are two pilasters with Corinthian capitals, which belonged to Clarendon House, and are perhaps the only remains of that edifice.

121 An old term for *contractors*. Evelyn tells us they were "certain rich bankers and mechanics, who gave for it, and the ground about it, 35,000*l*." They built streets and houses on the site to their great profit, the ground comprising twenty-four acres of land.

"TAXATION NO TYRANNY!"

SUCH was the title of a famous political tract, which was issued at a moment when a people, in a state of insurrection, put forth a declaration that taxation was tyranny! It was not against an insignificant tax they protested, but against taxation itself! and in the temper of the moment this abstract proposition appeared an insolent paradox. It was instantly run down by that everlasting party which, so far back as in the laws of our Henry the First, are designated by the odd descriptive term of *acephali, a people without heads!*122 the strange equality of levellers!

These political monsters in all times have had an association of ideas of *taxation* and *tyranny*, and with them one name instantly suggests the other! This happened to one Gigli of Sienna, who published the first part of a dictionary of the Tuscan language,123 of which only 312 leaves amused the Florentines; these having had the honour of being consigned to the flames by the hands of the hangman for certain popular errors; such as, for instance, under the word *Gran Duca* we find *Vedi Gabelli!* (see Taxes!) and the word *Gabella* was explained by a reference to *Gran Duca*! *Grand-duke*

and *taxes* were synonymes, according to this mordacious lexicographer! Such grievances, and the modes of expressing them, are equally ancient. A Roman consul, by levying a tax on *salt* during the Punic war, was nicknamed *Salinator*, and condemned by "the majesty" of the people! He had formerly done his duty to the country, but the *salter* was now his reward! He retired from Rome, let his beard grow, and by his sordid dress and melancholy air evinced his acute sensibility. The Romans at length wanted the *salter* to command the army—as an injured man, he refused—but he was told that he should bear the caprice of the Roman people with the tenderness of a son for the humours of a parent! He had lost his reputation by a productive tax on salt, though this tax had provided an army and obtained a victory!

Certain it is that Gigli and his numerous adherents are wrong: for were they freed from all restraints as much as if they slept in forests and not in houses; were they inhabitants of wilds and not of cities, so that every man should be his own lawgiver, with a perpetual immunity from all taxation, we could not necessarily infer their political happiness. There are nations where taxation is hardly known, for the people exist in such utter wretchedness, that they are too poor to be taxed; of which the Chinese, among others, exhibit remarkable instances. When Nero would have abolished all taxes, in his excessive passion for popularity, the senate thanked him for his good will to the people, but assured him that this was a certain means not of repairing, but of ruining the commonwealth. Bodin, in his curious work "The Republic," has noticed a class of politicians who are in too great favour with the people. "Many seditious citizens, and desirous of innovations, did of late years promise immunity of taxes and subsidies to our people; but neither could they do it, or if they could have done it, they would not; or if it were done, should we have any commonweal, being the ground and foundation of one."[124]

The undisguised and naked term of “taxation” is, however, so odious to the people, that it may be curious to observe the arts practised by governments, and even by the people themselves, to veil it under some mitigating term. In the first breaking out of the American troubles, they probably would have yielded to the mother-country *the right of taxation*, modified by the term *regulation* (of their trade); this I infer from a letter of Dr. Robertson, who observes, that “the distinction between *taxation* and *regulation* is mere folly!” Even despotic governments have condescended to disguise the contributions forcibly levied, by some appellative which should partly conceal its real nature. Terms have often influenced circumstances, as names do things; and conquest or oppression, which we may allow to be synonymes, apes benevolence whenever it claims as a gift what it exacts as a tribute.

A sort of philosophical history of taxation appears in the narrative of Wood, in his “Inquiry on Homer.” He tells us that “the presents (a term of extensive signification in the East) which are distributed annually by the bashaw of Damascus to the several Arab princes through whose territory he conducts the caravan of pilgrims to Mecca, are, at Constantinople, called a free gift, and considered as an act of the sultan’s generosity towards his indigent subjects; while, on the other hand, the Arab Sheikhs deny even a right of passage through the districts of their command, and exact those sums as a tax due for the permission of going through their country. In the frequent bloody contests which the adjustment of these fees produces, the Turks complain of robbery, and the Arabs of invasion.”[125]

Here we trace *taxation* through all its shifting forms, accommodating itself to the feelings of the different people; the same principle regulated the alternate terms proposed by the buccaneers, when they *asked* what the weaker party was sure to *give*, or when they *levied* what the others paid only as a common *toll*.

When Louis the Eleventh of France beheld his country exhausted by the predatory wars of England, he bought a peace of our Edward the Fourth by an annual sum of fifty thousand crowns, to be paid at London, and likewise granted *pensions* to the English ministers. Holinshed and all our historians call this a yearly *tribute*; but Comines, the French memoir-writer, with a national spirit, denies that these *gifts* were either *pensions* or *tributes*. "Yet," says Bodin, a Frenchman also, but affecting a more philosophical indifference, "it must be either the one or the other; though I confess, that those who receive a pension to obtain peace, commonly boast of it *as if it were a tribute*!"[126] Such are the shades of our feelings in this history of taxation and tribute. But there is another artifice of applying soft names to hard things, by veiling a tyrannical act by a term which presents no disagreeable idea to the imagination. When it was formerly thought desirable, in the relaxation of morals which prevailed in Venice, to institute the office of *censor*, three magistrates were elected bearing this title; but it seemed so harsh and austere in that dissipated city, that these reformers of manners were compelled to change their title; when they were no longer called *censors*, but *I signori sopra il bon vivere della città*, all agreed on the propriety of the office under the softened term. Father Joseph, the secret agent of Cardinal Richelieu, was the inventor of *lettres de cachet*, disguising that instrument of despotism by the amusing term of *a sealed letter*. Expatriation would have been merciful compared with the result of that *billet-doux*, a sealed letter from his majesty!

Burke reflects with profound truth—"Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object; and every nation has formed to itself some favourite point, which, by way of eminence, becomes the criterion of their happiness. It happened that the great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of *taxing*. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates, or

on the balance among the several orders of the state. The question of *money* was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens and most eloquent tongues have been exercised; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered."[127]

One party clamorously asserts that taxation is their grievance, while another demonstrates that the annihilation of taxes would be their ruin! The interests of a great nation, among themselves, are often contrary to each other, and each seems alternately to predominate and to decline. "The sting of taxation," observes Mr. Hallam, "is wastefulness; but it is difficult to name a limit beyond which taxes will not be borne without impatience when *faithfully applied*." In plainer words, this only signifies, we presume, that Mr. Hallam's party would tax us without "wastefulness!" Ministerial or opposition, whatever be the administration, it follows that "taxation is no tyranny;" Dr. Johnson then was terribly abused in his day for a *vox et præterea nihil*!

Still shall the innocent word be hateful, and the people will turn even on their best friend, who in administration inflicts a new impost; as we have shown by the fate of the Roman *Salinator*! Among ourselves, our government, in its constitution, if not always in its practice, long had a consideration towards the feelings of the people, and often contrived to hide the nature of its exactions by a name of blandishment. An enormous grievance was long the office of purveyance. A purveyor was an officer who was to furnish every sort of provision for the royal house, and sometimes for great lords, during their progresses or journeys. His oppressive office, by arbitrarily fixing the market prices, and compelling the countrymen to bring their articles to market, would enter into the history of the arts of grinding the labouring class of society; a remnant of feudal tyranny! The very title of this officer became odious; and by a statute of Edward III. the hateful name of *purveyor* was ordered to be changed into *acheteur* or

buyer![128] A change of name, it was imagined, would conceal its nature! The term often devised, strangely contrasted with the thing itself. Levies of money were long raised under the pathetic appeal of *benevolences*. When Edward IV. was passing over to France, he obtained, under this gentle demand, money towards "the great journey," and afterwards having "rode about the more part of the lands, and used the people in such fair manner, that they were liberal in their gifts;" old Fabian adds, "the which way of the levying of this money was after-named a benevolence." Edward IV. was courteous in this newly-invented style, and was besides the handsomest tax-gatherer in his kingdom! His royal presence was very dangerous to the purses of his loyal subjects, particularly to those of the females. In his progress, having kissed a widow for having contributed a larger sum than was expected from her estate, she was so overjoyed at the singular honour and delight, that she doubled her *benevolence*, and a second kiss had ruined her! In the succeeding reign of Richard III. the term had already lost the freshness of its innocence. In the speech which the Duke of Buckingham delivered from the hustings in Guildhall, he explained the term to the satisfaction of his auditors, who even then were as cross-humoured as the livery of this day, in their notions of what now we gently call "supplies." "Under the plausible name of *benevolence*, as it was held in the time of Edward IV., your goods were taken from you much against your will, as if by that name was understood that every man should pay, not what he pleased, but what the king would have him;" or, as a marginal note in Buck's Life of Richard III. more pointedly has it, that "the name of *benevolence* signified that every man should pay, not what he of his own good will list, but what the king of his good will list to take."[129] Richard III., whose business, like that of all usurpers, was to be popular, in a statute even condemns this "benevolence" as "a new imposition," and enacts that "none shall be charged with it in future; many families having been ruined under these pretended gifts." His successor, however, found means to levy

“a benevolence;” but when Henry VIII. demanded one, the citizens of London appealed to the act of Richard III. Cardinal Wolsey insisted that the law of a murderous usurper should not be enforced. One of the common council courageously replied, that “King Richard, conjointly with parliament, had enacted many good statutes.” Even then the citizen seems to have comprehended the spirit of our constitution—that taxes should not be raised without the consent of parliament!

Charles the First, amidst his urgent wants, at first had hoped, by the pathetic appeal to *benevolences*, that he should have touched the hearts of his unfriendly commoners; but the term of *benevolence* proved unlucky. The resisters of *taxation* took full advantage of a significant meaning, which had long been lost in the custom: asserting by this very term that all levies of money were not compulsory, but the voluntary gifts of the people. In that political crisis, when in the fulness of time all the national grievances which had hitherto been kept down started up with one voice, the courteous term strangely contrasted with the rough demand. Lord Digby said “the granting of *subsidies*, under so preposterous a name as of a *benevolence*, was a *malevolence*.” And Mr. Grimstone observed, that “they have granted a benevolence, but the nature of the *thing* agrees not with the *name*.” The nature indeed had so entirely changed from the name, that when James I. had tried to warm the hearts of his “benevolent” people, he got “little money, and lost a great deal of love.” “Subsidies,” that is grants made by parliament, observes Arthur Wilson, a dispassionate historian, “get more of the people’s money, but exactions enslave the mind.”

When *benevolences* had become a grievance, to diminish the odium they invented more inviting phrases. The subject was cautiously informed that the sums demanded were only *loans*; or he was honoured by a letter under the *Privy Seal*; a bond which the king engaged to repay at a definite period; but privy seals at length got to be hawked about to persons coming out of

church. “Privy Seals,” says a manuscript letter, “are flying thick and threefold in sight of all the world, which might surely have been better performed in delivering them to every man privately at home.” The *general loan*, which in fact was a forced loan, was one of the most crying grievances under Charles I. Ingenious in the destruction of his own popularity, the king contrived a new mode of “*secret instructions to commissioners*.”[130] They were to find out persons who could bear the largest rates. How the commissioners were to acquire this secret and inquisitorial knowledge appears in the bungling contrivance. It is one of their orders that after a number of inquiries have been put to a person, concerning others who had spoken against loan-money, and what arguments they had used, this person was to be charged in his majesty’s name, and upon his allegiance, not to disclose to any other the answer he had given. A striking instance of that fatuity of the human mind, when a weak government is trying to do what it knows not how to perform: it was seeking to obtain a secret purpose by the most open and general means: a self-destroying principle!

Our ancestors were children in finance; their simplicity has been too often described as tyranny! but from my soul do I believe, on this obscure subject of taxation, that old Burleigh’s advice to Elizabeth includes more than all the squabbling pamphlets of our political economists,—“WIN HEARTS, AND YOU HAVE THEIR HANDS AND PURSES!”

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122 Cowel’s “Interpreter,” art. *Acephali*. This by-name we unexpectedly find in a grave antiquarian law-dictionary! probably derived from Pliny’s description of a people whom some travellers had reported to have found in this predicament, in their fright and haste in attempting to land on a hostile shore among savages. To account for this fabulous people, it has been conjectured they wore such high coverings, that their heads did not appear above their shoulders, while their eyes seemed to be placed in their breasts. How this name came to be introduced into the laws of Henry the First remains to be told by some profound antiquary; but

the allusion was common in the middle ages. Cowel says, “Those are called *acephali* who were the *levellers* of that age, and acknowledged *no head* or superior.”

123 *Vocabulario di Santa Caterina e della Lingua Sanese*, 1717. This pungent lexicon was prohibited at Rome by desire of the court of Florence. The history of this suppressed work may be found in *Il Giornale de’ Letterati d’ Italia*, tomo xxix. 1410. In the last edition of Haym’s “Biblioteca Italiana,” 1803, it is said to be reprinted at *Manilla, nell’ Isole Fillippine*!—For the book-licensers it is a great way to go for it.

124 Bodin’s “Six Books of a Commonwealth,” translated by Richard Knolles, 1606. A work replete with the *practical* knowledge of politics, and of which Mr. Dugald Stewart has delivered a high opinion. Yet this great politician wrote a volume to anathematise those who doubted the existence of sorcerers and witches, &c., whom he condemns to the flames! See his “Demonomanie des Sorciers,” 1593.

125 Wood’s “Inquiry on Homer,” p. 153.

126 Bodin’s “Commonweal,” translated by R. Knolles, p. 148. 1606.

127 Burke’s Works, vol. i. 288.

128 The modern word *cheater* is traced by some authors to this term, which soon became odious to the populace.

129 Daines Barrington, in “Observations on the Statutes,” gives the marginal *note* of Buck as the *words* of the duke; they certainly served his purpose to amuse, better than the veracious ones; but we expect from a grave antiquary inviolable authenticity. The duke is made by Barrington a sort of wit, but the pithy quaintness is Buck’s.

130 These “Private Instructions to the Commissioners for the General Loan” may be found in Rushworth, i. 418.

THE BOOK OF DEATH.

MONTAIGNE was fond of reading minute accounts of the deaths of remarkable persons; and, in the simplicity of his heart, old Montaigne wished to be learned enough to form a collection of these deaths, to observe "their words, their actions, and what sort of countenance they put upon it." He seems to have been a little over curious about deaths, in reference, no doubt, to his own, in which he was certainly deceived; for we are told that he did not die as he had promised himself,—expiring in the adoration of the mass; or, as his preceptor Buchanan would have called it, in "the act of rank idolatry."

I have been told of a privately printed volume, under the singular title of "The Book of Death," where an *amateur* has compiled the pious memorials of many of our eminent men in their last moments: and it may form a companion-piece to the little volume on "Les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant." This work, I fear, must be monotonous; the deaths of the righteous must resemble each other; the learned and the eloquent can only receive in silence that hope which awaits "the covenant of the grave." But this volume will not establish any decisive principle, since the just and the religious have not always encountered death with indifference, nor even in a fit composure of mind.

The functions of the mind are connected with those of the body. On a death-bed a fortnight's disease may reduce the firmest to a most wretched state; while, on the contrary, the soul struggles, as it were in torture, in a robust frame. Nani, the Venetian historian, has curiously described the death of Innocent the Tenth, who was a character unblemished by vices, and who

died at an advanced age, with too robust a constitution. *Dopo lunga e terribile agonia, con dolore e con pena, seperandosi l'anima da quel corpo robusto, egli spiro ai sette di Genuaro, nel ottantesimo primo de suoi anno.* "After a long and terrible agony, with great bodily pain and difficulty, his soul separated itself from that robust frame, and expired in his eighty-first year."

Some have composed sermons on death, while they passed many years of anxiety, approaching to madness, in contemplating their own. The certainty of an immediate separation from all our human sympathies may, even on a death-bed suddenly disorder the imagination. The great physician of our times told me of a general, who had often faced the cannon's mouth, dropping down in terror, when informed by him that his disease was rapid and fatal. Some have died of the strong imagination of death. There is a print of a knight brought on the scaffold to suffer; he viewed the headsman; he was blinded, and knelt down to receive the stroke. Having passed through the whole ceremony of a criminal execution, accompanied by all its disgrace, it was ordered that his life should be spared. Instead of the stroke from the sword, they poured cold water over his neck. After this operation the knight remained motionless; they discovered that he had expired in the very imagination of death! Such are among the many causes which may affect the mind in the hour of its last trial. The habitual associations of the natural character are most likely to prevail, though not always. The intrepid Marshal Biron disgraced his exit by womanish tears and raging imbecility; the virtuous Erasmus, with miserable groans, was heard crying out, *Domine! Domine! fac finem! fac finem!* Bayle having prepared his proof for the printer, pointed to where it lay, when dying. The last words which Lord Chesterfield was heard to speak were, when the valet, opening the curtains of the bed, announced Mr. Dayroles, "Give Dayroles a chair!" "This good breeding," observed the late Dr. Warren, his physician, "only quits him with his life." The last words of Nelson were, "Tell Collingwood to bring the

fleet to an anchor." The tranquil grandeur which cast a new majesty over Charles the First on the scaffold, appeared when he declared, "I fear not death! Death is not terrible to me!" And the characteristic pleasantry of Sir Thomas More exhilarated his last moments, when, observing the weakness of the scaffold, he said, in mounting it, "I pray you, see me up safe, and for my coming down, let me shift for myself!" Sir Walter Rawleigh passed a similar jest when going to the scaffold.[131]

My ingenious friend Dr. Sherwen has furnished me with the following anecdotes of death:—In one of the bloody battles fought by the Duke d'Enghien, two French noblemen were left wounded among the dead on the field of battle. One complained loudly of his pains; the other, after long silence, thus offered him consolation: "My friend, whoever you are, remember that our God died on the cross, our king on the scaffold; and if you have strength to look at him who now speaks to you, you will see that both his legs are shot away."

At the murder of the Duke d'Enghien, the royal victim looking at the soldiers, who had pointed their fusees, said, "Grenadiers! lower your arms, otherwise you will miss, or only wound me!" To two of them who proposed to tie a handkerchief over his eyes, he said, "A loyal soldier who has been so often exposed to fire and sword can see the approach of death with naked eyes and without fear."

After a similar caution on the part of Sir George Lisle, or Sir Charles Lucas, when murdered in nearly the same manner at Colchester, by the soldiers of Fairfax, the loyal hero, in answer to their assertions and assurances that they would take care not to miss him, nobly replied, "You have often missed me when I have been nearer to you in the field of battle."

When the governor of Cadiz, the Marquis de Solano, was murdered by the enraged and mistaken citizens, to one of his murderers, who had run a

pike through his back, he calmly turned round and said, “Coward, to strike there! Come round—if you dare face—and destroy me!”

Abernethy, in his Physiological Lectures, has ingeniously observed that “Shakspeare has represented Mercutio continuing to jest, though conscious that he was mortally wounded; the expiring Hotspur thinking of nothing but honour; and the dying Falstaff still cracking his jests upon Bardolph’s nose. If such facts were duly attended to, they would prompt us to make a more liberal allowance for each other’s conduct, under certain circumstances, than we are accustomed to do.” The truth seems to be, that whenever the functions of the mind are not disturbed by “the nervous functions of the digestive organs,” the personal character predominates even in death, and its habitual associations exist to its last moments. Many religious persons may have died without showing in their last moments any of those exterior acts, or employing those fervent expressions, which the collector of “The Book of Death” would only deign to chronicle; their hope is not gathered in their last hour.

Yet many have delighted to taste of death long before they have died, and have placed before their eyes all the furniture of mortality. The horrors of a charnel-house is the scene of their pleasure. The “Midnight Meditations” of Quarles preceded Young’s “Night Thoughts” by a century, and both these poets loved preternatural terror.

> If I must die, I’ll snatch at everything
>
> That may but mind me of my latest breath;
>
> DEATH’S-HEADS, GRAVES, KNELLS, BLACKS,[132] TOMBS, all these shall bring
>
> Into my soul such *useful thoughts of death*,
>
> That this sable king of fears
>
> Shall not catch me unawares.—QUARLES.

But it may be doubtful whether the *thoughts of death are useful*, whenever they put a man out of the possession of his faculties. Young pursued the scheme of Quarles: he raised about him an artificial emotion of death: he darkened his sepulchral study, placing a skull on his table by lamp-light; as Dr. Donne had his portrait taken, first winding a sheet over his head and closing his eyes; keeping this melancholy picture by his bed-side as long as he lived, to remind him of his mortality[133]. Young, even in his garden, had his conceits of death: at the end of an avenue was viewed a seat of an admirable chiaro-oscuro, which, when approached, presented only a painted surface, with an inscription, alluding to the deception of the things of this world. To be looking at "the mirror which flatters not;" to discover ourselves only as a skeleton with the horrid life of corruption about us, has been among those penitential inventions, which have often ended in shaking the innocent by the pangs which are only natural to the damned.[134] Without adverting to those numerous testimonies, the diaries of fanatics, I shall offer a picture of an accomplished and innocent lady, in a curious and unaffected transcript she has left of a mind of great sensibility, where the preternatural terror of death might perhaps have hastened the premature one she suffered.

From the "Reliquiæ Gethinianæ,"[135] I quote some of Lady Gethin's ideas on "Death."—"The very thoughts of death disturb one's reason; and though a man may have many excellent qualities, yet he may have the weakness of not commanding his sentiments. Nothing is worse for one's health than to be in fear of death. There are some so wise as neither to hate nor fear it; but for my part I have an aversion for it; and with reason; for it is a rash inconsiderate thing, that always comes before it is looked for; always comes unseasonably, parts friends, ruins beauty, laughs at youth, and draws a dark veil over all the pleasures of life.—This dreadful evil is but the evil of a moment, and what we cannot by any means avoid; and it is that which makes it so terrible to me; for were it uncertain, hope might diminish some

part of the fear; but when I think I must die, and that I may die every moment, and that too a thousand several ways, I am in such a fright as you cannot imagine. I see dangers where, perhaps, there never were any. I am persuaded 'tis happy to be somewhat dull of apprehension in this case; and yet the best way to cure the pensiveness of the thoughts of death is to think of it as little as possible." She proceeds by enumerating the terrors of the fearful, who "cannot enjoy themselves in the pleasantest places, and although they are neither on sea, river, or creek, but in good health in their chamber, yet are they so well instructed with the *fear of dying*, that they do not measure it only by the *present* dangers that wait on us.—Then is it not best to submit to God? But some people cannot do it as they would; and though they are not destitute of reason, but perceive they are to blame, yet at the same time that their reason condemns them their imagination makes their hearts feel what it pleases."

Such is the picture of an ingenious and a religious mind, drawn by an amiable woman, who, it is evident, lived always in the fear of death. The Gothic skeleton was ever haunting her imagination. In Dr. Johnson the same horror was suggested by the thoughts of death. When Boswell once in conversation persecuted Johnson on this subject, whether we might not fortify our minds for the approach of death; he answered in a passion, "No, sir! let it alone! It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives! The art of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time!" But when Boswell persisted in the conversation, Johnson was thrown into such a state of agitation, that he thundered out "Give us no more of this!" and, further, sternly told the trembling and too curious philosopher, "Don't let us meet to-morrow!"

It may be a question whether those who by their preparatory conduct have appeared to show the greatest indifference for death, have not rather betrayed the most curious art to disguise its terrors. Some have invented a

mode of escaping from life in the midst of convivial enjoyment. A mortuary preparation of this kind has been recorded of an amiable man, Moncriff, the author of “Histoire des Chats” and “L’Art de Plaire,” by his literary friend La Place, who was an actor in, as well as the historian of, the singular narrative. One morning La Place received a note from Moncriff, requesting that “he would immediately select for him a dozen volumes most likely to amuse, and of a nature to withdraw the reader from being occupied by melancholy thoughts.” La Place was startled at the unusual request, and flew to his old friend, whom he found deeply engaged in being measured for a new peruke, and a taffety robe-de-chambre, earnestly enjoining the utmost expedition. “Shut the door!” said Moncriff, observing the surprise of his friend. “And now that we are alone, I confide my secret: on rising this morning, my valet in dressing me showed me on this leg this dark spot—from that moment I knew I was ‘condemned to death;’ but I had presence of mind enough not to betray myself.” “Can a head so well organised as yours imagine that such a trifle is a sentence of death?”—“Don’t speak so loud, my friend! or rather deign to listen a moment. At my age it is fatal! The system from which I have derived the felicity of a long life has been, that whenever any evil, moral or physical, happens to us, if there is a remedy, all must be sacrificed to deliver us from it—but in a contrary case, I do not choose to wrestle with destiny and to begin complaints, endless as useless! All that I request of you, my friend, is to assist me to pass away the few days which remain for me, free from all cares, of which otherwise they might be too susceptible. But do not think,” he added with warmth, “that I mean to elude the religious duties of a citizen, which so many of late affect to contemn. The good and virtuous curate of my parish is coming here under the pretext of an annual contribution, and I have even ordered my physician, on whose confidence I can rely. Here is a list of ten or twelve persons, friends beloved! who are mostly known to you. I shall write to them this evening, to tell them of my condemnation; but if they wish me to

live, they will do me the favour to assemble here at five in the evening, where they may be certain of finding all those objects of amusement, which I shall study to discover suitable to their tastes. And you, my old friend, with my doctor, are two on whom I most depend."

La Place was strongly affected by this appeal—neither Socrates, nor Cato, nor Seneca looked more serenely on the approach of death.

"Familiarise yourself early with death!" said the good old man with a smile—"It is only dreadful for those who dread it!"

During ten days after this singular conversation, the whole of Moncriff's remaining life, his apartment was open to his friends, of whom several were ladies; all kinds of games were played till nine o'clock; and that the sorrows of the host might not disturb his guests, he played the *chouette* at his favourite game of *picquet*; a supper, seasoned by the wit of the master, concluded at eleven. On the tenth night, in taking leave of his friend, Moncriff whispered to him, "Adieu, my friend! to-morrow morning I shall return your books!" He died, as he foresaw, the following day.

I have sometimes thought that we might form a history of this *fear of death*, by tracing the first appearances of the SKELETON which haunts our funereal imagination. In the modern history of mankind we might discover some very strong contrasts in the notion of death entertained by men at various epochs. The following article will supply a sketch of this kind.

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131 To these may be added Queen Anne Boleyn. Kingston, the Lieutenant of the Tower, in a letter to Cromwell, records that she remarked of her own execution, "'I heard say the executioner was very good, and I have a little neck;' and she put her hands about it, laughing heartily. Truly, this lady has much joy and pleasure in death."

132 *Blacks* was the term for mourning in James the First and Charles the First's time.

133 It was from this picture his stone effigy was constructed for his tomb in old St. Paul's. This mutilated figure, which withstood the great fire of London, is still preserved in the crypt of the present cathedral.

134 A still more curious *fashion* in this taste for mortuary memorials originated at the court of Henry II. of France; whose mistress, Diana of Poitiers, being a widow; mourning colours of black and white became the fashion at court. Watches in the form of skulls were worn; jewels and pendants in the shape of coffins; and rings decorated with skulls and skeletons.

135 My discovery of the nature of this rare volume, of what is original and what collected, will be found in volume ii. of this work.

HISTORY OF THE SKELETON OF DEATH.

Euthanasia! Euthanasia! an easy death! was the exclamation of Augustus; it was what Antoninus Pius enjoyed; and it is that for which every wise man will pray, said Lord Orrery, when perhaps he was contemplating the close of Swift's life.

The ancients contemplated DEATH without terror, and met it with indifference. It was the only divinity to which they never sacrificed, convinced that no human being could turn aside its stroke. They raised altars to Fever, to Misfortune, to all the evils of life; for these might change! But though they did not court the presence of death in any shape, they acknowledged its tranquillity; and in the beautiful fables of their allegorical

religion, Death was the daughter of Night, and the sister of Sleep; and ever the friend of the unhappy! To the eternal sleep of death they dedicated their sepulchral monuments—*Æternali somno!*[136] If the full light of revelation had not yet broken on them, it can hardly be denied that they had some glimpses and a dawn of the life to come, from the many allegorical inventions which describe the transmigration of the soul. A butterfly on the extremity of an extinguished lamp, held up by the messenger of the gods intently gazing above, implied a dedication of that soul; Love, with a melancholy air, his legs crossed, leaning on an inverted torch, the flame thus naturally extinguishing itself, elegantly denoted the cessation of human life; a rose sculptured on a sarcophagus, or the emblems of epicurean life traced on it, in a skull wreathed by a chaplet of flowers, such as they wore at their convivial meetings, a flask of wine, a patera, and the small bones used as dice: all these symbols were indirect allusions to death, veiling its painful recollections. They did not pollute their imagination with the contents of a charnel-house. The sarcophagi of the ancients rather recall to us the remembrance of the activity of life; for they are sculptured with battles or games, in basso relievo; a sort of tender homage paid to the dead, observes Mad. de Staël, with her peculiar refinement of thinking.

It would seem that the Romans had even an aversion to mention death in express terms, for they disguised its very name by some periphrasis, such as *discessit e vita*, "he has departed from life;" and they did not say that their friend had *died*, but that he had *lived*; *vixit*! In the old Latin chronicles, and even in the *Fœdera* and other documents of the middle ages, we find the same delicacy about using the fatal word *Death*, especially when applied to kings and great people. "*Transire à Sæculo—Vitam suam mutare—Si quid de eo humanitùs contigerit, &c.*" I am indebted to Mr. Merivale for this remark. Even among a people less refined, the obtrusive idea of death has been studiously avoided: we are told that when the Emperor of Morocco inquires after any one who has recently died, it is against etiquette to

mention the word “death;” the answer is “his destiny is closed!” But this tenderness is only reserved for “the elect” of the Mussulmen. A Jew’s death is at once plainly expressed: “He is dead, sir! asking your pardon for mentioning such a contemptible wretch!” *i. e.* a Jew! A Christian’s is described by ”The infidel is dead!” or, “The cuckold is dead.”

The ancient artists have so rarely attempted to personify Death, that we have not discovered a single revolting image of this nature in all the works of antiquity.137—To conceal its deformity to the eye, as well as to elude its suggestion to the mind, seems to have been an universal feeling, and it accorded with a fundamental principle of ancient art; that of never permitting violent passion to produce in its representation distortion of form. This may be observed in the Laocoon, where the mouth only opens sufficiently to indicate the suppressed agony of superior humanity, without expressing the loud cry of vulgar suffering. Pausanias considered as a personification of death a female figure, whose teeth and nails, long and crooked, were engraven on a coffin of cedar, which enclosed the body of Cypselus; this female was unquestionably only one of the *Parcæ*, or the Fates, “watchful to cut the thread of life.” Hesiod describes Atropos indeed as having sharp teeth and long nails, waiting to tear and devour the dead; but this image was of a barbarous era. Catullus ventured to personify the Sister Destinies as three Crones; “but in general,” Winkelmann observes, “they are portrayed as beautiful virgins, with winged heads, one of whom is always in the attitude of writing on a scroll.” Death was a nonentity to the ancient artist. Could he exhibit what represents nothing? Could he animate into action what lies in a state of eternal tranquillity? Elegant images of repose and tender sorrow were all he could invent to indicate the state of death. Even the terms which different nations have bestowed on a burial-place are not associated with emotions of horror. The Greeks called a burying-ground by the soothing term of *Cœmeterion*, or “the sleeping-place;” the Jews, who had no horrors of the grave, by *Beth-haim*, or, “the

house of the living;" the Germans, with religious simplicity, "God's-field." The Scriptures had only noticed that celestial being "the Angel of Death,"—graceful, solemn, and sacred!

Whence, then, originated that stalking skeleton, suggesting so many false and sepulchral ideas, and which for us has so long served as the image of death?

When the Christian religion spread over Europe, the world changed! the certainty of a future state of existence, by the artifices of wicked worldly men, terrified instead of consoling human nature; and in the resurrection the ignorant multitude seemed rather to have dreaded retribution, than to have hoped for remuneration. The Founder of Christianity everywhere breathes the blessedness of social feelings. It is "Our Father!" whom he addresses. The horrors with which Christianity was afterwards disguised arose in the corruptions of Christianity among those insane ascetics who, misinterpreting "the Word of Life," trampled on nature; and imagined that to secure an existence in the other world it was necessary not to exist in the one in which God had placed them. The dominion of mankind fell into the usurping hands of those imperious monks whose artifices trafficed with the terrors of ignorant and hypochondriac "Kaisers and kings." The scene was darkened by penances and by pilgrimages, by midnight vigils, by miraculous shrines, and bloody flagellations; spectres started up amidst their *ténèbres*; millions of masses increased their supernatural influence. Amidst this general gloom of Europe, their troubled imaginations were frequently predicting the end of the world. It was at this period that they first beheld the grave yawn, and Death, in the Gothic form of a gaunt anatomy, parading through the universe! The people were frightened as they viewed, everywhere hung before their eyes, in the twilight of their cathedrals, and their "pale cloisters," the most revolting emblems of death. They startled the traveller on the bridge; they stared on the sinner in the

carvings of his table and chair; the spectre moved in the hangings of the apartment; it stood in the niche, and was the picture of their sitting-room; it was worn in their rings, while the illuminator shaded the bony phantom in the margins of their "Horæ," their primers, and their breviaries. Their barbarous taste perceived no absurdity in giving action to a heap of dry bones, which could only keep together in a state of immovability and repose; nor that it was burlesquing the awful idea of the resurrection, by exhibiting the incorruptible spirit under the unnatural and ludicrous figure of mortality drawn out of the corruption of the grave.

An anecdote of these monkish times has been preserved by old Gerard Leigh; and as old stories are best set off by old words, Gerard speaketh! "The great Maximilian the emperor came to a monastery in High Almaine (Germany), the monks whereof had caused to be curiously painted the charnel of a man, which they termed—Death! When that well-learned emperor had beholden it awhile, he called unto him his painter, commanding to blot the skeleton out, and to paint therein the image of—a fool. Wherewith the abbot, humbly beseeching him to the contrary, said 'It was a good remembrance!'—'Nay,' quoth the emperor, 'as vermin that annoyeth man's body cometh unlooked for, so doth death, which here is but a fained image, and life is a certain thing, if we know to deserve it.'"[138] The original mind of Maximilian the Great is characterized by this curious story of converting our emblem of death into a parti-coloured fool; and such satirical allusions to the folly of those who persisted in their notion of the skeleton were not unusual with the artists of those times; we find the figure of a fool sitting with some drollery between the legs of one of these skeletons.[139]

This story is associated with an important fact. After they had successfully terrified the people with their charnel-house figure, a reaction in the public feelings occurred, for the skeleton was now employed as a

medium to convey the most facetious, satirical, and burlesque notions of human life. Death, which had so long harassed their imaginations, suddenly changed into a theme fertile in coarse humour. The Italians were too long accustomed to the study of the beautiful to allow their pencil to sport with deformity; but the Gothic taste of the German artists, who could only copy their own homely nature, delighted to give human passions to the hideous physiognomy of a noseless skull; to put an eye of mockery or malignity into its hollow socket, and to stretch out the gaunt anatomy into the postures of a Hogarth; and that the ludicrous might be carried to its extreme, this imaginary being, taken from the bone-house, was viewed in the action of *dancing*! This blending of the grotesque with the most disgusting image of mortality, is the more singular part of this history of the skeleton, and indeed of human nature itself!

"The Dance of Death," erroneously considered as Holbein's, with other similar Dances, however differently treated, have one common subject which was painted in the arcades of burying-grounds, or on town-halls, and in market-places. The subject is usually "The Skeleton" in the act of leading all ranks and conditions to the grave, personated after nature, and in the strict costume of the times. This invention opened a new field for genius; and when we can for a moment forget their luckless choice of their bony and bloodless hero, who to amuse us by a variety of action becomes a sort of horrid Harlequin in these pantomimical scenes, we may be delighted by the numerous human characters, which are so vividly presented to us. The origin of this extraordinary invention is supposed to be a favourite pageant, or religious mummery, invented by the clergy, who in these ages of barbarous Christianity always found it necessary to amuse, as well as to frighten the populace; a circumstance well known to have occurred in so many other grotesque and licentious festivals they allowed the people. The practice of dancing in churches and church-yards was interdicted by several councils; but it was found convenient in those rude times. It seems probable

that the clergy contrived the present dance, as more decorous and not without moral and religious emotions. This pageant was performed in churches, in which the chief characters in society were supported in a sort of masquerade, mixing together in a general dance, in the course of which every one in his turn vanished from the scene, to show how one after the other died off. The subject was at once poetical and ethical; and the poets and painters of Germany adopting the skeleton, sent forth this chimerical Ulysses of another world to roam among the men and manners of their own. A popular poem was composed, said to be by one Macaber, which name seems to be a corruption of St. Macaire; the old Gaulish version, reformed, is still printed at Troyes, in France, with the ancient blocks of woodcuts, under the title of "La Grande Danse Macabre des Hommes et des Femmes." Merian's "Todten Tanz," or the "Dance of the Dead," is a curious set of prints of a Dance of Death from an ancient painting, I think not entirely defaced, in a cemetery at Basle, in Switzerland. It was ordered to be painted by a council held there during many years, to commemorate the mortality occasioned by a plague in 1439. The prevailing character of all these works is unquestionably grotesque and ludicrous; not, however, that genius, however barbarous, could refrain in this large subject of human life from inventing scenes often imagined with great delicacy of conception, and even great pathos. Such is the new-married couple, whom Death is leading, beating a drum; and in the rapture of the hour, the bride seems, with a melancholy look, not insensible of his presence; or Death is seen issuing from the cottage of the poor widow with her youngest child, who waves his hand sorrowfully, while the mother and the sister vainly answer; or the old man, to whom Death is playing on a psaltery, seems anxious that his withered fingers should once more touch the strings, while he is carried off in calm tranquillity. The greater part of these subjects of death are, however, ludicrous; and it may be a question, whether the spectators of these Dances of Death did not find their mirth more excited than their religious emotions.

Ignorant and terrified as the people were at the view of the skeleton, even the grossest simplicity could not fail to laugh at some of those domestic scenes and familiar persons drawn from among themselves. The skeleton, skeleton as it is, in the creation of genius, gesticulates and mimics, while even its hideous skull is made to express every diversified character, and the result is hard to describe; for we are at once amused and disgusted with so much genius founded on so much barbarism.[140]

When the artist succeeded in conveying to the eye the most ludicrous notions of death, the poets also discovered in it a fertile source of the burlesque. The curious collector is acquainted with many volumes where the most extraordinary topics have been combined with this subject. They made the body and the soul debate together, and ridicule the complaints of a damned soul! The greater part of the poets of the time were always composing on the subject of Death in their humorous pieces.[141] Such historical records of the public mind, historians, intent on political events, have rarely noticed.

Of a work of this nature, a popular favourite was long the one entitled "*Le faut mourir, et les Excuses Inutiles qu'on apporte à cette Necessité; Le tout en vers burlesques, 1658*." Jacques Jacques, a canon of Ambrun, was the writer, who humorously says of himself that he gives his thoughts just as they lie on his heart, without dissimulation—"For I have nothing double about me except my name! I tell thee some of the most important truths in laughing; it is for thee *d'y penser tout à bon*." This little volume was procured for me with some difficulty in France; and it is considered as one of the happiest of this class of death-poems, of which I know not of any in our literature.

Our canon of Ambrun, in facetious rhymes, and with the *naïveté* of expression which belongs to his age, and an idiomatic turn fatal to a translator, excels in pleasantry; his haughty hero condescends to hold very

amusing dialogues with all classes of society, and delights to confound their "excuses inutiles." The most miserable of men, the galley-slave, the mendicant, alike would escape when he appears to them. "Were I not absolute over them," Death exclaims, "they would confound me with their long speeches; but I have business, and must gallop on!" His geographical rhymes are droll.

Ce que j'ai fait dans l'Afrique
Je le fais bien dans l'Amérique;
On l'appelle monde nouveau
Mais ce sont des brides à veau;
Nulle terre à moy n'est nouvelle
Je vay partout sans qu'on m'appelle;
Mon bras de tout temps commanda
Dans le pays du Canada;
J'ai tenu de tout temps en bride
La Virginie et la Floride,
Et j'ai bien donné sur le bec
Aux Français du fort de Kebec.
Lorsque je veux je fais la nique
Aux Incas, aux rois de Mexique;
Et montre aux Nouveaux Grénadins
Qu'ils sont des foux et des badins.
Chacun sait bien comme je matte
Ceux du Brésil et de la Plate,
Ainsi que les Taupinembous—
En un mot, je fais voir à tout
Que ce que naît dans la nature,
Doit prendre de moy tablature![142]

The perpetual employments of Death display copious invention with a facility of humour.

Egalement je vay rangeant,
Le conseiller et le serjent,
Le gentilhomme et le berger,
Le bourgeois et le boulanger,
Et la maistresse et la servante
Et la nièce comme la tante;
Monsieur l'abbé, monsieur son moine,
Le petit clerc et le chanoine;
Sans choix je mets dans mon butin
Maistre Claude, maistre Martin,
Dame Luce, dame Perrete, &c.
J'en prends un dans le temps qu'il pleure
A quelque autre, au contraire à l'heure
Qui démésurément il rit;
Je donne le coup qui le frit.
J'en prends un, pendant qu'il se lève;
En se couchant l'autre j'enlève.
Je prends le malade et le sain
L'un aujourd'hui, l'autre le demain.
J'en surprends un dedans son lit,
L'autre à l'estude quand il lit.
J'en surprends un le ventre plein
Je mène l'autre par la faim.
J'attrape l'un pendant qu'il prie,
Et l'autre pendant qu'il renie;
J'en saisis un au cabaret
Entre le blanc et le clairet,

L’autre qui dans son oratoire
A son Dieu rend honneur et gloire:
J’en surprends un lorsqu’il se psame
Le jour qu’il èpouse sa femme,
L’autre le jour que plein de deuil
La sieune il voit dans le cercueil;
Un à pied et l’autre à cheval,
Dans le jeu l’un, et l’autre au bal;
Un qui mange et l’autre qui boit,
Un qui paye et l’autre qui doit,
L’un en été lorsqu’il moissonne,
L’autre eu vendanges dans l’automne,
L’un criant almanachs nouveaux—
Un qui demande son aumosne
L’autre dans le temps qu’il la donne,
Je prends le bon maistre Clément,
Au temps qu’il prend un lavement,
Et prends la dame Catherine
Le jour qu’elle prend médecine.

This veil of gaiety in the old canon of Ambrun covers deeper and more philosophical thoughts than the singular mode of treating so solemn a theme. He has introduced many scenes of human life which still interest, and he addresses the “teste à triple couronne,” as well as the “forçat de galère,” who exclaims, “Laissez-moi vivre dans mes fers,” “le gueux,” the “bourgeois,” the “chanoine,” the “pauvre soldat,” the “médecin;” in a word, all ranks in life are exhibited, as in all the “Dances of Death.” But our object in noticing these burlesque paintings and poems is to show that after the monkish Goths had opened one general scene of melancholy and tribulation over Europe, and given birth to that dismal *skeleton of death*,

which still terrifies the imagination of many, a reaction of feeling was experienced by the populace, who at length came to laugh at the gloomy spectre which had so long terrified them!

136 Montfaucon, “L’Antiquité Expliquée,” i. 362.

137 A representation of Death by a skeleton appears among the Egyptians: a custom more singular than barbarous prevailed, of enclosing a skeleton of beautiful workmanship in a small coffin, which the bearer carried round at their entertainments; observing, “After death you will resemble this figure: drink, then! and be happy.” A symbol of Death in a convivial party was not designed to excite terrific or gloomy ideas, but a recollection of the brevity of human life.

138 “The Accidence of Armorie,” p. 199.

139 A woodcut preserved in Mr. Dibdin’s Bibliographical Decameron, i. 35.

140 My greatly-lamented friend, the late Mr. Douce, has poured forth the most curious knowledge on this singular subject, of “The Dance of Death.” This learned investigator has reduced *Macaber* to a nonentity, but not “The Macaber Dance,” which has been frequently painted. Mr. Douce’s edition is accompanied by a set of woodcuts, which have not unsuccessfully copied the exquisite originals of the Lyons wood-cutter.

141 Goujet, “Bib. Françoise,” vol. x. 185.

142 *Tablature d’un luth*, Cotgrave says, is the belly of a lute, meaning “all in nature must dance to my music!”

THE RIVAL BIOGRAPHERS OF HEYLIN.

PETER HEYLIN was one of the popular writers of his times, like Fuller and Howell, who, devoting their amusing pens to subjects which deeply interested their own busy age, will not be slighted by the curious.[143] We have nearly outlived their divinity, but not their politics. Metaphysical absurdities are luxuriant weeds which must be cut down by the scythe of Time; but the great passions branching from the tree of life are still "growing with our growth."

There are two biographies of our Heylin, which led to a literary quarrel of an extraordinary nature; and, in the progress of its secret history, all the feelings of rival authorship were called out.

Heylin died in 1662. Dr. Barnard, his son-in-law, and a scholar, communicated a sketch of the author's life to be prefixed to a posthumous folio, of which Heylin's son was the editor. This Life was given by the son, but anonymously, which may not have gratified the author, the son-in-law.[144]

Twenty years had elapsed when, in 1682, appeared "The Life of Dr. Peter Heylin, by George Vernon." The writer, alluding to the prior Life prefixed to the posthumous folio, asserts that, in borrowing something from Barnard, Barnard had also "Excerpted passages out of *my papers*, the very words as well as matter, when he had them in his custody, as any reader may discern who will be at the pains of comparing the Life now published with what is extant before the *Keimalea Ecclesiastica*;" the quaint, pedantic title, after the fashion of the day, of the posthumous folio.

This strong accusation seemed countenanced by a dedication to the son and the nephew of Heylin. Roused now into action, the indignant Barnard soon produced a more complete Life, to which he prefixed "A necessary

Vindication." This is an unsparing castigation of Vernon, the literary pet whom the Heylins had fondled in preference to their learned relative.[145] The long-smothered family grudge, the suppressed mortifications of literary pride, after the subterraneous grumblings of twenty years, now burst out, and the volcanic particles flew about in caustic pleasantries and sharp invectives; all the lava of an author's vengeance, mortified by the choice of an inferior rival.

It appears that Vernon had been selected by the son of Heylin, in preference to his brother-in-law, Dr. Barnard, from some family disagreement. Barnard tells us, in describing Vernon, that "No man, except himself, who was totally ignorant of the doctor, and all the circumstances of his life, would have engaged in such a work, which was never primarily laid out for him, but by reason of some unhappy differences, as usually fall out in families; and he, who loves to put his oar in troubled waters, instead of closing them up, hath made them wider."

Barnard tells his story plainly. Heylin the son, intending to have a more elaborate Life of his father prefixed to his works, Dr. Barnard, from the high reverence in which he held the memory of his father-in-law, offered to contribute it. Many conferences were held, and the son entrusted him with several papers. But suddenly his caprice, more than his judgment, fancied that George Vernon was worth John Barnard. The doctor affects to describe his rejection with the most stoical indifference. He tells us—"I was satisfied, and did patiently expect the coming forth of the work, not only term after term, but year after year—a very considerable time for such a tract. But at last, instead of the Life, came a letter to me from a bookseller in London, who lived at the sign of the Black Boy, in Fleet-street."[146]

Now, it seems that he who lived at the Black Boy had combined with another who lived at the Fleur de Luce, and that the Fleur de Luce had assured the Black Boy that Dr. Barnard was concerned in writing the Life of

Heylin—this was a strong recommendation. But lo! it appeared that “one Mr. Vernon, of Gloucester,” was to be the man! a gentle, thin-skinned authorling, who bleated like a lamb, and was so fearful to trip out of its shelter, that it allows the Black Boy and the Fleur de Luce to communicate its papers to any one they choose, and erase or add at their pleasure.[147]

It occurred to the Black Boy, on this proposed arithmetical criticism, that the work required addition, subtraction, and division; that the fittest critic, on whose name, indeed, he had originally engaged in the work, was our Dr. Barnard; and he sent the package to the doctor, who resided near Lincoln.

The doctor, it appears, had no appetite for a dish dressed by another, while he himself was in the very act of the cookery; and it was suffered to lie cold for three weeks at the carrier’s.

But entreated and overcome, the good doctor at length sent to the carrier’s for the life of his father-in-law. “I found it, according to the bookseller’s description, most lame and imperfect; ill begun, worse carried on, and abruptly concluded.” The learned doctor exercised that plenitude of power with which the Black Boy had invested him—he very obligingly showed the author in what a confused state his materials lay together, and how to put them in order—

Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo.

If his rejections were copious, to show his good-will as well as his severity, his additions were generous, though he used the precaution of carefully distinguishing by “distinct paragraphs” his own insertions amidst Vernon’s mass, with a gentle hint that “He knew more of Heylin than any man now living, and ought therefore to have been the biographer.” He returned the MS. to the gentleman with great civility, but none he received back! When Vernon pretended to ask for improvements, he did not imagine that the

work was to be improved by being nearly destroyed; and when he asked for correction, he probably expected all might end in a compliment.

The narrative may now proceed in Dr. Barnard's details of his doleful mortifications, in being "altered and mangled" by Mr. Vernon.

"Instead of thanks from him (Vernon), and the return of common civility, he disfigured my papers, that no sooner came into his hands, but he fell upon them as a lion rampant, or the cat upon the poor cock in the fable, saying, *Tu hodie mihi discerperis*—so my papers came home miserably clawed, blotted, and blurred; whole sentences dismembered, and pages scratched out; several leaves omitted which ought to be printed,—shamefully he used my copy; so that before it was carried to the press, he swooped away the second part of the Life wholly from it—in the room of which he shuffled in a preposterous conclusion at the last page, which he printed in a different character, yet could not keep himself honest, as the poet saith,

Dicitque tua pagina, fur es.

MARTIAL.

For he took out of my copy Dr. Heylin's dream, his sickness, his last words before his death, and left out the burning of his surplice. He so mangled and metamorphosed the whole Life I composed, that I may say as Sosia did, *Egomet mihi non credo, ille alter Sosia me malis mulcavit modis*—PLAUT."

Dr. Barnard would have "patiently endured these wrongs;" but the accusation Vernon ventured on, that Barnard was the plagiary, required the doctor "to return the poisoned chalice to his own lips," that "himself was the plagiary both of words and matter." The fact is, that this reciprocal accusation was owing to Barnard having had a prior perusal of Heylin's papers, which afterwards came into the hands of Vernon: they both drew

their water from the same source. These papers Heylin himself had left for "a rule to guide the writer of his life."

Barnard keenly retorts on Vernon for his surreptitious use of whole pages from Heylin's works, which he has appropriated to himself without any marks of quotation. "I am no such excerptor (as he calls me); he is of the humour of the man who took all the ships in the Attic haven for his own, and yet was himself not master of any one vessel."

Again:—

"But all this while I misunderstand him, for possibly he meaneth his own dear words I have excerpted. Why doth he not speak in plain, downright English, that the world may see my faults? For every one doth not know what is *excerpting*. If I have been so bold to pick or snap a word from him, I hope I may have the benefit of the clergy. What words have I robbed him of?—and how have I become the richer for them? I was never so taken with him as to be once tempted to break the commandments, because I love plain speaking, plain writing, and plain dealing, which he does not: I hate the word *excerpted*, and the action imported in it. However, he is a fanciful man, and thinks there is no elegancy nor wit but in his own way of talking. I must say as Tully did, *Malim equidem indisertam prudentiam quam stultam loquacitatem*."

In his turn he accuses Vernon of being a perpetual transcriber, and for the Malone minuteness of his history.

"But how have I excerpted *his* matter? Then I am sure to rob the spittle-house; for he is so poor and put to hard shifts, that he has much ado to compose a tolerable story, which he hath been hammering and conceiving in his mind for four years together, before he could bring forth his *fœtus* of intolerable transcriptions to molest the reader's patience and memory. How doth he run himself out of breath, sometimes for twenty pages and more, at

other times fifteen, ordinarily nine and ten, collected out of Dr. Heylin's old books, before he can take his wind again to return to his story! I never met with such a transcriber in all my days; for want of matter to fill up a *vacuum*, of which his book was in much danger, he hath set down the story of Westminster, as long as the Ploughman's Tale in Chaucer, which to the reader would have been more pertinent and pleasant. I wonder he did not transcribe bills of Chancery, especially about a tedious suit my father had for several years about a lease at Norton."

In his raillery of Vernon's affected metaphors and comparisons, "his similitudes and dissimilitudes strangely hooked in, and fetched as far as the Antipodes," Barnard observes, "The man hath also a strange opinion of himself that he is Dr. Heylin; and because he writes his Life, that he hath his natural parts, if not acquired. The soul of St. Augustin (say the schools) was Pythagorically transfused into the corpse of Aquinas; so the soul of Dr. Heylin into a narrow soul. I know there is a question in philosophy, *An animæ sint œquales?*—whether souls be alike? But there's a difference between the spirits of Elijah and Elisha: so small a prophet with so great a one!"

Dr. Barnard concludes by regretting that good counsel came now unseasonably, else he would have advised the writer to have transmitted his task to one who had been an ancient friend of Dr. Heylin, rather than ambitiously have assumed it, who was a professed stranger to him, by reason of which no better account could be expected from him than what he has given. He hits off the character of this piece of biography—"A Life to the half; an imperfect creature, that is not only lame (as the honest bookseller said), but wanteth legs, and all other integral parts of a man; nay, the very soul that should animate a body like Dr. Heylin. So that I must say of him, as Plutarch does of Tib. Gracchus, 'that he is a bold undertaker and

rash talker of those matters he does not understand.' And so I have done with him, unless he creates to himself and me a future trouble!"

Vernon appears to have slunk away from the duel. The son of Heylin stood corrected by the superior Life produced by their relative; the learned and vivacious Barnard probably never again ventured to *alter and improve the works of an author* kneeling and praying for corrections. These bleating lambs, it seems, often turn out roaring lions![148]

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143 Dr. Heylin's principal work, "*Ecclesia Restaurata*; or, the History of the Reformation of the Church of England," was reprinted at the Cambridge University press, for "the Ecclesiastical History Society," in 2 vols. 8vo, 1849, under the able editorship of J. C. Robertson, M.A., Vicar of Bekesbourne, Kent. The introductory account of Heylin has enabled us to correct the present article in some particulars, and add a few useful notes.

144 Dr. John Barnard married the daughter of Heylin, when he lived at Abingdon, near Oxford. He afterwards became rector of the rich living of Waddington, near Lincoln, of which he purchased the perpetual advowson, holding also the sinecure of Gedney, in the same county. He was ultimately made Prebendary of Asgarby, in the church of Lincoln, and died at Newark, on a journey, in August, 1683. His rich and indolent life would naturally hold out few inducements for literary labour.

145 Mr. George Vernon, according to Wood (Athen. Oxon. iv. 606), was made Chaplain of All Souls' College, afterwards Rector of Sarsden, near Churchill, in Oxfordshire, of Bourton-on-the-Water, in Gloucestershire, and of St. John and St. Michael, in the city of Gloucester. Wood enumerates several works by him, so that he was evidently more of a "literary man" than Barnard, who enjoyed "learned ease" to a great degree, and was evidently only to be aroused by something flagitious.

146 This was Harper, a bookseller, who had undertaken a republication of the *Ecclesia Vindicata*, and other tracts by Heylin, to which the Life was to be prefixed.

147 The author had “desired Mr. Harper to communicate the papers to whom he pleases, and cross out or add what is thought convenient.” A leave very few literary men would give!

148 The most curious part of the story remains yet to be told. Dr. Barnard was mistaken in his imputations, and Vernon was not the really blamable party. We tell the tale in Mr. Robertson’s words in the work already alluded to.—“Who was the party guilty of these outrages? Barnard assumed that it could be no other than Vernon; but the truth seems to be that the Rector of Bourton had nothing whatever to do with the matter. The publisher had called in a more important adviser—Dr. Barlow, Bishop of Lincoln (Ath. Oxon. iii. 567; iv. 606); the mutilations of Barnard’s MS. were really the work, not of the obscure Gloucestershire clergyman, but of the indignant author’s own diocesan; and we need not hesitate to ascribe the abruptness of the conclusion, and the smallness of the type in which it is printed, to Mr. Harper’s economical desire to save the expense of an additional sheet.” Thus “Bishop Barlow and the bookseller had made the mischief between the parties, who, instead of attempting a private explanation, attacked each other in print.”

OF LENGLET DU FRESNOY.

THE “*Méthode pour étudier l’Histoire*,” by the Abbé Lenglet du Fresnoy, is a master-key to all the locked-up treasures of ancient and modern history, and to the more secret stores of the obscurer memorialists of every nation. The history of this work and its author are equally remarkable. The man was a sort of curiosity in human nature, as his works are in literature. Lenglet du Fresnoy is not a writer merely laborious; without genius, he still

has a hardy originality in his manner of writing and of thinking; and his vast and restless curiosity fermenting his immense book-knowledge, with a freedom verging on cynical causticity, led to the pursuit of uncommon topics. Even the prefaces to the works which he edited are singularly curious, and he has usually added *bibliothèques*, or critical catalogues of authors, which we may still consult for notices on the writers of romances —of those on literary subjects—on alchymy, or the hermetic philosophy; of those who have written on apparitions, visions, &c.; an historical treatise on the secret of confession, &c.; besides those "Pièces Justificatives," which constitute some of the most extraordinary documents in the philosophy of history. His manner of writing secured him readers even among the unlearned; his mordacity, his sarcasm, his derision, his pregnant interjections, his unguarded frankness, and often his strange opinions, contribute to his reader's amusement more than comports with his graver tasks; but his peculiarities cannot alter the value of his knowledge, whatever they may sometimes detract from his opinions; and we may safely admire the ingenuity, without quarrelling with the sincerity of the writer, who having composed a work on *L'Usage des Romans*, in which he gaily impugned the authenticity of all history, to prove himself not to have been the author, ambidexterously published another of *L'Histoire justifiée contre les Romans*; and perhaps it was not his fault that the attack was spirited, and the justification dull.

This "Méthode" and his "Tablettes Chronologiques," of nearly forty other publications are the only ones which have outlived their writer; volumes, merely curious, are exiled to the shelf of the collector; the very name of an author merely curious—that shadow of a shade—is not always even preserved by a dictionary-compiler in the universal charity of his alphabetical mortuary.

The history of this work is a striking instance of those imperfect beginnings, which have often closed in the most important labours. This admirable “Méthode” made its first meagre appearance in two volumes in 1713. It was soon reprinted at home and abroad, and translated into various languages. In 1729 it assumed the dignity of four quartos; but at this stage it encountered the vigilance of government, and the lacerating hand of a celebrated *censeur*, Gros de Boze. It is said, that from a personal dislike of the author, he cancelled one hundred and fifty pages from the printed copy submitted to his censorship. He had formerly approved of the work, and had quietly passed over some of these obnoxious passages: it is certain that Gros de Boze, in a dissertation on the Janus of the ancients in this work, actually erased a high commendation of himself,[149] which Lenglet had, with unusual courtesy, bestowed on Gros de Boze; for as a critic he is most penurious of panegyric, and there is always a caustic flavour even in his drops of honey. This *censeur* either affected to disdain the commendation, or availed himself of it as a trick of policy. This was a trying situation for an author, now proud of a great work, and who himself partook more of the bull than of the lamb. He who winced at the scratch of an epithet, beheld his perfect limbs bruised by erasures and mutilated by cancels. This sort of troubles indeed was not unusual with Lenglet. He had occupied his old apartment in the Bastile so often, that at the sight of the officer who was in the habit of conducting him there, Lenglet would call for his nightcap and snuff; and finish the work he had then in hand at the Bastile, where, he told Jordan, that he made his edition of Marot. He often silently restituted an epithet or a sentence which had been condemned by the *censeur*, at the risk of returning once more; but in the present desperate affair he took his revenge by collecting the castrations into a quarto volume, which was sold clandestinely. I find, by Jordan, in his *Voyage Littéraire*, who visited him, that it was his pride to read these cancels to his friends, who generally, but secretly, were of opinion that the decision of the *censeur* was not so wrong

as the hardihood of Lenglet insisted on. All this increased the public rumour, and raised the price of the cancels. The craft and mystery of authorship was practised by Lenglet to perfection; and he often exulted, not only in the subterfuges by which he parried his *censeurs*, but in his bargains with his booksellers, who were equally desirous to possess, while they half feared to enjoy, his uncertain or his perilous copyrights. When the *unique* copy of the *Méthode*, in its pristine state, before it had suffered any dilapidations, made its appearance at the sale of the curious library of the *censeur* Gros de Boze, it provoked a Roxburgh competition, where the collectors, eagerly outbidding each other, the price of this uncastrated copy reached to 1500 livres; and even more extraordinary in the history of French bibliography, than in our own. The curious may now find all these cancel sheets, or *castrations*, preserved in one of those works of literary history, to which the Germans have contributed more largely than other European nations, and I have discovered that even the erasures, or *bruises*, are amply furnished in another bibliographical record.150

This *Méthode*, after several later editions, was still enlarging itself by fresh supplements; and having been translated by men of letters in Europe, by Coleti in Italy, by Mencken in Germany, and by Dr. Rawlinson in England, these translators have enriched their own editions by more copious articles, designed for their respective nations. The sagacity of the original writer now renovated his work by the infusions of his translators; like old Æson, it had its veins filled with green juices; and thus his old work was always undergoing the magic process of rejuvenescence.151

The personal character of our author was as singular as many of the uncommon topics which engaged his inquiries; these we might conclude had originated in mere eccentricity, or were chosen at random. But Lenglet has shown no deficiency of judgment in several works of acknowledged utility; and his critical opinions, his last editor has shown, have, for the

greater part, been sanctioned by the public voice. It is curious to observe how the first direction which the mind of a hardy inquirer may take, will often account for that variety of uncommon topics he delights in, and which, on a closer examination, may be found to bear an invisible connexion with some preceding inquiry. As there is an association of ideas, so in literary history there is an association of research; and a very judicious writer may thus be impelled to compose on subjects which may be deemed strange or injudicious.

This observation may be illustrated by the literary history of Lenglet du Fresnoy. He opened his career by addressing a letter and a tract to the Sorbonne, on the extraordinary affair of Maria d'Agreda, abbess of the nunnery of the Immaculate Conception in Spain, whose mystical Life of the Virgin, published on the decease of the abbess, and which was received with such rapture in Spain, had just appeared at Paris, where it excited the murmurs of the pious, and the inquiries of the curious. This mystical Life was declared to be founded on apparitions and revelations experienced by the abbess. Lenglet proved, or asserted, that the abbess was not the writer of this pretended Life, though the manuscript existed in her handwriting; and secondly, that the apparitions and revelations recorded were against all the rules of apparitions and revelations which he had painfully discovered. The affair was of a delicate nature. The writer was young and incredulous; a grey-beard, more deeply versed in theology, replied, and the Sorbonnists silenced our philosopher in embryo.

Lenglet confined these researches to his portfolio; and so long a period as fifty-five years had elapsed before they saw the light. It was when Calmet published his Dissertations on Apparitions, that the subject provoked Lenglet to return to his forsaken researches. He now published all he had formerly composed on the affair of Maria d'Agreda, and two other works; the one, "*Traité historique et dogmatique sur les Apparitions, les Visions, et*

les Révélations particulières," in two volumes; and "*Recueil de Dissertations anciennes et nouvelles, sur les Apparitions, &c.*," with a catalogue of authors on this subject, in four volumes. When he edited the *Roman de la Rose*, in compiling the glossary of this ancient poem, it led him to reprint many of the earliest French poets; to give an enlarged edition of the *Arrêts d'Amour*, that work of love and chivalry, in which his fancy was now so deeply embedded; while the subject of Romance itself naturally led to the taste of romantic productions which appeared in "*L'Usage des Romans*," and its accompanying copious nomenclature of all romances and romance-writers, ancient and modern. Our vivacious Abbé had been bewildered by his delight in the works of a chemical philosopher; and though he did not believe in the existence of apparitions, and certainly was more than a sceptic in history, yet it is certain that the "grande œuvre" was an article in his creed; it would have ruined him in experiments, if he had been rich enough to have been ruined. It altered his health; and the most important result of his chemical studies appears to have been the invention of a syrup, in which he had great confidence; but its trial blew him up into a tympany, from which he was only relieved by having recourse to a drug, also of his own discovery, which, in counteracting the syrup, reduced him to an alarming state of atrophy. But the mischances of the historian do not enter into his history: and our curiosity must be still eager to open Lenglet's "Histoire de la Philosophie Hermétique," accompanied by a catalogue of the writers in this mysterious science, in two volumes: as well as his enlarged edition of the works of a great Paracelsian, Nicholas le Fevre. This philosopher was appointed by Charles the Second superintendent over the royal laboratory at St. James's: he was also a member of the Royal Society, and the friend of Boyle, to whom he communicated the secret of infusing young blood into old veins, with a notion that he could renovate that which admits of no second creation.[152] Such was the origin of Du Fresnoy's active

curiosity on a variety of singular topics, the germs of which may be traced to three or four of our author's principal works.

Our Abbé promised to write his own life, and his pugnacious vivacity, and hardy frankness, would have seasoned a piece of autobiography; an amateur has, however, written it in the style which amateurs like, with all the truth he could discover, enlivened by some secret history, writing the life of Lenglet with the very spirit of Lenglet: it is a mask taken from the very features of the man, not the insipid wax-work of an hyperbolical éloge-maker.[153]

Although Lenglet du Fresnoy commenced in early life his career as a man of letters, he was at first engaged in the great chase of political adventure; and some striking facts are recorded, which show his successful activity. Michault describes his occupations by a paraphrastical delicacy of language, which an Englishman might not have so happily composed. The minister for foreign affairs, the Marquis de Torcy, sent Lenglet to Lille, where the court of the Elector of Cologne was then held: "He had particular orders to *watch* that the two ministers of the elector should do nothing prejudicial to the king's affairs." He seems, however, to have *watched* many other persons, and detected many other things. He discovered a captain, who agreed to open the gates of Mons to Marlborough, for 100,000 piastres; the captain was arrested on the parade, the letter of Marlborough was found in his pocket, and the traitor was broken on the wheel. Lenglet denounced a foreign general in the French service, and the event warranted the prediction. His most important discovery was that of the famous conspiracy of Prince Cellamar, one of the chimerical plots of Alberoni; to the honour of Lenglet, he would not engage in its detection unless the minister promised that no blood should be shed. These successful incidents in the life of an honourable spy were rewarded with a moderate pension.—Lenglet must have been no vulgar intriguer; he was not only perpetually

confined by his very patrons when he resided at home, for the freedom of his pen, but I find him early imprisoned in the citadel of Strasburgh for six months: it is said for purloining some curious books from the library of the Abbé Bignon, of which he had the care. It is certain that he knew the value of the scarcest works, and was one of those lovers of bibliography who trade at times in costly rarities. At Vienna he became intimately acquainted with the poet Rousseau, and Prince Eugene. The prince, however, who suspected the character of our author, long avoided him. Lenglet insinuated himself into the favour of the prince's librarian; and such was his bibliographical skill, that this acquaintance ended in Prince Eugene laying aside his political dread, and preferring the advice of Lenglet to his librarian's, to enrich his magnificent library. When the motive of Lenglet's residence at Vienna became more and more suspected, Rousseau was employed to *watch* him; and not yet having quarrelled with his brother spy, he could only report that the Abbé Lenglet was every morning occupied in working on his "Tablettes Chronologiques," a work not worthy of alarming the government; that he spent his evenings at a violin-player's married to a Frenchwoman, and returned home at eleven. As soon as our historian had discovered that the poet was a brother spy and newsmonger on the side of Prince Eugene, their reciprocal civilities cooled. Lenglet now imagined that he owed his six months' retirement in the citadel of Strasburgh to the secret officiousness of Rousseau: each grew suspicious of the other's fidelity; and spies are like lovers, for their mutual jealousies settled into the most inveterate hatred. One of the most defamatory libels is Lenglet's intended dedication of his edition of Marot to Rousseau, which being forced to suppress in Holland, by order of the States-general; at Brussels, by the intervention of the Duke of Aremberg; and by every means the friends of the unfortunate Rousseau could contrive; was, however, many years afterwards at length subjoined by Lenglet to the first volume of his work on Romances; where an ordinary reader may wonder at its appearance

unconnected with any part of the work. In this dedication, or "Éloge Historique," he often addresses "Mon cher Rousseau," but the irony is not delicate, and the calumny is heavy. Rousseau lay too open to the unlicensed causticity of his accuser. The poet was then expatriated from France for a false accusation against Saurin, in attempting to fix on him those criminal couplets, which so long disturbed the peace of the literary world in France, and of which Rousseau was generally supposed to be the writer; but of which on his death-bed he solemnly protested that he was guiltless. The *coup-de-grace* is given to the poet, stretched on this rack of invective, by just accusations on account of those infamous epigrams, which appear in some editions of that poet's works; a lesson for a poet, if poets would be lessoned, who indulge their imagination at the cost of their happiness, and seem to invent crimes, as if they themselves were criminals.

But to return to our Lenglet. Had he composed his own life, it would have offered a sketch of political servitude and political adventure, in a man too intractable for the one, and too literary for the other. Yet to the honour of his capacity, we must observe that he might have chosen his patrons, would he have submitted to patronage. Prince Eugene at Vienna; Cardinal Passionei at Rome; or Mons. Le Blanc, the French minister, would have held him on his own terms. But "Liberty and my books!" was the secret ejaculation of Lenglet; and from that moment all things in life were sacrificed to a jealous spirit of independence, which broke out in his actions as well as in his writings; and a passion for study for ever crushed the worm of ambition.

He was as singular in his conversation, which, says Jordan, was extremely agreeable to a foreigner, for he delivered himself without reserve on all things, and on all persons, seasoned with secret and literary anecdotes. He refused all the conveniences offered by an opulent sister, that he might not endure the restraint of a settled dinner-hour. He lived to his

eightieth year, still busied, and then died by one of those grievous chances, to which aged men of letters are liable: our caustic critic slumbered over some modern work, and, falling into the fire was burnt to death. Many characteristic anecdotes of the Abbé Lenglet have been preserved in the *Dictionnaire Historique*, but I shall not repeat what is of easy recurrence.

149 This fact appears in the account of the minuter erasures.

150 The *castrations* are in *Beyeri Memoriæ historico-criticæ Librorum rariorum*, p. 166. The *bruises* are carefully noted in the *Catalogue of the Duke de la Valière*, 4467. Those who are curious in such singularities will be gratified by the extraordinary opinions and results in Beyer; and which after all were purloined from a manuscript "Abridgment of Universal History," which was drawn up by Count de Boulainvilliers, and more adroitly than delicately inserted by Lenglet in his own work. The original manuscript exists in various copies, which were afterwards discovered. The minuter corrections, in the Duke de la Valière's catalogue, furnish a most enlivening article in the dryness of bibliography.

151 The last edition, enlarged by Drouet, is in fifteen volumes, but is not later than 1772. It is still an inestimable manual for the historical student, as well as his *Tablettes Chronologiques*.

152 The "Dictionnaire Historique," 1789, in their article Nich. Le Fevre, notices the third edition of his "Course of Chemistry," that of 1664, in two volumes; but the present one of Lenglet du Fresnoy's is more recent, 1751, enlarged into five volumes, two of which contain his own additions. I have never met with this edition, and it is wanting at the British Museum. Le Fevre published a tract on the great cordial of Sir Walter Rawleigh, which may be curious.

153 This anonymous work of "Mémoires de Monsieur l'Abbé Lenglet du Fresnoy," although the dedication is signed G. P., is written by Michault, of Dijon, as a presentation copy to Count de Vienne in my possession proves. Michault is the writer of two volumes of agreeable "Mélanges Historiques et Philologiques;" and the present is a very curious piece of literary history. The "Dictionnaire Historique" has compiled the article of Lenglet entirely from this work; but the *Journal des Sçavans* was too ascetic in this opinion. *Etoit-ce la peine de faire un livre pour apprendre au public qu'un homme de lettres fut espion, escroc, bizarre, fougueux, cynique, incapable d'amitié, de soumission aux loix? &c.* Yet they do not pretend that the bibliography of Lenglet du Fresnoy is at all deficient in curiosity.

THE DICTIONARY OF TREVOUX.

A LEARNED friend, in his very agreeable "Trimestre, or a Three Months' Journey in France and Switzerland," could not pass through the small town of Trevoux without a literary association of ideas which should accompany every man of letters in his tours, abroad or at home. A mind well-informed cannot travel without discovering that there are objects constantly presenting themselves, which *suggest* literary, historical, and moral facts. My friend writes, "As you proceed nearer to Lyons you stop to dine at Trevoux, on the left bank of the Saone. On a sloping hill, down to the water-side, rises an amphitheatre, crowned with an ancient Gothic castle, in venerable ruin; under it is the small town of Trevoux, well known for its Journal and Dictionary, which latter is almost an encyclopædia, as *there are few things of which something is not said in that most valuable compilation*, and the whole was printed at Trevoux. The knowledge of this circumstance greatly enhances the delight of any visitor who has consulted the book, and is acquainted with its merit; and must add much to his local pleasures."

A work from which every man of letters may be continually deriving such varied knowledge, and which is little known but to the most curious readers, claims a place in these volumes; nor is the history of the work itself without interest. Eight large folios, each consisting of a thousand closely printed pages, stand like a vast mountain, of which, before we climb, we may be anxious to learn the security of the passage. The history of dictionaries is the most mutable of all histories; it is a picture of the inconstancy of the knowledge of man; the learning of one generation passes away with another; and a dictionary of this kind is always to be repaired, to be rescinded, and to be enlarged.

The small town of Trevoux gave its name to an excellent literary journal, long conducted by the Jesuits, and to this dictionary—as Edinburgh has to its Critical Review and Annual Register, &c. It first came to be distinguished as a literary town from the Duc du Maine, as prince sovereign of Dombes,154 transferring to this little town of Trevoux not only his parliament and other public institutions, but also establishing a magnificent printing-house, in the beginning of the last century. The duke, probably to keep his printers in constant employ, instituted the "*Journal de Trévoux*;" and this perhaps greatly tended to bring the printing-house into notice, so that it became a favourite with many good writers, who appear to have had no other connexion with the place; and this dictionary borrowed its first title, which it always preserved, merely from the place where it was printed. Both the journal and the dictionary were, however, consigned to the care of some learned Jesuits; and perhaps the place always indicated the principles of the writers, of whom none were more eminent for elegant literature than the Jesuits.155

The first edition of this dictionary sprung from the spirit of rivalry, occasioned by a French dictionary published in Holland, by the protestant Basnage de Beauval. The duke set his Jesuits hastily to work; who, after a pompous announcement that this dictionary was formed on a plan suggested by their patron, did little more than pillage Furetière, and rummage Basnage, and produced three new folios without any novelties; they pleased the Duc du Maine, and no one else. This was in 1704. Twenty years after, it was republished and improved; and editions increasing, the volumes succeeded each other, till it reached to its present magnitude and value in eight large folios, in 1771, the only edition now esteemed. Many of the names of the contributors to this excellent collection of words and things, the industry of Monsieur Barbier has revealed in his "Dictionnaire des Anonymes," art. 10782. The work, in the progress of a century, evidently became a favourite receptacle with men of letters in France, who

eagerly contributed the smallest or largest articles with a zeal honourable to literature and most useful to the public. They made this dictionary their commonplace book for all their curious acquisitions; every one competent to write a short article, preserving an important fact, did not aspire to compile the dictionary, or even an entire article in it; but it was a treasury in which such mites collected together formed its wealth; and all the literati may be said to have engaged in perfecting these volumes during a century. In this manner, from the humble beginnings of three volumes, in which the plagiary much more than the contributor was visible, eight were at length built up with more durable materials, and which claim the attention and the gratitude of the student.

The work, it appears, interested the government itself, as a national concern, from the tenor of the following anecdotes.

Most of the minor contributors to this great collection were satisfied to remain anonymous; but as might be expected among such a number, sometimes a contributor was anxious to be known to his circle; and did not like this penitential abstinence of fame. An anecdote recorded of one of this class will amuse: A Monsieur Lautour du Chatel, avocat au parlement de Normandie, voluntarily devoted his studious hours to improve this work, and furnished nearly three thousand articles to the supplement of the edition of 1752. This ardent scholar had had a lively quarrel thirty years before with the first authors of the dictionary. He had sent them one thousand three hundred articles, on condition that the donor should be handsomely thanked in the preface of the new edition, and further receive a copy *en grand papier*. They were accepted. The conductors of the new edition, in 1721, forgot all the promises—nor thanks, nor copy! Our learned avocat, who was a little irritable, as his nephew who wrote his life acknowledges, as soon as the great work appeared, astonished, like Dennis, that “they were rattling his own thunder,” without saying a word, quits his country town, and

ventures, half dead with sickness and indignation, on an expedition to Paris, to make his complaint to the chancellor; and the work was deemed of that importance in the eye of government, and so zealous a contributor was considered to have such an honourable claim, that the chancellor ordered, first, that a copy on large paper should be immediately delivered to Monsieur Lautour, richly bound and free of carriage; and secondly, as a reparation of the unperformed promise, and an acknowledgment of gratitude, the omission of thanks should be inserted and explained in the three great literary journals of France; a curious instance, among others, of the French government often mediating, when difficulties occurred in great literary undertakings, and considering not lightly the claims and the honours of men of letters.

Another proof, indeed, of the same kind, concerning the present work, occurred after the edition of 1752. One Jamet l'aîné, who had with others been usefully employed on this edition, addressed a proposal to government for an improved one, dated from the Bastile. He proposed that the government should choose a learned person, accustomed to the labour of the researches such a work requires; and he calculated, that if supplied with three amanuenses, such an editor would accomplish his task in about ten or twelve years, the produce of the edition would soon repay all the expenses and capital advanced. This literary projector did not wish to remain idle in the Bastile. Fifteen years afterwards the last improved edition appeared, published by the associated booksellers of Paris.

As for the work itself, it partakes of the character of our Encyclopædias; but in this respect it cannot be safely consulted, for widely has science enlarged its domains and corrected its errors since 1771. But it is precious as a vast collection of ancient and modern learning, particularly in that sort of knowledge which we usually term antiquarian and philological. It is not merely a grammatical, scientific, and technical dictionary, but it is replete

with divinity, law, moral philosophy, critical and historical learning, and abounds with innumerable miscellaneous curiosities. It would be difficult, whatever may be the subject of inquiry, to open it, without the gratification of some knowledge neither obvious nor trivial. I heard a man of great learning declare, that whenever he could not recollect his knowledge he opened Hoffman's *Lexicon Universale Historicum*, where he was sure to find what he had lost. The works are similar; and valuable as are the German's four folios, the eight of the Frenchman may safely be recommended as their substitute, or their supplement. As a Dictionary of the French Language it bears a peculiar feature, which has been presumptuously dropped in the Dictionnaire de l'Académie; the last invents phrases to explain words, which therefore have no other authority than the writer himself! this of Trevoux is furnished, not only with mere authorities, but also with quotations from the classical French writers—an improvement which was probably suggested by the English Dictionary of Johnson. One nation improves by another.

154 It was always acknowledged as an independent state by the French kings from the time of Philip Augustus. It had its own parliament, and the privilege also of coining its own money.

155 The house in which the Jesuits resided, having the shield of arms of their order over its portal, still remains at Trevoux.

QUADRIO'S ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH POETRY.

It is, perhaps, somewhat mortifying in our literary researches to discover that our own literature has been only known to the other nations of Europe comparatively within recent times. We have at length triumphed over our continental rivals in the noble struggles of genius, and our authors now see their works printed even at foreign presses, while we are furnishing with our gratuitous labours nearly the whole literature of a new empire; yet so late as in the reign of Anne, our poets were only known by the Latin versifiers of the "Musæ Anglicanæ;" and when Boileau was told of the public funeral of Dryden, he was pleased with the national honours bestowed on genius, but he declared that he never heard of his name before. This great legislator of Parnassus has never alluded to one of our own poets, so insular then was our literary glory! The most remarkable fact, or perhaps assertion, I have met with, of the little knowledge which the Continent had of our writers, is a French translation of Bishop Hall's "Characters of Virtues and Vices." It is a duodecimo, printed at Paris, of 109 pages, 1610, with this title *Charactères de Vertus et de Vices; tirés de l'Anglois de M. Josef Hall*. In a dedication to the Earl of Salisbury, the translator informs his lordship that "*ce livre est la* première traduction de l'Anglois *jamais* imprimée en aucun vulgaire"—the first translation from the English ever printed in any modern language! Whether the translator is a bold liar, or an ignorant blunderer, remains to be ascertained; at all events it is a humiliating demonstration of the small progress which our home literature had made abroad in 1610!

I come now to notice a contemporary writer, professedly writing the history of our Poetry, of which his knowledge will open to us as we proceed with our enlightened and amateur historian.

Father Quadrio's *Della Storia e dell' ragione d' ogni Poesia*,—is a gigantic work, which could only have been projected and persevered in by some hypochondriac monk, who, to get rid of the *ennui* of life, could discover no pleasanter way than to bury himself alive in seven monstrous closely-printed quartos, and every day be compiling something on a subject which he did not understand. Fortunately for Father Quadrio, without taste to feel, and discernment to decide, nothing occurred in this progress of literary history and criticism to abridge his volumes and his amusements; and with diligence and erudition unparalleled, he has here built up a receptacle for his immense, curious, and trifling knowledge on the poetry of every nation. Quadrio is among that class of authors whom we receive with more gratitude than pleasure, fly to sometimes to quote, but never linger to read; and fix on our shelves, but seldom have in our hands.

I have been much mortified, in looking over this voluminous compiler, to discover, although he wrote so late as about 1750, how little the history of English poetry was known to foreigners. It is assuredly our own fault. We have too long neglected the bibliography and the literary history of our own country. Italy, Spain, and France have enjoyed eminent bibliographers—we have none to rival them. Italy may justly glory in her Tiraboschi and her Mazzuchelli; Spain in the Bibliothecas of Nicholas Antonio; and France, so rich in bibliographical treasures, affords models to every literary nation of every species of literary history. With us, the partial labour of the hermit Anthony for the Oxford writers, compiled before philosophical criticism existed in the nation; and Warton's History of Poetry, which was left unfinished at its most critical period, when that delightful antiquary of taste had just touched the threshold of his Paradise—these are the sole great labours to which foreigners might resort, but these will not be found of much use to them. The neglect of our own literary history has, therefore, occasioned the errors, sometimes very ridiculous ones, of foreign writers respecting our authors. Even the lively Chaudon, in his "Dictionnaire

Historique," gives the most extraordinary accounts of most of the English writers. Without an English guide to attend such weary travellers, they have too often been deceived by the *mirages* of our literature. They have given blundering accounts of works which do exist, and chronicled others which never did exist; and have often made up the personal history of our authors, by confounding two or three into one. Chaudon, mentioning Dryden's tragedies, observes, that Atterbury translated two into Latin verse, entitled *Achitophel* and *Absalom*![156]

Of all these foreign authors, none has more egregiously failed than this good Father Quadrio. In this universal history of poetry, I was curious to observe what sort of figure we made, and whether the fertile genius of our original poets had struck the foreign critic with admiration or with critical censure. But little was our English poetry known to its universal historian. In the chapter on those who have cultivated "la melica poesia in propria lingua tra, Tedeschi, Fiamminghi e Inglesi,"[157] we find the following list of English poets.

"Of John Gower; whose rhymes and verses are preserved in manuscript in the college of the most Holy Trinity, in Cambridge.

"Arthur Kelton, flourished in 1548, a skilful English poet: he composed various poems in English; also he lauds the Cambrians and their genealogy.

"The works of William Wycherly, in English prose and verse."

These were the only English poets whom Quadrio at first could muster together! In his subsequent additions he caught the name of Sir Philip Sidney with an adventurous criticism, "le sue poesie assai buone." He then was lucky enough to pick up the title—not the volume, surely—which was one of the rarest; "Fiori poetici de A. Cowley," which he calls "poesie amorose:" this must mean that early volume of Cowley's, published in his thirteenth year, under the title of "Poetical Blossoms." Further he laid hold

of “John Donne” by the skirt, and “Thomas Creech,” at whom he made a full pause, informing his Italians that “his poems are reputed by his nation as ‘assai buone.’” He has also “Le opere di Guglielmo;” but to this Christian name, as it would appear, he had not ventured to add the surname. At length, in his progress of inquiry, in his fourth volume (for they were published at different periods), he suddenly discovers a host of English poets—in Waller, Duke of Buckingham, Lord Roscommon, and others, among whom is Dr. Swift; but he acknowledges their works have not reached him. Shakspeare at length appears on the scene; but Quadrio’s notions are derived from Voltaire, whom, perhaps, he boldly translates. Instead of improving our drama, he conducted it *a totale rovina nelle sue farse monstruose, che si chiaman tragedie; alcune scene vi abbia luminose e belle e alcuni tratti si trovono terribili e grandi*. Otway is said to have composed a tragic drama on the subject of “Venezia Salvata;” he adds with surprise, “ma affatto regolare.” Regularity is the essence of genius with such critics as Quadrio. Dryden is also mentioned; but the only drama specified is “King Arthur.” Addison is the first Englishman who produced a classical tragedy; but though Quadrio writes much about the life of Addison, he never alludes to the Spectator.

We come now to a more curious point. Whether Quadrio had read our *comedies* may be doubtful; but he distinguishes them by very high commendation. Our comedy, he says, represents human life, the manners of citizens and the people, much better than the French and Spanish comedies, in which all the business of life is mixed up with love affairs. The Spaniards had their gallantry from the Moors, and their manners from chivalry; to which they added their tumid African taste, differing from that of other nations. I shall translate what he now adds of English comedy.

“The English, more skilfully even than the French, have approximated to the true idea of comic subjects, choosing for the argument of their invention

the customary and natural objects of the citizens and the populace. And when religion and decorum were more respected in their theatres, they were more advanced in this species of poetry, and merited not a little praise, above their neighbouring nations. But more than the English and the French (to speak according to pure and bare truth) have the Italians signalised themselves." A sly, insinuating criticism! But, as on the whole, for reasons which I cannot account for, Father Quadrio seems to have relished our English comedy, we must value his candour. He praises our comedy; "per il bello ed il buono;" but, as he is a methodical Aristotelian, he will not allow us that liberty in the theatre which we are supposed to possess in parliament —by delivering whatever we conceive to the purpose. His criticism is a specimen of the irrefragable. "We must not abandon legitimate rules *to give mere pleasure thereby*; because pleasure is produced by, and flows from, the *beautiful*; and the beautiful is chiefly drawn from the good order and unity in which it consists!"

Quadrio succeeded in discovering the name of one of our greatest comic geniuses; for, alluding to our diversity of action in comedy, he mentions in his fifth volume, page 148,—"Il celebre *Benjanson*, nella sua commedia intitolato *Bartolommeo Foicere*, e in quella altra commedia intitolato *Ipsum Veetz*." The reader may decipher the poet's name with his *Fair*; but it required the critical sagacity of Mr. Douce to discover that by *Ipsum Veetz* we are to understand Shadwell's comedy of *Epsom Wells*. The Italian critic had transcribed what he and his Italian printer could not spell. We have further discovered the source of his intelligence in St. Evremond, who had classed Shadwell's comedy with Ben Jonson's. To such shifts is the writer of an universal history *d' ogni Poesia* miserably reduced!

Towards the close of the fifth volume we at last find the sacred muse of Milton,—but, unluckily, he was a man "di pochissima religione," and spoke of Christ like an Arian. Quadrio quotes Ramsay for Milton's vomiting forth

abuse on the Roman Church. His figures are said to be often mean, unworthy of the majesty of his subject; but in a later place, excepting his religion, our poet, it is decided on, is worthy “di molti laudi.”

Thus much for the information the curious may obtain on English poetry from its universal history. Quadrio unquestionably writes with more ignorance than prejudice against us: he has not only highly distinguished the comic genius of our writers, and raised it above that of our neighbours, but he has also advanced another discovery, which ranks us still higher for original invention, and which, I am confident, will be as new as it is extraordinary to the English reader.

Quadrio, who, among other erudite accessories to his work, has exhausted the most copious researches on the origin of Punch and Harlequin, has also written, with equal curiosity and value, the history of Puppet-shows. But whom has he lauded? whom has he placed paramount, above all other people, for their genius of invention in improving this art!—The English! and the glory which has hitherto been universally conceded to the Italian nation themselves, appears to belong to us! For we, it appears, while others were dandling and pulling their little representatives of human nature into such awkward and unnatural motions, first invented pulleys, or wires, and gave a fine and natural action to the artificial life of these gesticulating machines!

We seem to know little of ourselves as connected with the history of puppet-shows; but in an article in the curious Dictionary of Trevoux, I find that John Brioché, to whom had been attributed the invention of *Marionnettes*, is only to be considered as an improver; in his time (but the learned writers supply no date) *an Englishman* discovered the secret of moving them by springs, and without strings; but the Marionnettes of Brioché were preferred for the pleasantries which he made them deliver. The erudite Quadrio appears to have more successfully substantiated our

claims to the pulleys or wires, or springs of the puppets, than any of our own antiquaries; and perhaps the uncommemorated name of this Englishman was that Powell, whose Solomon and Sheba were celebrated in the days of Addison and Steele; the former of whom has composed a classical and sportive Latin poem on this very subject. But Quadrio might well rest satisfied that the nation which could boast of its *Fantoccini*, surpassed, and must ever surpass the puny efforts of a doll-loving people!

156 Even recently, il Cavaliere Onofrio Boni, in his Eloge of Lanzi, in naming the three Augustan periods of modern literature, fixes them, for the Italians, under Leo the Tenth; for the French, under Louis the Fourteenth, or the Great; and for the English, under Charles the Second!

157 Quadrio, vol. ii. p. 416.

"POLITICAL RELIGIONISM."

In Professor Dugald Stewart's first Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy, I find this singular and significant term. It has occasioned me to reflect on those contests for religion, in which a particular faith has been made the ostensible pretext, while the secret motive was usually political. The historians, who view in religious wars only religion itself, have written large volumes, in which we may never discover that they have either been a struggle to obtain predominance, or an expedient to secure it. The hatreds of ambitious men have disguised their own purposes, while Christianity has

borne the odium of loosening a destroying spirit among mankind; which, had Christianity never existed, would have equally prevailed in human affairs. Of a moral malady, it is not only necessary to know the nature, but to designate it by a right name, that we may not err in our mode of treatment. If we call that *religious* which we shall find for the greater part is *political*, we are likely to be mistaken in the regimen and the cure.

Fox, in his "Acts and Monuments," writes the martyrology of the *Protestants* in three mighty folios; where, in the third, "the tender mercies" of the Catholics are "cut in wood" for those who might not otherwise be enabled to read or spell them. Such pictures are abridgments of long narratives, but they leave in the mind a fulness of horror. Fox made more than one generation shudder; and his volume, particularly this third, chained to a reading-desk in the halls of the great, and in the aisles of churches, often detained the loiterer, as it furnished some new scene of papistical horrors to paint forth on returning to his fireside. The protestants were then the martyrs, because, under Mary, the protestants had been thrown out of power.

Dodd has opposed to Fox three curious folios, which he calls "The Church History of England," exhibiting a most abundant martyrology of the *catholics*, inflicted by the hands of the protestants; who in the succeeding reign of Elizabeth, after long trepidations and balancings, were confirmed into power. He grieves over the delusion and seduction of the black-letter romance of honest John Fox, which he says, "has obtained a place in protestant churches next to the Bible, while John Fox himself is esteemed little less than an evangelist."[158] Dodd's narratives are not less pathetic: for the situation of the catholic, who had to secrete himself, as well as to suffer, was more adapted for romantic adventures, than even the melancholy but monotonous story of the protestants tortured in the cell, or bound to the stake. These catholics, however, were attempting all sorts of intrigues; and

the saints and martyrs of Dodd, to the parliament of England, were only traitors and conspirators!

Heylin, in his history of the *Puritans* and the *Presbyterians*, blackens them for political devils. He is the Spagnolet of history, delighting himself with horrors at which the painter himself must have started. He tells of their "oppositions" to monarchical and episcopal government; their "innovations" in the church; and their "embroilments" of the kingdoms. The sword rages in their hands; treason, sacrilege, plunder; while "more of the blood of Englishmen had poured like water within the space of four years, than had been shed in the civil wars of York and Lancaster in four centuries!"

Neal opposes a more elaborate history; where these "great and good men," the puritans and the presbyterians, "are placed among the *reformers*;" while their fame is blanched into angelic purity. Neal and his party opined that the protestant had not sufficiently protested, and that the reformation itself needed to be reformed. They wearied the impatient Elizabeth and her ardent churchmen; and disputed with the learned James, and his courtly bishops, about such ceremonial trifles, that the historian may blush or smile who has to record them. And when the *puritan* was thrown out of preferment, and seceded into separation, he turned into a *presbyter*. Nonconformity was their darling sin, and their sullen triumph.

Calamy, in four painful volumes, chronicles the bloodless martyrology of the two thousand silenced and ejected ministers. Their history is not glorious, and their heroes are obscure; but it is a domestic tale. When the second Charles was restored, the *presbyterians*, like every other faction, were to be amused, if not courted. Some of the king's chaplains were selected from among them, and preached once. Their hopes were raised that they should, by some agreement, be enabled to share in that ecclesiastical establishment which they had so often opposed; and the bishops met the

presbyters in a convocation at the Savoy. A conference was held between the *high church*, resuming the seat of power, and the *low church*, now prostrate; that is, between the *old clergy* who had recently been mercilessly ejected by the *new*, who in their turn were awaiting their fate. The conference was closed with arguments by the weaker, and votes by the stronger. Many curious anecdotes of this conference have come down to us. The presbyterians, in their last struggle, petitioned for *indulgence*; but oppressors who had become petitioners, only showed that they possessed no longer the means of resistance. This conference was followed up by the *Act of Uniformity*, which took place on Bartholomew day, August 24, 1652: an act which ejected Calamy's two thousand ministers from the bosom of the established church. Bartholomew day with this party was long paralleled, and perhaps is still, with the dreadful French massacre of that fatal saint's day. The calamity was rather, however, of a private than of a public nature. The two thousand ejected ministers were indeed deprived of their livings; but this was, however, a happier fate than what has often occurred in these contests for the security of political power. This *ejection* was not like the expulsion of the Moriscoes, the best and most useful subjects of Spain, which was a human sacrifice of half a million of men, and the proscription of many Jews from that land of Catholicism; or the massacre of thousands of Huguenots, and the expulsion of more than a hundred thousand by Louis the Fourteenth from France. The presbyterian divines were not driven from their fatherland, and compelled to learn another language than their mother-tongue. Destitute as divines, they were suffered to remain as citizens; and the result was remarkable. These divines could not disrobe themselves of their learning and their piety, while several of them were compelled to become tradesmen: among these the learned Samuel Chandler, whose literary productions are numerous, kept a bookseller's shop in the Poultry.

Hard as this event proved in its result, it was, however, pleaded, that "It was but like for like." And that the history of "the like" might not be

curtailed in the telling, opposed to Calamy's chronicle of the two thousand ejected ministers stands another, in folio magnitude, of the same sort of chronicle of the clergy of the Church of England, with a title by no means less pathetic.

This is Walker's "Attempt towards recovering an Account of the Clergy of the Church of England who were sequestered, harassed, &c., in the late Times." Walker is himself astonished at the size of his volume, the number of his sufferers, and the variety of the sufferings. "Shall the church," says he, "not have the liberty to preserve the history of her sufferings, as well as the *separation* to set forth an account of theirs? Can Dr. Calamy be acquitted for publishing the history of the *Bartholomew sufferers*, if I am condemned for writing that of the *sequestered loyalists*?" He allows that "the number of the ejected amounts to two thousand," and there were no less than "seven or eight thousand of the episcopal clergy imprisoned, banished, and sent a starving," &c. &c.

Whether the reformed were martyred by the catholics, or the catholics executed by the reformed; whether the puritans expelled those of the established church, or the established church ejected the puritans, all seems reducible to two classes, conformists and non-conformists, or, in the political style, the administration and the opposition. When we discover that the heads of all parties are of the same hot temperament, and observe the same evil conduct in similar situations; when we view honest old Latimer with his own hands hanging a mendicant friar on a tree, and, the government changing, the friars binding Latimer to the stake; when we see the French catholics cutting out the tongues of the protestants, that they might no longer protest; the haughty Luther writing submissive apologies to Leo the Tenth and Henry the Eighth for the scurrility with which he had treated them in his writings, and finding that his apologies were received with contempt, then retracting his retractations; when we find that

haughtiest of the haughty, John Knox, when Elizabeth first ascended the throne, crouching and repenting of having written his famous excommunication against all female sovereignty; or pulling down the monasteries, from the axiom that when the rookery was destroyed, the rooks would never return; when we find his recent apologist admiring, while he apologises for, some extraordinary proofs of Machiavelian politics, an impenetrable mystery seems to hang over the conduct of men who profess to be guided by the bloodless code of Jesus. But try them by a human standard, and treat them as *politicians*, and the motives once discovered, the actions are understood!

Two edicts of Charles the Fifth, in 1555, condemned to death the Reformed of the Low Countries, even should they return to the catholic faith, with this exception, however, in favour of the latter, that they shall not be burnt alive, but that the men shall be beheaded, and the women buried alive! *Religion* could not, then, be the real motive of the Spanish cabinet, for in returning to the ancient faith that point was obtained; but the truth is, that the Spanish government considered the reformed as *rebels*, whom it was not safe to re-admit to the rights of citizenship. The undisguised fact appears in the codicil to the will of the emperor, when he solemnly declares that he had written to the Inquisition "to burn and extirpate the heretics," *after trying to make Christians of them*, because he is convinced that they never can become sincere catholics; and he acknowledges that he had committed a great fault in permitting Luther to return free on the faith of his safe-conduct, as the emperor was not bound to keep a promise with a heretic. "It is because that I destroyed him not, that heresy has now become strong, which I am convinced might have been stifled with him in its birth."[159] The whole conduct of Charles the Fifth in this mighty revolution was, from its beginning, censured by contemporaries as purely *political*. Francis the First observed that the emperor, under the colour of religion, was placing himself at the head of a league to make his way to a

predominant monarchy. “The pretext of religion is no new thing,” writes the Duke of Nevers. “Charles the Fifth had never undertaken a war against the Protestant princes but with the design of rendering the Imperial crown hereditary in the house of Austria; and he has only attacked the electoral princes to ruin them, and to abolish their right of election. Had it been zeal for the catholic religion, would he have delayed from 1519 to 1549 to arm? That he might have extinguished the Lutheran heresy, which he could easily have done in 1526, but he considered that this novelty would serve to divide the German princes, and he patiently waited till the effect was realised.”[160]

Good men of both parties, mistaking the nature of these religious wars, have drawn horrid inferences! The “dragonnades” of Louis XIV. excited the admiration of Bruyère; and Anquetil, in his “Esprit de la Ligue,” compares the revocation of the Edict of Nantes to a salutary amputation. The massacre of St. Bartholomew in its own day, and even recently, has found advocates; a Greek professor at the time asserted that there were *two classes* of protestants in France—political and religious; and that “the late ebullition of public vengeance was solely directed against the former.” Dr. M’Crie, cursing the catholic with a catholic’s curse, execrates “the stale sophistry of this calumniator.” But should we allow that the Greek professor who advocated their national crime was the wretch the calvinistic doctor describes, yet the nature of things cannot be altered by the equal violence of Peter Charpentier and Dr. M’Crie.

This subject of “Political Religionism” is indeed as nice as it is curious; *politics* have been so cunningly worked into the cause of *religion*, that the parties themselves will never be able to separate them; and to this moment the most opposite opinions are formed concerning the same events and the same persons. When public disturbances broke out at Nismes on the first restoration of the Bourbons, the protestants, who there are numerous, declared that they were persecuted for religion, and their cry, echoed by

their brethren the dissenters, resounded in this country. We have not forgotten the ferment it raised here; much was said, and something was done. Our minister, however, persisted in declaring that it was a mere *political* affair. It is clear that our government was right on the *cause*, and those zealous complainants wrong, who only observed the *effect*; for as soon as the Bourbonists had triumphed over the Bonapartists, we heard no more of those sanguinary persecutions of the protestants of Nismes, of which a dissenter has just published a large history. It is a curious fact, that when two writers at the same time were occupied in a Life of Cardinal Ximenes, Flechier converted the cardinal into a saint, and every incident in his administration was made to connect itself with his religious character; Marsollier, a writer very inferior to Flechier, shows the cardinal merely as a politician. The elegances of Flechier were soon neglected by the public, and the deep interests of truth soon acquired, and still retain, for the less elegant writer the attention of the statesman.

A modern historian has observed that "the affairs of religion were the grand fomenters and promoters of the *Thirty Years' War*, which first brought down the powers of the North to mix in the politics of the Southern states." The fact is indisputable, but the cause is not so apparent. Gustavus Adolphus, the vast military genius of his age, had designed, and was successfully attempting, to oppose the overgrown power of the imperial house of Austria, which had long aimed at an universal monarchy in Europe; a circumstance which Philip IV. weakly hinted at to the world when he placed this motto under his arms—"*Sine ipso factum est nihil*;" an expression applied to Jesus Christ by St. John!

158 "Fox's Martyrs," as the book was popularly called, was often chained to a reading-desk in churches; one is still thus affixed at Cirencester; it thus received equal honour with the Bible.

159 Llorente's "Critical History of the Inquisition."

160 Naudé, “Considérations Politiques,” p. 115. See a curious note in Hart’s “Life of Gustavus Adolphus,” ii. 129.

TOLERATION.

An enlightened toleration is a blessing of the last age—it would seem to have been practised by the Romans, when they did not mistake the primitive Christians for seditious members of society; and was inculcated even by Mahomet, in a passage in the Koran, but scarcely practised by his followers. In modern history it was condemned when religion was turned into a political contest under the aspiring house of Austria—and in Spain—and in France. It required a long time before its nature was comprehended—and to this moment it is far from being clear, either to the tolerators or the tolerated.

It does not appear that the precepts or the practice of Jesus and the apostles inculcate the *compelling* of any to be Christians;161 yet an expression employed in the nuptial parable of the great supper, when the hospitable lord commanded the servant, finding that he had still room to accommodate more guests, to go out in the highways and hedges, and “*compel them to come in, that my house may be filled*,” was alleged as an authority by those catholics who called themselves “the converters,” for using religious force, which, still alluding to the hospitable lord, they called “a charitable and salutary violence.” It was this circumstance which

produced Bayle's "Commentaire Philosophique sur ces Paroles de Jesus Christ," published under the supposititious name of an *Englishman*, as printed at Canterbury in 1686, but really at Amsterdam. It is curious that Locke published his first letter on "Toleration" in Latin at Gouda, in 1689—the second in 1690—and the third in 1692. Bayle opened the mind of Locke, and some time after quotes Locke's Latin letter with high commendation.[162] The caution of both writers in publishing in foreign places, however, indicates the prudence which it was deemed necessary to observe in writing in favour of toleration.

These were the first *philosophical* attempts; but the earliest advocates for toleration may be found among the religious controversialists of a preceding period; it was probably started among the fugitive sects who had found an asylum in Holland. It was a blessing which they had gone far to find, and the miserable, reduced to humane feelings, are compassionate to one another. With us the sect called "the Independents" had, early in our revolution under Charles the First, pleaded for the doctrine of religious liberty, and long maintained it against the presbyterians. Both proved persecutors when they possessed power. The first of our respectable divines who advocated this cause were Jeremy Taylor, in his "Discourse on the Liberty of Prophesying," 1647, and Bishop Hall, who had pleaded the cause of *moderation* in a discourse about the same period.[163] Locke had no doubt examined all these writers. The history of opinions is among the most curious of histories; and I suspect that Bayle was well acquainted with the pamphlets of our sectarists, who, in their flight to Holland, conveyed those curiosities of theology, which had cost them their happiness and their estates: I think he indicates this hidden source of his ideas by the extraordinary ascription of his book to *an Englishman*, and fixing the place of its publication at *Canterbury*!

Toleration has been a vast engine in the hands of modern politicians. It was established in the United Provinces of Holland, and our numerous non-conformists took refuge in that asylum for disturbed consciences; it attracted a valuable community of French refugees; it conducted a colony of Hebrew fugitives from Portugal; conventicles of Brownists, quakers' meetings, French churches, and Jewish synagogues, and (had it been required) Mahometan mosques, in Amsterdam, were the precursors of its mart, and its exchange; the moment they could preserve their consciences sacred to themselves, they lived without mutual persecution, and mixed together as good Dutchmen.

The excommunicated part of Europe seemed to be the most enlightened, and it was then considered as a proof of the admirable progress of the human mind, that Locke and Clarke and Newton corresponded with Leibnitz, and others of the learned in France and Italy. Some were astonished that philosophers who differed in their *religious opinions* should communicate among themselves with so much toleration.[164]

It is not, however, clear that had any one of these sects at Amsterdam obtained predominance, which was sometimes attempted, they would have granted to others the toleration they participated in common. The infancy of a party is accompanied by a political weakness which disables it from weakening others.

The catholic in this country pleads for toleration; in his own he refuses to grant it. Here, the presbyterian, who had complained of persecution, once fixed in the seat of power, abrogated every kind of independence among others. When the flames consumed Servetus at Geneva, the controversy began, whether the civil magistrate might punish heretics, which Beza, the associate of Calvin, maintained; he triumphed in the small predestinating city of Geneva; but the book he wrote was fatal to the protestants a few leagues distant, among a majority of catholics. Whenever the protestants

complained of the persecutions they suffered, the catholics, for authority and sanction, never failed to appeal to the volume of their own Beza.

M. Necker de Saussure has recently observed on “what trivial circumstances the change or the preservation of the established religion in different districts of Europe has depended!” When the Reformation penetrated into Switzerland, the government of the principality of Neufchatel, wishing to allow liberty of conscience to all their subjects, invited each parish to vote “for or against the adoption of the new worship; and in all the parishes, except two, the majority of suffrages declared in favour of the protestant communion.” The inhabitants of the small village of Cressier had also assembled; and forming an even number, there happened to be an equality of votes for and against the change of religion. A shepherd being absent, tending the flocks on the hills, they summoned him to appear and decide this important question: when, having no liking to innovation, he gave his voice in favour of the existing form of worship; and this parish remained catholic, and is so at this day, in the heart of the protestant cantons.

I proceed to some facts which I have arranged for the history of Toleration. In the Memoirs of James the Second, when that monarch published “The Declaration for Liberty of Conscience,” the catholic reasons and liberalises like a modern philosopher: he accuses “the jealousy of our clergy, who had degraded themselves into intriguers; and like mechanics in a trade, who are afraid of nothing so much as interlopers—they had therefore induced indifferent persons to imagine that their earnest contest was not about their faith, but about their temporal possessions. It was incongruous that a church, which does not pretend to be infallible, should constrain persons, under heavy penalties and punishments, to believe as she does: they delighted, he asserted, to hold an iron rod over dissenters and catholics; so sweet was dominion, that the very thought of others

participating in their freedom made them deny the very doctrine they preached." The chief argument the catholic urged on this occasion was "the reasonableness of repealing laws which made men liable to the greatest punishments for that it was not in their power to remedy, for that no man could force himself to believe what he really did not believe."[165]

Such was the rational language of the most bigoted of zealots!—The fox can bleat like the lamb. At the very moment James the Second was uttering this mild expostulation, in his own heart he had anathematised the nation; for I have seen some of the king's private papers, which still exist; they consist of communications, chiefly by the most bigoted priests, with the wildest projects, and most infatuated prophecies and dreams, of restoring the true catholic faith in England! Had the Jesuit-led monarch retained the English throne, the language he now addressed to the nation would have been no longer used; and in that case it would have served his protestant subjects. He asked for toleration, to become intolerant! He devoted himself, not to the hundredth part of the English nation; and yet he was surprised that he was left one morning without an army! When the catholic monarch issued this declaration for "liberty of conscience," the Jekyll of his day observed, that "it was but scaffolding: they intend to build another house, and when that house (Popery) is built, they will take down the scaffold."[166]

When presbytery was our lord, they who had endured the tortures of persecution, and raised such sharp outcries for freedom, of all men were the most intolerant: hardly had they tasted of the Circean cup of dominion, ere they were transformed into the most hideous or the most grotesque monsters of political power. To their eyes toleration was an hydra, and the dethroned bishops had never so vehemently declaimed against what, in ludicrous rage, one of the high-flying presbyterians called "a cursed intolerable toleration!" They advocated the rights of persecution; and "shallow Edwards," as Milton calls the author of "The Gangræna,"

published a treatise *against toleration*. They who had so long complained of "the licensers," now sent all the books they condemned to penal fires. Prynne now vindicated the very doctrines under which he himself had so severely suffered; assuming the highest possible power of civil government, even to the infliction of death on its opponents. Prynne lost all feeling for the ears of others!

The idea of toleration was not intelligible for too long a period in the annals of Europe: no parties probably could conceive the idea of toleration in the struggle for predominance. Treaties are not proffered when conquest is the concealed object. Men were immolated! a massacre was a sacrifice! medals were struck to commemorate these holy persecutions![167] The destroying angel, holding in one hand a cross, and in the other a sword, with these words—*Vgonottorum Strages*, 1572—"The massacre of the Huguenots"—proves that toleration will not agree with that date.[168] Castelnau, a statesman and a humane man, was at a loss how to decide on a point of the utmost importance to France. In 1532 they first began to burn the Lutherans or Calvinists, and to cut out the tongues of all protestants, "that they might no longer protest." According to Father Paul, fifty thousand persons had perished in the Netherlands, by different tortures, for religion. But a change in the religion of the state, Castelnau considered, would occasion one in the government: he wondered how it happened, that the more they punished with death, it only increased the number of the victims: martyrs produced proselytes. As a statesman, he looked round the great field of human actions in the history of the past; there he discovered that the Romans were more enlightened in their actions than ourselves; that Trajan commanded Pliny the younger not to molest the Christians for their *religion*, but should their conduct endanger the state, to put down *illegal assemblies*; that Julian the Apostate expressly forbad the *execution* of the Christians, who then imagined that they were securing their salvation by martyrdom; but he ordered all their goods to be *confiscated*—a severe

punishment—by which Julian prevented more than he could have done by persecutions. “All this,” he adds, “we read in ecclesiastical history.”[169] Such were the sentiments of Castelnau, in 1560. Amidst perplexities of state necessity, and of our common humanity, the notion of *toleration* had not entered into the views of the statesman. It was also at this time that De Sainctes, a great controversial writer, declared, that had the fires lighted for the destruction of Calvinism not been extinguished, the sect had not spread! About half a century subsequent to this period, Thuanus was, perhaps, the first great mind who appears to have insinuated to the French monarch and his nation, that they might live at peace with heretics; by which avowal he called down on himself the haughty indignation of Rome, and a declaration that the man who spoke in favour of heretics must necessarily be one of the first class. Hear the afflicted historian: “Have men no compassion, after forty years passed full of continual miseries? Have they no fear after the loss of the Netherlands, occasioned by the frantic obstinacy which marked the times? I grieve that such sentiments should have occasioned my book to have been examined with a rigour that amounts to calumny.” Such was the language of Thuanus, in a letter written in 1606;[170] which indicates an approximation to *toleration*, but which term was not probably yet found in any dictionary. We may consider, as so many attempts at toleration, the great national synod of Dort, whose history is amply written by Brandt; and the mitigating protestantism of Laud, to approximate to the ceremonies of the Roman church; but the synod, after holding about two hundred sessions, closed, dividing men into universalists and semi-universalists, supralapsarians and sublapsarians! The *reformed* themselves produced the *remonstrants*; and Laud’s ceremonies ended in placing the altar eastward, and in raising the scaffold for the monarchy and the hierarchy. Error is circuitous when it will do what it has not yet learnt. They were pressing for conformity to do that which, a century afterwards, they found could only be done by *toleration*.

The *secret history of toleration* among certain parties has been disclosed to us by a curious document, from that religious Machiavel, the fierce ascetic republican John Knox, a calvinistical Pope. “While the posterity of Abraham,” says that mighty and artful reformer, “were *few in number*, and while they sojourned in *different countries*, they were merely required to avoid all participation in the idolatrous rites of the heathen; but *as soon as they prospered into a kingdom*, and had obtained *possession of Canaan*, they were strictly charged to suppress idolatry, and to destroy all the monuments and incentives. The same duty was *now* incumbent on the professors of the true religion in Scotland. Formerly, when not more than *ten persons in a county* were enlightened, it would have been *foolishness* to have demanded of the nobility the suppression of idolatry. But *now*, when knowledge had been increased,” &c.[171] Such are the men who cry out for toleration during their state of political weakness, but who cancel the bond by which they hold their tenure whenever they “obtain possession of Canaan.” The only commentary on this piece of the secret history of *toleration* is the acute remark of Swift:—“We are fully convinced that we shall always tolerate them, but not that they will tolerate us.”

The truth is that TOLERATION was allowed by none of the parties! and I will now show the dilemmas into which each party thrust itself.

When the kings of England would forcibly have established episcopacy in Scotland, the presbyters passed an act *against the toleration of dissenters from presbyterian doctrines and discipline*; and thus, as Guthrie observes, they were committing the same violence on the consciences of their brethren which they opposed in the king. The presbyterians contrived their famous *covenant* to dispossess the royalists of their livings; and the independents, who assumed the principle of toleration in their very name, shortly after enforced what they called the *engagement*, to eject the presbyterians! In England, where the dissenters were ejected, their great

advocate Calamy complains that the dissenters were only making use of the same arguments which the most eminent reformers had done in their noble defence of the reformation against the papists; while the arguments of the established church against the dissenters were the same which were urged by the papists against the protestant reformation![172] When the presbyterians were our masters, and preached up the doctrine of passive obedience in spiritual matters to the civil power, it was unquestionably passing a self-condemnation on their own recent opposition and detraction of the former episcopacy. Whenever men act from a secret motive entirely contrary to their ostensible one, such monstrous results will happen; and as extremes will join, however opposite they appear in their beginnings, John Knox and Father Petre, in office, would have equally served James the Second as confessor and prime minister!

A fact relating to the famous Justus Lipsius proves the difficulty of forming a clear notion of TOLERATION. This learned man, after having been ruined by the religious wars of the Netherlands, found an honourable retreat in a professor's chair at Leyden, and without difficulty abjured papacy. He published some political works: and adopted as his great principle, that only *one religion* should be allowed to a people, and that no clemency should be granted to non-conformists, who, he declares, should be pursued by sword and fire: in this manner a single member would be cut off to preserve the body sound. *Ure, seca*—are his words. Strange notions these in a protestant republic; and, in fact, in Holland it was approving of all the horrors of their oppressors, the Duke d'Alva and Philip the Second, from which they had hardly recovered.[173] It was a principle by which we must inevitably infer, says Bayle, that in Holland no other mode of religious belief but one sect should be permitted; and that those Pagans who had hanged the missionaries of the gospel had done what they ought. Lipsius found himself sadly embarrassed when refuted by Theodore Cornhert,[174] the firm advocate of political and religious freedom, and at length Lipsius, that

protestant with a catholic heart, was forced to eat his words, like Pistol his onion, declaring that the two objectionable words, *ure*, *seca*, were borrowed from medicine, meaning not literally *fire* and *sword*, but a strong efficacious remedy, one of those powerful medicines to expel poison. Jean de Serres, a warm Huguenot, carried the principle of TOLERATION so far in his "Inventaire générale de l'Histoire de France," as to blame Charles Martel for compelling the Frisans, whom he had conquered, to adopt Christianity! "A pardonable zeal," he observes, "in a warrior; but in fact the minds of men cannot be gained over by arms, nor that religion forced upon them, which must be introduced into the hearts of men by reason." It is curious to see a protestant, in his zeal for toleration, blaming a king for forcing idolaters to become Christians; and to have found an opportunity to express his opinions in the dark history of the eighth century, is an instance how historians incorporate their passions in their works, and view ancient facts with modern eyes.

The protestant cannot grant toleration to the catholic, unless the catholic ceases to be a papist; and the Arminian church, which opened its wide bosom to receive every denomination of Christians, nevertheless were forced to exclude the papists, for their passive obedience to the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. The catholic has curiously told us, on this word *toleration*, that *Ce mot devient fort en usage à mesure que le nombre des tolérans augmente*.[175] It was a word which seemed of recent introduction, though the book is modern! The protestants have disputed much how far they might tolerate, or whether they should tolerate at all; "a difficulty," triumphantly exclaims the catholic, "which they are not likely ever to settle, while they maintain their principles of pretended reformation; the consequences which naturally follow excite horror to the Christian. It is the weak who raise such outcries for toleration; the strong find authority legitimate."

A religion which admits not of *toleration* cannot be safely tolerated, if there is any chance of its obtaining a political ascendancy.

When Priscillian and six of his followers were condemned to torture and execution for asserting that the three persons of the Trinity were to be considered as three different *acceptions* of the same being, Saint Ambrose and Saint Martin asserted the cause of offended humanity, and refused to communicate with the bishops who had called out for the blood of the Priscillianists; but Cardinal Baronius, the annalist of the church, was greatly embarrassed to explain how men of real purity could abstain from *applauding* the ardent zeal of the *persecution*: he preferred to give up the saints rather than to allow of toleration—for he acknowledges that the toleration which these saints would have allowed was not exempt from sin.176

In the preceding article, "Political Religionism," we have shown how to provide against the possible evil of the *tolerated* becoming the *tolerators*! Toleration has been suspected of indifference to religion itself; but with sound minds, it is only an indifference to the logomachies of theology—things "not of God, but of man," that have perished, and that are perishing around us!

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161 Bishop Barlow's "Several Miscellaneous and Weighty Cases of Conscience Resolved," 1692. His "Case of a Toleration in Matters of Religion," addressed to Robert Boyle, p. 39. This volume was not intended to have been given to the world, a circumstance which does not make it the less curious.

162 In the article *Sancterius*. Note F.

163 Recent writers among our sectarists assert that Dr. Owen was the *first* who wrote in favour of toleration, in 1648! Another claims the honour for John Goodwin, the chaplain of Oliver Cromwell, who published one of his obscure polemical tracts in 1644, among a number

of other persons who, at that crisis, did not venture to prefix their names to pleas in favour of toleration, so delicate and so obscure did this subject then appear! In 1651, they translated the liberal treatise of Grotius, *De Imperio Summarum Potestatum circa Sacra*, under the title of "The Authority of the Highest Powers about Sacred Things." London, 8vo, 1651. To the honour of Grotius, the first of philosophical reformers, be it recorded, that he displeased both parties!

164 J. P. Rabaut, "sur la Revolution Française," p. 27.

165 "Life of James the Second, from his own Papers," ii 114.

166 This was a Baron Wallop. From Dr. H. Sampson's Manuscript Diary.

167 It is curious to observe that the catholics were afterwards ashamed of these indiscretions; they were unwilling to own that there were any medals which commemorate massacres. Thuanus, in his 53rd book, has minutely described them. The medals, however, have become excessively scarce; but copies inferior to the originals have been sold. They had also pictures on similar subjects, accompanied by insulting inscriptions, which latter they have effaced, sometimes very imperfectly. See Hollis's "Memoirs," p. 312-14. This enthusiast advertised in the papers to request travellers to procure them.

168 The *Sala Regia* of the Vatican has still upon its walls a painting by Vasari of this massacre, among the other important events in the history of the Popes similarly commemorated.

169 "Mémoires de Michel de Castelnau," liv. i. c. 4.

170 "Life of Thuanus, by the Rev. J. Collinson," p. 115.

171 Dr. M'Crie's "Life of John Knox," ii. 122.

172 I quote from an unpublished letter, written so late as in 1749, addressed to the author of "The Free and Candid Disquisition," by the Rev. Thomas Allen, rector of Kettering, Northamptonshire. However extravagant his doctrine appears to us, I suspect that it exhibits the concealed sentiments of even some protestant churchmen! This rector of Kettering attributes the growth of schism to the *negligence* of the clergy, and seems to have persecuted both the archbishops, "to his detriment," as he tells us, with singular plans of reform borrowed from

monastic institutions. He wished to revive the practice inculcated by a canon of the counsel of Laodicea of having prayers *ad horam nonam et ad vesperam*—prayers twice a day in the churches. But his grand project take in his own words:—

"I let the archbishop know that I had composed an *irenicon*, wherein I prove the necessity of an ecclesiastical *power over consciences* in matters of religion, which utterly silences their arguments who *plead so hard for toleration*. I took my scheme from 'A Discourse of Ecclesiastical Polity,' wherein the authority of the civil magistrate over the consciences of subjects in matters of external religion is asserted; *the mischiefs and inconveniences of toleration* are represented, and all pretences pleaded in behalf of *liberty of conscience* are fully answered. If this book were reprinted and considered, the king would know his power and the people their duty."

The rector of Kettering seems not to have known that the author of this "Discourse on Ecclesiastical Polity" was the notorious Parker, immortalised by the satire of Marvell. This political apostate, from a republican and presbyterian, became a furious advocate for *arbitrary government* in church and state! He easily won the favour of James the Second, who made him Bishop of Oxford! His principles were so violent that Father Petre, the confessor of James, made sure of him! This letter of the rector of Kettering, in adopting the system of such a *catholic* bishop, confirms my suspicion that *toleration* is condemned as an evil among some protestants!

173 The cruelties practised by the Protestant against the Catholic party are pictured and described in Arnoudt Van Geluwe's book, "Over de Ontledinghe van dry verscheyden Niew-Ghereformeerde Martelaers Boecken," published at Antwerp in 1656.

174 Cornhert was one of the fathers of Dutch literature, and even of their arts. He was the composer of the great national air of William of Orange; he was too a famous engraver, the master of Goltzius. On his death-bed he was still writing against the *persecution of heretics*.

175 "Dictionnaire de Trevoux," *ad vocem* Tolerance. Printed in 1771.

176 Sismondi, "Hist. des Français," i. 41. The character of the *first person* who introduced *civil* persecution into the Christian church has been described by Sulpicius Severus. See Dr. Maclaine's note in his translation of Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History," vol. i. 428.

APOLOGY FOR THE PARISIAN MASSACRE.

An original document now lying before me, the autograph letter of Charles the Ninth, will prove, that the unparalleled massacre, called by the world *religious*, was, in the French cabinet, considered merely as *political*; one of those revolting state expedients which a pretended instant necessity has too often inflicted on that part of a nation which, like the undercurrent, subterraneously works its way, and runs counter to the great stream, till the critical moment arrives when one or the other must cease.

The massacre began on St. Bartholomew day, in August, 1572, lasted in France during seven days: that awful event interrupted the correspondence of our court with that of France. A long silence ensued; the one did not dare to tell the tale which the other could not listen to. But sovereigns know how to convert a mere domestic event into a political expedient. Charles the Ninth, on the birth of a daughter, sent over an ambassador extraordinary to request Elizabeth to stand as sponsor: by this the French monarch obtained a double purpose; it served to renew his interrupted intercourse with the silent queen, and alarmed the French protestants by abating their hopes, which long rested on the aid of the English queen.

The following letter, dated 8th February, 1573, is addressed by the king to La Motte Fénélon, his resident ambassador at London. The king in this letter minutely details a confidential intercourse with his mother, Catharine of Medicis, who, perhaps, may have dictated this letter to the secretary,

although signed by the king with his own hand.[177] Such minute particulars could only have been known to herself. The Earl of *Wolchester* (Worcester) was now taking his departure, having come to Paris on the baptism of the princess; and accompanied by Walsingham, our resident ambassador, after taking leave of Charles, had the following interview with Catharine de Medicis. An interview with the young monarch was usually concluded by a separate audience with his mother, who probably was still the directress of his councils.

The French court now renewed their favourite project of marrying the Duke d'Alençon with Elizabeth. They had long wished to settle this turbulent spirit, and the negotiation with Elizabeth had been broken off in consequence of the massacre at Paris. They were somewhat uneasy lest he should share the fate of his brother, the Duke of Anjou, who had not long before been expedited on the same fruitless errand; and Elizabeth had already objected to the disparity of their ages, the Duke of Alençon, being only seventeen, and the maiden queen six-and-thirty; but Catharine observed that Alençon was only one year younger than his brother, against whom this objection had not occurred to Elizabeth, for he had been sent back upon another pretext—some difficulty which the queen had contrived about his performing mass in his own house.

After Catharine de Medicis had assured the Earl of Worcester of her great affection for the Queen of England, and her and the king's strict intention to preserve it, and that they were therefore desirous of this proposed marriage taking place, she took this opportunity of inquiring of the Earl of Worcester the cause of the queen his mistress's marked *coolness toward them*. The narrative becomes now dramatic.

"On this Walsingham, who kept always close by the side of the count, here took on himself to answer, acknowledging that the said count had indeed been charged to speak on this head; and he then addressed some

words in English to Worcester. And afterwards the count gave to my lady and mother to understand, that the queen his mistress had been waiting for an answer on two articles; the one concerning religion, and the other for an interview. My lady and mother instantly replied, that she had never heard any articles mentioned, on which she would not have immediately satisfied the Sieur Walsingham, who then took up the word; first observing that the count was not accustomed to business of this nature, but that he himself knew for certain that the cause of this negotiation for marriage not being more advanced, was really these two unsettled points: that his mistress still wished that the point of religion should be cleared up; for that they concluded in England that this business was designed only to amuse and never to be completed (as happened in that of my brother the Duke of Anjou); and the other point concerned the interview between my brother the Duke of Alençon; because some letters which may have been written between the parties[178] in such sort of matters, could not have the same force which the sight and presence of both the persons would undoubtedly have. But, he added, *another thing, which had also greatly retarded this business, was what had happened lately in this kingdom*; and during such troubles, proceeding from religion, it could not have been well timed to have spoken with them concerning the said marriage; and that himself and those of his nation had been in great fear in this kingdom, thinking that we intended to extirpate all those of the said religion. On this, my lady and mother answered him instantly and in order: That she was certain that the queen his mistress could never like nor value a prince who had not his religion at heart; and whoever would desire to have this otherwise, would be depriving him of what we hold dearest in this world; That he might recollect that my brother had always insisted on the freedom of religion, and that it was from the difficulty of its public exercise, which he always insisted on, which had broken off this negotiation: the Duke d'Alençon will be satisfied when this point is agreed on, and will hasten over to the queen, persuaded that she

will not occasion him the pain and the shame of passing over the seas without happily terminating this affair. In regard to *what has occurred these latter days*, that he must have seen how it happened by the fault of the chiefs of those who remained here; for when the late admiral was treacherously wounded at Nôtre Dame, he knew the affliction it threw us into (fearful that it might have occasioned great troubles in this kingdom), and the diligence we used to verify judicially whence it proceeded; and the verification was nearly finished, when they were so forgetful, as to raise a conspiracy, to attempt the lives of myself, my lady and mother, and my brothers, and endanger the whole state; which was the cause, that to avoid this, I was compelled, to my very great regret, to permit what had happened in this city; but as he had witnessed, I gave orders to stop, as soon as possible, this fury of the people, and place every one in repose. On this, the Sieur Walsingham replied to my lady and mother, that the exercise of the said religion had been interdicted in this kingdom. To which she also answered, that this had not been done but for a good and holy purpose; namely, that the fury of the catholic people might the sooner be allayed, who else had been reminded of the past calamities, and would again have been let loose against those of the said religion, had they continued to preach in this kingdom. Also should these once more fix on any chiefs, which I will prevent as much as possible, giving him clearly and pointedly to understand, that what is done here is much the same as what has been done, and is now practised by the queen his mistress in her kingdom. For she permits the exercise but of one religion, although there are many of her people who are of another; and having also, during her reign, punished those of her subjects whom she found seditious and rebellious. It is true this has been done by the laws, but I indeed could not act in the same manner; for finding myself in such imminent peril, and the conspiracy raised against me and mine, and my kingdom, ready to be executed, I had no time to arraign and try in open justice as much as I wished, but was constrained, to

my very great regret, to strike the blow (lascher le main) in what has been done in this city."

This letter of Charles the Ninth, however, does not here conclude. "My lady and mother" plainly acquaints the Earl of Worcester and Sir Francis Walsingham, that her son had never interfered between their mistress and her subjects, and in return expects the same favour; although, by accounts they had received from England, many ships were arming to assist their rebels at Rochelle. "My lady and mother" advances another step, and declares that Elizabeth by treaty is bound to assist her son against his rebellious subjects; and they expect, at least, that Elizabeth will not only stop these armaments in all her ports, but exemplarily punish the offenders. I resume the letter.

"And on hearing this, the said Walsingham changed colour, and appeared somewhat astonished, as my lady and mother well perceived by his face; and on this he requested the Count of Worcester to mention the order which he knew the queen his mistress had issued to prevent these people from assisting those of La Rochelle; but that in England, so numerous were the seamen and others who gained their livelihood by maritime affairs, and who would starve without the entire freedom of the seas, that it was impossible to interdict them."

Charles the Ninth encloses the copy of a letter he had received from London, in part agreeing with an account the ambassador had sent to the king, of an English expedition nearly ready to sail for La Rochelle, to assist his rebellious subjects. He is still further alarmed, that Elizabeth foments the *wartegeux*, and assists underhand the discontented. He urges the ambassador to hasten to the queen, to impart these complaints in the most friendly way, as he knows the ambassador can well do, and as, no doubt, Walsingham will have already prepared her to receive. Charles entreats Elizabeth to prove her good faith by deeds and not by words; to act openly

on a point which admits of no dissimulation. The best proof of her friendship will be the marriage; and the ambassador, after opening this business to her chief ministers, who the king thinks are desirous of this projected marriage, is then “to acquaint the queen with what has passed between her ambassadors and myself.”

Such is the first letter on English affairs which Charles the Ninth despatched to his ambassador, after an awful silence of six months, during which time La Motte Fénélon was not admitted into the presence of Elizabeth. The apology for the massacre of St. Bartholomew comes from the king himself, and contains several remarkable expressions, which are at least divested of that style of bigotry and exultation we might have expected: on the contrary, this sanguinary and inconsiderate young monarch, as he is represented, writes in a subdued and sorrowing tone, lamenting his hard necessity, regretting he could not have recourse to the laws, and appealing to others for his efforts to check the fury of the people, which he himself had let loose. Catharine de Medicis, who had governed him from the tender age of eleven years, when he ascended the throne, might unquestionably have persuaded him that a conspiracy was on the point of explosion. Charles the Ninth died young, and his character is unfavourably viewed by the historians. In the voluminous correspondence which I have examined, could we judge by state letters of the character of him who subscribes them, we must form a very different notion; they are so prolix, and so earnest, that one might conceive they were dictated by the young monarch himself!

177 All the numerous letters which I have seen of Charles the Ninth, now in the possession of Mr. Murray, are carefully signed by himself, and I have also observed *postscripts* written with his own hand: they are always countersigned by his secretary. I mention this circumstance, because, in the *Dictionnaire Historique*, it is said that Charles, who died young, was so given up to the amusements of his age, that he would not even sign his despatches, and introduced the

custom of secretaries subscribing for the king. This voluminous correspondence shows the falsity of this statement. History is too often composed of popular tales of this stamp.

178 These *love-letters* of Alençon to our Elizabeth are noticed by Camden, who observes, that the queen became wearied by receiving so many; and to put an end to this trouble, she consented that the young duke should come over, conditionally, that he should not be offended if her suitor should return home suitless.

PREDICTION.

IN a curious treatise on "Divination," or the knowledge of future events, Cicero has preserved a complete account of the state-contrivances which were practised by the Roman government to instil among the people those hopes and fears by which they regulated public opinion. The pagan creed, now become obsolete and ridiculous, has occasioned this treatise to be rarely consulted; it remains, however, as a chapter in the history of man!

To these two books of Cicero on "Divination," perhaps a third might be added, on POLITICAL and MORAL PREDICTION. The principles which may even raise it into a science are self-evident; they are drawn from the heart of man, and they depend on the nature and connexion of human events! We presume we shall demonstrate the positive existence of such a faculty; a faculty which Lord Bacon describes of "making things FUTURE and REMOTE AS PRESENT." The aruspex, the augur, and the astrologer have vanished with

their own superstitions; but the moral and the political predictor, proceeding on principles authorised by nature and experience, has become more skilful in his observations on the phenomena of human history; and it has often happened that a tolerable philosopher has not made an indifferent prophet.

No great political or moral revolution has occurred which has not been accompanied by its *prognostic*; and men of a philosophic cast of mind in their retirement, freed from the delusions of parties and of sects, at once intelligent in the *quicquid agunt homines*, while they are withdrawn from their conflicting interests, have rarely been confounded by the astonishment which overwhelms those who, absorbed in active life, are the mere creatures of sensation, agitated by the shadows of truth, the unsubstantial appearances of things! Intellectual nations are advancing in an eternal circle of events and passions which succeed each other, and the last is necessarily connected with its antecedent; the solitary force of some fortuitous incident only can interrupt this concatenated progress of human affairs.

That every great event has been accompanied by a presage or prognostic, has been observed by Lord Bacon. “The shepherds of the people should understand the *prognostics of state tempests*; hollow blasts of wind seemingly at a distance, and secret swellings of the sea, often precede a storm.” Such were the prognostics discerned by the politic Bishop Williams in Charles the First’s time, who clearly foresaw and predicted the final success of the Puritanic party in our country: attentive to his own security, he abandoned the government and sided with the rising opposition, at the moment when such a change in public affairs was by no means apparent.[179]

In this spirit of foresight our contemplative antiquary Dugdale must have anticipated the scene which was approaching in 1641, in the destruction of our ancient monuments in cathedral churches. He hurried on his itinerant labours of taking draughts and transcribing inscriptions, as he says, “to preserve them for future and better times.” Posterity owes to the prescient

spirit of Dugdale the ancient Monuments of England, which bear the marks of the haste, as well as the zeal, which have perpetuated them.

Continental writers formerly employed a fortunate expression, when they wished to have an *Historia Reformationis ante Reformationem*: this history of the Reformation would have commenced at least a century before the Reformation itself! A letter from Cardinal Julian to Pope Eugenius the Fourth, written a century before Luther appeared, clearly predicts the Reformation and its consequences. He observed that the minds of men were ripe for something tragical; he felt the axe striking at the root, and the tree beginning to bend, and that his party, instead of propping it, were hastening its fall.[180] In England, Sir Thomas More was not less prescient in his views; for when his son Roper was observing to him that the Catholic religion, under "the Defender of the Faith," was in a most flourishing state, the answer of More was an evidence of political foresight—"Truth, it is, son Roper! and yet I pray God that we may not live to see the day that we would gladly be at league and composition with heretics, to let them have their churches quietly to themselves, so that they would be contented to let us have ours quietly to ourselves." Whether our great chancellor predicted from a more intimate knowledge of the king's character, or from some private circumstances which may not have been recorded for our information, of which I have an obscure suspicion, remains to be ascertained. The minds of men of great political sagacity were unquestionably at that moment full of obscure indications of the approaching change; Erasmus, when at Canterbury before the tomb of Becket, observing it loaded with a vast profusion of jewels, wished that those had been distributed among the poor, and that the shrine had been only adorned with boughs and flowers; "For," said he, "those who have heaped up all this mass of treasure will one day be plundered, and fall a prey to those who are in power;"—a prediction literally fulfilled about twenty years after it was made. The unknown author of the Visions of Piers

Ploughman, who wrote in the reign of Edward the Third,[181] surprised the world by a famous prediction of *the fall of the religious houses from the hand of a king*.[182] The event was realised, two hundred years afterwards, by our Henry the Eighth. The protestant writers have not scrupled to declare that in this instance he was *divino numine afflatus*. But moral and political prediction is not inspiration; the one may be wrought out by man, the other descends from God. The same principle which led Erasmus to predict that those who were "in power" would destroy the rich shrines, because no other class of men in society could mate with so mighty a body as the monks, conducted the author of Piers Ploughman to the same conclusion; and since power only could accomplish that great purpose, he fixed on the highest as the most likely; and thus the wise prediction was, so long after, literally accomplished!

Sir Walter Rawleigh foresaw the future consequences of the separatists and the sectaries in the national church, and the very scene his imagination raised in 1530 has been exhibited, to the letter of his description, two centuries after the prediction! His memorable words are—"Time will even bring it to pass, if it were not resisted, that God would be *turned out of churches* into *barns*, and from thence again into the *fields* and *mountains*, and under *hedges*—all order of discipline and church government left to *newness of opinion* and men's fancies, and *as many kinds of religion* spring up as there are parish churches within England." We are struck by the profound genius of Tacitus, who clearly foresaw the calamities which so long ravaged Europe on the fall of the Roman Empire, in a work written five hundred years before the event! In that sublime anticipation of the future, he observed—"When the Romans shall be hunted out from those countries which they have conquered, what will then happen? The revolted people, freed from their master oppressor, will not be able to subsist without destroying their neighbours, and the most cruel wars will exist among all these nations."

We are told that Solon at Athens, contemplating on the port and citadel of Munychia, suddenly exclaimed, “How blind is man to futurity! Could the Athenians foresee what mischief this will do their city, they would even eat it with their own teeth to get rid of it!”—a prediction verified more than two hundred years afterwards! Thales desired to be buried in an obscure quarter of Milesia, observing that that very spot would in time be the forum. Charlemagne, in his old age, observing from the window of a castle a Norman descent on his coast, tears started in the eyes of the aged monarch. He predicted that since they dared to threaten his dominions while he was yet living, what would they do when he should be no more!—a melancholy prediction, says De Foix, of their subsequent incursions, and of the protracted calamities of the French nation during a whole century!

There seems to be something in minds which take in extensive views of human nature which serves them as a kind of divination, and the consciousness of this faculty has even been asserted by some. Cicero appeals to Atticus how he had always judged of the affairs of the republic as a good diviner; and that its overthrow had happened as he had foreseen fourteen years before.[183] Cicero had not only predicted what happened in his own times, but also what occurred long after, according to the testimony of Cornelius Nepos. The philosopher, indeed, affects no secret revelation, nor visionary second-sight; he honestly tells us that this art had been acquired merely by study and the administration of public affairs, while he reminds his friend of several remarkable instances of his successful predictions. “I do not divine human events by the arts practised by the augurs, but I use other signs.” Cicero then expresses himself with the guarded obscurity of a philosopher who could not openly ridicule the prevailing superstitions; but we perfectly comprehend the nature of his “signs” when, in the great pending event of the rival conflicts of Pompey and of Cæsar, he shows the means he used for his purpose. “On one side I consider the humour and genius of Cæsar, and on the other the condition

and the manner of civil wars."[184] In a word, the political diviner foretold events by their dependence on general causes, while the moral diviner, by his experience of the personal character, anticipated the actions of the individual. Others, too, have asserted the possession of this faculty. Du Vair, a famous chancellor of France, imagined the faculty was intuitive with him: by his own experience he had observed the results of this curious and obscure faculty, and at a time when the history of the human mind was so imperfectly comprehended, it is easy to account for the apparent egotism of this grave and dignified character. "Born," says he, "with constitutional infirmity, a mind and body but ill adapted to be laborious, with a most treacherous memory, enjoying no gift of nature, yet able at all times to exercise a sagacity so great that I do not know, since I have reached manhood, that anything of importance has happened to the state, to the public, or to myself in particular, which I had not foreseen."[185] This faculty seems to be described by a remarkable expression employed by Thucydides in his character of Themistocles, of which the following is given as a close translation: "By a species of sagacity peculiarly his own, for which he was in no degree indebted either to early education or after study, he was supereminently happy in forming a prompt judgment in matters that admitted but little time for deliberation; at the same time that he far surpassed all in his *deductions of the future from the* PAST, or was the best *guesser of the future* from the past."[186] Should this faculty of moral and political prediction be ever considered as a science, we can even furnish it with a denomination; for the writer of the Life of Sir Thomas Browne prefixed to his works, in claiming the honour of it for that philosopher, calls it "the Stochastic," a term derived from the Greek and from archery, meaning "to shoot at a mark." This eminent genius, it seems, often "hit the white." Our biographer declares, that "though he were no prophet, yet in that faculty which comes nearest to it, he excelled, *i. e.*, *the Stochastic*,

wherein he was seldom mistaken as to *future events*, as well public as private."

We are not, indeed, inculcating the fanciful elements of an occult art. We know whence its principles may be drawn; and we may observe how it was practised by the wisest among the ancients. Aristotle, who collected all the curious knowledge of his times, has preserved some remarkable opinions on the art of *divination*. In detailing the various subterfuges practised by the pretended diviners of his day, he reveals the *secret principle* by which one of them regulated his predictions. He frankly declared that the FUTURE being always very obscure, while the PAST was easy to know, *his predictions had never the future in view*; for he decided from the PAST as it appeared in human affairs, which, however, lie concealed from the multitude.[187] Such is the true principle by which a philosophical historian may become a skilful diviner.

Human affairs make themselves; they grow out of one another, with slight variations; and thus it is that they usually happen as they have happened. The necessary dependence of effects on causes, and the similarity of human interests and human passions, are confirmed by comparative parallels with the past. The philosophic sage of holy writ truly deduced the important principle, that "the thing that hath been is that which shall be." The vital facts of history, deadened by the touch of chronological antiquarianism, are restored to animation when we comprehend the principles which necessarily terminate in certain results, and discover the characters among mankind who are the usual actors in these scenes. The heart of man beats on the same eternal springs; and whether he advances or retrogrades, he cannot escape out of the march of human thought. Hence, in the most extraordinary revolutions we discover that the time and the place only have changed; for even when events are not strictly parallel, we detect the same conducting principles. Scipio Ammirato, one of the great Italian

historians, in his curious discourses on Tacitus, intermingles ancient examples with the modern; that, he says, all may see how the truth of things is not altered by the changes and diversities of time. Machiavel drew his illustrations of modern history from the ancient.

When the French Revolution recalled our attention to a similar eventful period in our own history, the neglected volumes which preserved the public and private history of our Charles the First and Cromwell were collected with eager curiosity. Often the scene existing before us, even the very personages themselves, opened on us in these forgotten pages. But as the annals of human nature did not commence with those of Charles the First, we took a still more retrograde step, and it was discovered in this wider range, that in the various governments of Greece and Rome, the events of those times had been only reproduced. Among them the same principles had terminated in the same results, and the same personages had figured in the same drama. This strikingly appeared in a little curious volume, entitled, "Essai sur l'Histoire de la Révolution Françoise, par une Société d'Auteurs Latins," published at Paris in 1801. This "Society of Latin Authors," who have written so inimitably the history of the *French* Revolution, consist of the *Roman historians* themselves! By extracts ingeniously applied, the events of that melancholy period are so appositely described, indeed so minutely narrated, that they will not fail to surprise those who are not accustomed to detect the perpetual parallels which we meet with in philosophical history.

Many of these crises in history are close resemblances of each other. Compare the history of "The League" in France with that of our own civil wars. We are struck by the similar occurrences performed by the same political characters who played their part on both those great theatres of human action. A satirical royalist of those times has commemorated the motives, the incidents, and the personages in the "Satire Ménippée de la

Vertu du Catholicon d'Espagne;" and this famous "Satire Ménippée" is a perfect Hudibras in prose! The writer discovers all the bitter ridicule of Butler in his ludicrous and severe exhibition of the "Etats de Paris," while the artist who designed the satirical prints becomes no contemptible Hogàrth. So much are these public events alike in their general spirit and termination, that they have afforded the subject of a printed but unpublished volume, entitled "Essai sur les Revolutions."[188] The whole work was modelled on this principle. "It would be possible," says the eloquent writer, "to frame a table or chart in which all the given imaginable events of the history of a people would be reduced to a mathematical exactness." The conception is fanciful, but its foundation lies deep in truth.

A remarkable illustration of the secret principle divulged by Aristotle, and described by Thucydides, appears in the recent confession of a man of genius among ourselves. When Mr. Coleridge was a political writer in the *Morning Post* and *Courier*, at a period of darkness and utter confusion, that writer was then conducted by a tract of light, not revealed to ordinary journalists, on the Napoleonic empire. "Of that despotism in masquerade" he decided by "the state of Rome under the first Cæsars;" and of the Spanish American Revolution, by taking the war of the United Provinces with Philip the Second as the groundwork of the comparison. "On every great occurrence," he says, "I endeavoured to discover, in PAST HISTORY the event that most nearly resembled it. I procured the contemporary historians, memorialists, and pamphleteers. Then fairly subtracting the points of *difference* from those of *likeness*, as the balance favoured the former or the latter, I conjectured that the result would be the same or different. In the essays 'On the Probable Final Restoration of the Bourbons,' I feel myself authorised to affirm, by the effect produced on many intelligent men, that were the dates wanting, it might have been suspected that the essays had been written within the last twelve months."[189]

In moral predictions on individuals, many have discovered the future character. The revolutionary character of Cardinal de Retz, even in his youth, was detected by the sagacity of Mazarin. He then wrote the history of the conspiracy of Fiesco, with such vehement admiration of his hero, that the Italian politician, after its perusal, predicted that the young author would be one of the most turbulent spirits of the age! The father of Marshal Biron, even amid the glory of his son, discovered the cloud which, invisible to others, was to obscure it. The father, indeed, well knew the fiery passions of his son. "Biron," said the domestic seer, "I advise thee, when peace takes place, to go and plant cabbages in thy garden, otherwise I warn thee, thou wilt lose thy head on the scaffold!" Lorenzo de' Medici had studied the temper of his son Piero; for Guicciardini informs us that he had often complained to his most intimate friends that "he foresaw the imprudence and arrogance of his son would occasion the ruin of his family." There is a remarkable prediction of James the First of the evils likely to ensue from Laud's violence, in a conversation given by Hacket, which the king held with Archbishop Williams. When the king was hard pressed to promote Laud, he gave his reasons why he intended to "keep Laud back from all place of rule and authority, because I find he hath a restless spirit, and cannot see when matters are well, but loves to toss and change, and to bring things to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain, which endangers the steadfastness of that which is in a good pass. I speak not at random; he hath made himself known to me to be such an one." James then gives the circumstances to which he alludes; and at length, when, still pursued by the archbishop, then the organ of Buckingham, as usual, this king's good nature too easily yielded; he did not, however, without closing with this prediction: "Then take him to you!—but, on my soul, you will repent it!" The future character of Cromwell was apparent to two of our great politicians. "This coarse unpromising man," said Lord Falkland, pointing to Cromwell, "will be the first person in the kingdom, if the nation comes to blows!" And

Archbishop Williams told Charles the First confidentially, “There was *that* in Cromwell which foreboded something dangerous, and wished his majesty would either win him over to him, or get him taken off.” The Marquis of Wellesley’s incomparable character of Bonaparte predicted his fall when highest in his glory; that great statesman then poured forth the sublime language of philosophical prophecy. “His eagerness of power is so inordinate; his jealousy of independence so fierce; his keenness of appetite so feverish in all that touches his ambition, even in the most trifling things, that he must plunge into dreadful difficulties. He is one of an order of minds that by nature make for themselves great reverses.”

Lord Mansfield was once asked, after the commencement of the French Revolution, when it would end? His lordship replied, “It is an event *without precedent*, and therefore *without prognostic*.” The truth, however, is, that it had both. Our own history had furnished a precedent in the times of Charles the First. And the prognostics were so redundant, that a volume might be collected of passages from various writers who had predicted it. However ingenious might be a history of the Reformation before it occurred, the evidence could not be more authentic and positive than that of the great moral and political revolution which we have witnessed in our own days.

A prediction which Bishop Butler threw out in a sermon before the House of Lords, in 1741, does honour to his political sagacity, as well as to his knowledge of human nature; he calculated that the irreligious spirit would produce, some time or other, political disorders similar to those which, in the seventeenth century, had arisen from religious fanaticism. “Is there no danger,” he observed, “that all this may raise somewhat like *that levelling spirit*, upon atheistical principles, which in the last age prevailed upon enthusiastic ones? Not to speak of the possibility that *different sorts of people* may *unite* in it upon these *contrary principles*!” All this literally has been accomplished! Leibnitz, indeed, foresaw the results of those selfish,

and at length demoralizing, opinions, which began to prevail through Europe in his day. These disorganizing principles, conducted by a political sect, who tried "to be worse than they could be," as old Montaigne expresses it; a sort of men who have been audaciously congratulated as "having a *taste* for evil;" exhibited to the astonished world the dismal catastrophe the philosopher predicted. I shall give this remarkable passage. "I find that certain opinions approaching those of Epicurus and Spinoza, are, little by little, insinuating themselves into the minds of the great rulers of public affairs, who serve as the guides of others, and on whom all matters depend; besides, these opinions are also sliding into fashionable books, and thus *they are preparing all things to that* GENERAL REVOLUTION *which menaces Europe*; destroying those generous sentiments of the ancients, Greek and Roman, which preferred the love of country and public good, and the cares of posterity, to fortune and even to life. Our *public spirits*,[190] as the English call them, excessively diminish, and are no more in fashion, and will be still less while the least vicious of these men preserve only one principle, which they call *honour*; a principle which only keeps them from not doing what they deem a low action, while they openly laugh at the love of country—ridicule those who are zealous for public ends—and when a well-intentioned man asks what will become of their posterity, they reply 'Then, as now!' *But it may happen to these persons themselves to have to endure those evils which they believe are reserved for others.* If this epidemical and intellectual disorder could be corrected, *whose bad effects are already visible*, those evils might still be prevented; but if it proceeds in its growth, *Providence will correct man by the very revolution which must spring from it*. Whatever may happen indeed, all must turn out as usual for the best in general, at the end of the account, although *this cannot happen without the punishment of those who contribute even to general good by their evil actions*." The most superficial reader will hardly require a commentary on this very remarkable passage; he must instantly perceive

how Leibnitz, in the seventeenth century, foresaw what has occurred in the eighteenth; and the prediction has been verified in the history of the actors in the late revolution, while the result, which we have not perhaps yet had, according to Leibnitz's own exhilarating system of optimism, is an eduction of good from evil.

A great genius, who was oppressed by malignant rivals in his own times, has been noticed by Madame de Staël, as having left behind him an actual prophecy of the French Revolution: this was Guibert, who, in his Commentary on Folard's Polybius, published in 1727, declared that "a conspiracy is actually forming in Europe, by means at once so subtle and efficacious, that I am sorry not to have come into the world *thirty years later* to witness its result. It must be confessed that the sovereigns of Europe wear very bad spectacles. The proofs of it are mathematical, if such proofs ever were, of a conspiracy." Guibert unquestionably foresaw the anti-monarchical spirit gathering up its mighty wings, and rising over the universe! but could not judge of the nature of the impulse which he predicted; prophesying from the ideas in his luminous intellect, he seems to have been far more curious about, than certain of, the consequences. Rousseau even circumstantially predicted the convulsions of modern Europe. He stood on the crisis of the French Revolution, which he vividly foresaw, for he seriously advised the higher classes of society to have their children taught some useful trade; a notion highly ridiculed on the first appearance of the Emile: but at its hour the awful truth struck! He, too, foresaw the horrors of that revolution; for he announced that Emile designed to emigrate, because, from the moral state of the people, a virtuous revolution had become impossible.[191] The eloquence of Burke was often oracular; and a speech of Pitt, in 1800, painted the state of Europe as it was only realised fifteen years afterwards.

But many remarkable predictions have turned out to be false. Whenever the facts on which the prediction is raised are altered in their situation, what was relatively true ceases to operate as a general principle. For instance, to that striking anticipation which Rousseau formed of the French revolution, he added, by way of note, as remarkable a prediction on MONARCHY. *Je tiens pour impossible que les grandes monarchies de l'Europe aient encore long tems à durer; toutes ont brillé et tout état qui brille est sur son declin.* The predominant anti-monarchical spirit among our rising generation seems to hasten on the accomplishment of the prophecy; but if an important alteration has occurred in the nature of things, we may question the result. If by looking into the past, Rousseau found facts which sufficiently proved that nations in the height of their splendour and corruption had closed their career by falling an easy conquest to barbarous invaders, who annihilated the most polished people at a single blow; we now find that no such power any longer exists in the great family of Europe: the state of the question is therefore changed. It is *now* how corrupt nations will act against corrupt nations equally enlightened? But if the citizen of Geneva drew his prediction of the extinction of monarchy in Europe from that predilection for democracy which assumes that a republic must necessarily produce more happiness to the people than a monarchy, then we say that the fatal experiment was again repeated since the prediction, and the fact proved not true! The excess of democracy inevitably terminates in a monarchical state; and were all the monarchies in Europe at present republics, a philosopher might safely predict the restoration of monarchy!

If a prediction be raised on facts which our own prejudices induce us to infer will exist, it must be chimerical. We have an Universal Chronicle of the Monk Carion, printed in 1532, in which he announces that the world was about ending,[192] as well as his chronicle of it; that the Turkish empire would not last many years; that after the death of Charles the Fifth the empire of Germany would be torn to pieces by the Germans themselves.

This monk will no longer pass for a prophet; he belongs to that class of historians who write to humour their own prejudices, like a certain lady-prophetess, who, in 1811, predicted that grass was to grow in Cheapside about this time![193] The monk Carion, like others of greater name, had miscalculated the weeks of Daniel, and wished more ill to the Mahometans than suit the Christian cabinets of Europe to inflict on them; and, lastly, the monastic historian had no notion that it would please Providence to prosper the heresy of Luther! Sir James Mackintosh once observed, "I am sensible that in the field of *political prediction* veteran sagacity has often been deceived." Sir James alluded to the memorable example of Harrington, who published a demonstration of the impossibility of re-establishing monarchy in England six months before the restoration of Charles the Second! But the author of the Oceana was a political fanatic, who ventured to predict an event, not by other similar events, but by a theoretical principle which he had formed, that "the balance of power depends on that of property." Harrington, in his contracted view of human nature, had dropped out of his calculation all the stirring passions of ambition and party, and the vacillations of the multitude. A similar error of a great genius occurs in De Foe. "Child," says Mr. George Chalmers, "foreseeing from experience that men's *conduct* must finally be decided by their *principles*, FORETOLD *the colonial revolt*. De Foe, allowing his prejudices to obscure his sagacity, reprobated that suggestion, because he deemed *interest* a more strenuous prompter than *enthusiasm*." The predictions of Harrington and De Foe are precisely such as we might expect from a petty calculator, a political economist, who can see nothing farther than immediate results; but the true philosophical predictor was Child, who had read the *past*. It is probable that the American emancipation from the mother country of England was foreseen twenty or thirty years before it occurred, though not perhaps by the administration. Lord Orford, writing in 1754, under the ministry of the Duke of Newcastle, blames "The instructions to the governor of New York,

which seemed better calculated for the latitude of Mexico, and for a Spanish tribunal, than for a free British settlement, and in such opulence and such haughtiness, that *suspicions had long been conceived of their meditating to throw off the dependence on their mother-country*." If this was written at the time, as the author asserts, it is a very remarkable passage, observes the noble editor of his memoirs. The prognostics or presages of this revolution it may now be difficult to recover; but it is evident that Child, before the time when Lord Orford wrote this passage, predicted the separation on true and philosophical principles.

Even when the event does not always justify the prediction, the predictor may not have been the less correct in his principles of divination. The catastrophe of human life, and the turn of great events, often prove accidental. Marshal Biron, whom we have noticed, might have ascended the throne instead of the scaffold; Cromwell and De Retz might have become only the favourite general or the minister of their sovereigns. Fortuitous events are not comprehended in the reach of human prescience; such must be consigned to those vulgar superstitions which presume to discover the issue of human events, without pretending to any human knowledge. There is nothing supernatural in the prescience of the philosopher.

Sometimes predictions have been condemned as false ones, which, when scrutinised, we can scarcely deem to have failed: they may have been accomplished, and they may again revolve on us. In 1749 Dr. Hartley published his "Observations on Man," and predicted the fall of the existing governments and hierarchies in two simple propositions; among others—

Prop. 81. It is probable that all the civil governments will be overturned.

Prop. 82. It is probable that the present forms of church-government will be dissolved.

Many were alarmed at these predicted falls of church and state. Lady Charlotte Wentworth asked Hartley when these terrible things would happen. The answer of the predictor was not less awful: “I am an old man, and shall not live to see them; but you are a young woman, and probably will see them.” In the subsequent revolutions of America and of France, and perhaps now of Spain, we can hardly deny that these predictions had failed. A fortuitous event has once more thrown back Europe into its old corners: but we still revolve in a circle, and what is now dark and remote may again come round, when time has performed its great cycle. There was a prophetical passage in Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity regarding the church which long occupied the speculations of its expounders. Hooker indeed seemed to have done what no predictor of events should do; he fixed on the period of its accomplishment. In 1597 he declared that it would “peradventure fall out to be threescore and ten years, or if strength do awe, into fourscore.” Those who had outlived the revolution in 1641, when the long parliament pulled down the ecclesiastical establishment, and sold the church-lands—a circumstance which Hooker had contemplated—and were afterwards returned to their places on the Restoration, imagined that the prediction had not yet been completed, and were looking with great anxiety towards the year 1677, for the close of this extraordinary prediction! When Bishop Barlow, in 1675, was consulted on it, he endeavoured to dissipate the panic, by referring to an old historian, who had reproached our nation for their proneness to prophecies![194] The prediction of the venerable Hooker in truth had been fully accomplished, and the event had occurred without Bishop Barlow having recurred to it; so easy it seems to forget what we dislike to remember! The period of time was too literally taken, and seems to have been only the figurative expression of man’s age in scriptural language which Hooker had employed; but no one will now deny that this prescient sage had profoundly foreseen the results of that rising party,

whose designs on church and state were clearly depicted in his own luminous view.

The philosophical predictor, in foretelling a crisis from the appearance of things, will not rashly assign the period of time; for the crisis which he anticipates is calculated on by that inevitable march of events which generate each other in human affairs; but the period is always dubious, being either retarded or accelerated by circumstances of a nature incapable of entering into this moral arithmetic. It is probable that a revolution similar to that of France would have occurred in this country, had it not been counteracted by the genius of Pitt. In 1618 it was easy to foretell by the political prognostic that a mighty war throughout Europe must necessarily occur. At that moment, observes Bayle, the house of Austria aimed at a universal monarchy; the consequent domineering spirit of the ministers of the Emperor and the King of Spain, combined with their determination to exterminate the new religion, excited a reaction to this imperial despotism; public opinion had been suppressed, till every people grew impatient; while their sovereigns, influenced by national feeling, were combining against Austria. But Austria was a vast military power, and her generals were the first of their class. The efforts of Europe would then be often repulsed! This state of affairs prognosticated a long war!—and when at length it broke out it lasted thirty years! The approach and the duration of the war might have been predicted; but the period of its termination could not have been foreseen.

There is, however, a spirit of political vaticination which presumes to pass beyond the boundaries of human prescience; it has been often ascribed to the highest source of inspiration by enthusiasts; but since “the language of prophecy” has ceased, such pretensions are not less impious than they are unphilosophical. Knox the reformer possessed an extraordinary portion of this awful prophetic confidence: he appears to have predicted several

remarkable events, and the fates of some persons. We are told that, condemned to a galley at Rochelle, he predicted that “within two or three years he should preach the gospel at Saint Giles’s in Edinburgh;” an improbable event, which happened. Of Mary and Darnley, he pronounced that, “as the king, for the queen’s pleasure, had gone to mass, the Lord, in his justice, would make her the instrument of his overthrow.” Other striking predictions of the deaths of Thomas Maitland, and of Kirkaldy of Grange, and the warning he solemnly gave to the Regent Murray not to go to Linlithgow, where he was assassinated, occasioned a barbarous people to imagine that the prophet Knox had received an immediate communication from Heaven. A Spanish friar and almanac-maker predicted, in clear and precise words, the death of Henry the Fourth of France; and Pieresc, though he had no faith in the vain science of astrology, yet, alarmed at whatever menaced the life of a beloved monarch, consulted with some of the king’s friends, and had the Spanish almanac laid before his majesty. That high-spirited monarch thanked them for their solicitude, but utterly slighted the prediction: the event occurred, and in the following year the Spanish friar spread his own fame in a new almanac. I have been occasionally struck at the Jeremiads of honest George Withers, the vaticinating poet of our civil wars: some of his works afford many solemn predictions. We may account for many predictions of this class without the intervention of any supernatural agency. Among the busy spirits of a revolutionary age, the heads of a party, such as Knox, have frequently secret communications with spies or with friends. In a constant source of concealed information, a shrewd, confident, and enthusiastic temper will find ample matter for mysterious prescience. Knox exercised that deep sagacity which took in the most enlarged views of the future, as appears by his Machiavelian foresight on the barbarous destruction of the monasteries and the cathedrals—“The best way to keep the *rooks* from returning, is to pull down their *nests*.” In the case of the prediction of the death of Henry the Fourth, by the Spanish

friar, it resulted either from his being acquainted with the plot, or from his being made an instrument for their purpose by those who were. It appears that rumours of Henry's assassination were rife in Spain and Italy before the event occurred. Such vaticinators as George Withers will always rise in those disturbed times which his own prosaic metre has forcibly depicted:—

> It may be on that darkness, which they find
> Within their hearts, a sudden light hath shin'd,
> Making reflections of SOME THINGS TO COME,
> Which leave within them musings troublesome
> To their weak spirits; or too intricate
> For them to put in order, and relate.
> They act as men in ecstasies have done—
> Striving their cloudy visions to declare—
> And I, perhaps, among these may be one
> That was let loose for service to be done:
> I blunder out what worldly-prudent men
> Count madnesse.—P. 7.[195]

Separating human prediction from inspired prophecy, we only ascribe to the faculties of man that acquired prescience which we have demonstrated that some great minds have unquestionably exercised. We have discovered its principles in the necessary dependence of effects on general causes, and we have shown that, impelled by the same motives, and circumscribed by the same passions, all human affairs revolve in a circle; and we have opened the true source of this yet imperfect science of moral and political prediction, in an intimate but a discriminative knowledge of the PAST.

Authority is sacred, when experience affords parallels and analogies. If much which may overwhelm when it shall happen can be foreseen, the prescient statesman and moralist may provide defensive measures to break

the waters, whose streams they cannot always direct; and the venerable Hooker has profoundly observed, that "the best things have been overthrown, not so much by puissance and might of adversaries, as through defect of council in those that should have upheld and defended the same."[196]

The philosophy of history blends the past with the present, and combines the present with the future: each is but a portion of the other! The actual state of a thing is necessarily determined by its antecedent, and thus progressively through the chain of human existence; while "the present is always full of the future," as Leibnitz has happily expressed the idea.

A new and beautiful light is thus thrown over the annals of mankind, by the analogies and the parallels of different ages in succession. How the seventeenth century has influenced the eighteenth; and the results of the nineteenth as they shall appear in the twentieth, might open a source of predictions, to which, however difficult it might be to affix their dates, there would be none in exploring into causes, and tracing their inevitable effects.

The multitude live only among the shadows of things in the appearances of the PRESENT; the learned, busied with the PAST, can only trace whence and how all comes; but he who is one of the people, and one of the learned, the true philosopher, views the natural tendency and terminations which are preparing for the FUTURE!

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179 See Rushworth, vol. i. p. 420. His language was decisive.

180 This letter is in the works of Æneas Sylvius; a copious extract is given by Bossuet, in his "Variations." See also Mosheim, Cent. xiii. part ii. chap. 2, note *m*.

181 Though it cannot be positively asserted it is generally believed that the author was Robert Longlande, a monk of Malvern. See introduction to Wright's edition of "The Vision." The latter part of the year 1362 is believed to be the time of its composition.

182 The passage is so remarkable as to be worth giving here, for the immediate reference of such readers as may not have ready access to the original. We modernize the spelling from Mr. Wright's edition:—

> But there shall come a king,
> And confess you religious,
> And award you as the Bible telleth
> For breaking of your rule.
>
> * * * *
>
> And then shall the Abbot of Abingdon
> And all his issue for ever,
> Have a knock of a king,
> And incurable the wound.

183 Ep. ad Att. Lib. x. Ep. 4.

184 Ep. ad Att. Lib. vi. Ep. 6.

185 This remarkable confession I find in Menage's "Observations sur la Langue Françoise," Part II. p. 110.

186 Οἰκείᾳ γὰρ ξυνέσει, καί οὔτε προμαθών ἐς αὐτήν οὐδὲν, οὔτ᾽ ἐπιμαθὼν τῶν τε παραχρῆμα δὶ ἐλαχίστης βουλῆς κράτιστος γνώμων, καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἐπιπλεῖστον τοῦ γενησομένου ἄριστος εἰκαστής.—Thucydides, lib. i.

187 Arist. Rhet. lib. vii. c. 5.

188 This work was printed in London as a *first* volume, but remained unpublished. This singularly curious production was suppressed, but reprinted at Paris. It has suffered the most cruel mutilations. I read with surprise and instruction the single copy which I was assured was the only one saved from the havoc of the entire edition. The writer was the celebrated Chateaubriand.

189 “Biographia Literaria; or, Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions.” By S.T. Coleridge, Esq. 1807. Vol. i. p. 214.

190 *Public spirit*, and *public spirits*, were about the year 1700 household words with us. Leibnitz was struck by their significance, but it might now puzzle us to find synonyms, or even to explain the very terms themselves.

191 This extraordinary passage is at the close of the third book of *Emile*, to which I must refer the reader. It is curious, however, to observe, that in 1760 Rousseau poured forth the following awful predictions, which were considered quite absurd:—“Vous vous fiez à l’ordre actuel de la société, sans songer que cet ordre est sujet à des *révolutions inévitables*—le grand devient petit, le riche devient pauvre, le monarque devient sujet—*nous approchons l’état de crise et du siècle des révolutions*. Que fera donc dans la bassesse ce satrape que vous n’aurez élevé que pour la grandeur? Que fera dans la pauvreté, ce publicain qui ne sçait vivre que d’or? Que fera, dépourvu de tout, ce fastueux imbecille qui ne sait point user de lui-même?” &c. &c.

192 This prediction of the end of the world is one of the most popular hallucinations, warmly received by many whenever it is promulgated. It had the most marked effect when the cycle of a thousand years after the birth of Christ was approaching completion; and the world was assured that was the limit of its present state. Numerous acts of piety were performed. Churches were built, religious houses founded, and asceticism became the order of the day, until the dreaded year was completed without the accompaniment of the supernatural horrors so generally feared; the world soon relapsed into forgetfulness, and went on as before. Very many prophecies have since been promulgated; and in defiance of such repeated failures are still occasionally indulged in by persons from whom better things might be expected. Richard Brothers, in the last century, and more than one reverend gentleman in the present one, have been bold enough to fix an exact time for the event: but it has passed as quietly as the thousandth anniversary noted above.

193 One of the most effective prophecies against London, and which frightened for the time a very large number of its inhabitants, was that given out in the spring of 1750, after a slight shock of an earthquake was felt in London, and it was prophesied that another should occur which would destroy the town and all its inhabitants. All the roads were thronged with persons flying to the country a day or two before the threatened event; and they were all unmercifully

ridiculed when the day passed over quietly. Walpole in one of his amusing letters speaks of a party who went "to an inn ten miles out of town, where they are to play at brag till five in the morning, and then come back—I suppose, to look for the bones of their husbands and families under the rubbish!" Jokers who were out late amused themselves by bawling in the watchmen's voice, "Past four o'clock, and a dreadful earthquake!" A pamphlet purporting to be "a full and true account" of this earthquake which never happened, was "printed for Tim Tremor, in Fleet-street, 1750," and made the vehicle for much personal satire. Thus it is stated that the "Commissioners of Westminster-bridge have ordered this calamity to be entered in their books, as a glorious excuse for the next sinking pier;" and that the town received some comfort upon hearing that "the Inns of Court were all sunk, and several orders were given that no one should assist in bringing any one lawyer above ground."

194 An eye-witness of the great fire of London has noted the difficulty of obtaining effective assistance in endeavouring to stay its progress, owing to the superstition which seized many persons, because a prophecy of Mother Shipton's was quoted to show that London was doomed to hopeless and entire destruction.

195 "A Dark Lantherne, offering a dim Discovery, intermixed with Remembrances, Predictions, &c. 1652."

196 Hooker wrote this about 1560, and he wrote before the *Siècle des Révolutions* had begun, even among ourselves! He penetrated into this important principle merely by the force of his own meditation. *At this moment*, after more practical experience in political revolutions, a very intelligent French writer, in a pamphlet, entitled "M. da Villèle," says, "Experience proclaims a great truth—namely, that revolutions themselves cannot succeed, except when they are favoured by a portion of the GOVERNMENT." He illustrates the axiom by the different revolutions which have occurred in his nation within these thirty years. It is the same truth, traced to its source by another road.

DREAMS AT THE DAWN OF PHILOSOPHY.

MODERN philosophy, theoretical or experimental, only amuses while the action of discovery is suspended or advances; the interest ceases with the inquirer when the catastrophe is ascertained, as in the romance whose *dénouement* turns on a mysterious incident, which, once unfolded, all future agitation ceases. But in the true infancy of science, philosophers were as imaginative a race as poets: marvels and portents, undemonstrable and undefinable, with occult fancies, perpetually beginning and never ending, were delightful as the shifting cantos of Ariosto. Then science entranced the eye by its thaumaturgy; when they looked through an optic tube, they believed they were looking into futurity; or, starting at some shadow darkening the glassy globe, beheld the absent person; while the mechanical inventions of art were toys and tricks, with sometimes an automaton, which frightened them with life.

The earlier votaries of modern philosophy only witnessed, as Gaffarel calls his collection, "Unheard-of Curiosities." This state of the marvellous, of which we are now for ever deprived, prevailed among the philosophers and the *virtuosi* in Europe, and with ourselves, long after the establishment of the Royal Society. Philosophy then depended mainly on authority—a single one, however, was sufficient: so that when this had been repeated by fifty others, they had the authority of fifty honest men—whoever the first man might have been! They were then a blissful race of children, rambling here and there in a golden age of innocence and ignorance, where at every step each gifted discoverer whispered to the few, some half-concealed secret of nature, or played with some toy of art; some invention which with great difficulty performed what, without it, might have been done with great

ease. The cabinets of the lovers of mechanical arts formed enchanted apartments, where the admirers feared to stir or look about them; while the philosophers themselves half imagined they were the very thaumaturgi, for which the world gave them too much credit, at least for their quiet! Would we run after the shadows in this gleaming land of moonshine, or sport with these children in the fresh morning of science, ere Aurora had scarcely peeped on the hills, we must enter into their feelings, view with their eyes, and believe all they confide to us; and out of these bundles of dreams sometimes pick out one or two for our own dreaming. They are the fairy tales and the Arabian Nights' entertainments of science. But if the reader is stubbornly mathematical and logical, he will only be holding up a great torch against the muslin curtain, upon which the fantastic shadows playing upon it must vanish at the instant. It is an amusement which can only take place by carefully keeping himself in the dark.[197]

What a subject, were I to enter on it, would be the narratives of magical writers! These precious volumes have been so constantly wasted by the profane, that now a book of real magic requires some to find it, as well as a great magician to use it. Albertus Magnus, or Albert the Great, as he is erroneously styled—for this sage only derived this enviable epithet from his surname *De Groot*, as did Hugo Grotius—this sage, in his "Admirable Secrets," delivers his opinion that these books of magic should be most preciously preserved; for, he prophetically added, the time is arriving when they would be understood! It seems they were not intelligible in the thirteenth century; but if Albertus has not miscalculated, in the present day they may be! Magical terms with talismanic figures may yet conceal many a secret; gunpowder came down to us in a sort of anagram, and the kaleidoscope, with all its interminable multiplications of forms, lay at hand for two centuries in Baptista Porta's "Natural Magic." The abbot Trithemius, in a confidential letter, happened to call himself a magician, perhaps at the moment he thought himself one, and sent three or four leaves

stuffed with the names of devils and with their evocations. At the death of his friend these leaves fell into the unworthy hands of the prior, who was so frightened on the first glance at the diabolical nomenclature, that he raised the country against the abbot, and Trithemius was nearly a lost man! Yet, after all, this evocation of devils has reached us in his "Steganographia," and proves to be only one of this ingenious abbot's polygraphic attempts at *secret writing*; for he had flattered himself that he had invented a mode of concealing his thoughts from all the world, while he communicated them to a friend. Roger Bacon promised to raise thunder and lightning, and disperse clouds by dissolving them into rain. The first magical process has been obtained by Franklin; and the other, of far more use to our agriculturists, may perchance be found lurking in some corner which has been overlooked in the "Opus majus" of our "Doctor mirabilis." Do we laugh at their magical works of art? Are we ourselves such indifferent artists? Cornelius Agrippa, before he wrote his "Vanity of the Arts and Sciences," intended to reduce into a system and method the secret of communicating with spirits and demons.198 On good authority, that of Porphyrius, Psellus, Plotinus, Jamblichus—and on better, were it necessary to allege it—he was well assured that the upper regions of the air swarmed with what the Greeks called *dæmones*, just as our lower atmosphere is full of birds, our waters of fish, and our earth of insects. Yet this occult philosopher, who knew perfectly eight languages, and married two wives, with whom he had never exchanged a harsh word in any of them, was everywhere avoided as having by his side, for his companion, a personage no less than a demon! This was a great black dog, whom he suffered to stretch himself out among his magical manuscripts, or lie on his bed, often kissing and patting him, and feeding him on choice morsels. Yet for this would Paulus Jovius and all the world have had him put to the ordeal of fire and fagot! The truth was afterwards boldly asserted by Wierus, his learned domestic, who believed that his master's dog was really nothing more than what he appeared! "I

believe," says he, "that he was a real natural dog; he was indeed black, but of a moderate size, and I have often led him by a string, and called him by the French name Agrippa had given him, Monsieur! and he had a female who was called Mademoiselle! I wonder how authors of such great character should write so absurdly on his vanishing at his death, nobody knows how!" But as it is probable that Monsieur and Mademoiselle must have generated some puppy demons, Wierus ought to have been more circumstantial.

Albertus Magnus, for thirty years, had never ceased working at a man of brass, and had cast together the qualities of his materials under certain constellations, which threw such a spirit into his man of brass, that it was reported his growth was visible; his feet, legs, thighs, shoulders, neck, and head, expanded, and made the city of Cologne uneasy at possessing one citizen too mighty for them all. This man of brass, when he reached his maturity, was so loquacious, that Albert's master, the great scholastic Thomas Aquinas, one day, tired of his babble, and declaring it was a devil, or devilish, with his staff knocked the head off; and, what was extraordinary, this brazen man, like any human being thus effectually silenced, "word never spake more." This incident is equally historical and authentic; though whether heads of brass can speak, and even prophesy, was indeed a subject of profound inquiry even at a later period.[199] Naudé, who never questioned their vocal powers, and yet was puzzled concerning the nature of this new species of animal, has no doubt most judiciously stated the question, Whether these speaking brazen heads had a sensitive and reasoning nature, or whether demons spoke in them? But brass has not the faculty of providing its own nourishment, as we see in plants, and therefore they were not sensitive; and as for the act of reasoning, these brazen heads presumed to know nothing but the future: with the past and the present they seemed totally unacquainted, so that their memory and their observation were very limited; and as for the future, that is always doubtful and obscure

—even to heads of brass! This learned man then infers that “These brazen heads could have no reasoning faculties, for nothing altered their nature; they said what they had to say, which no one could contradict; and having said their say, you might have broken the head for anything more that you could have got out of it. Had they had any life in them, would they not have moved as well as spoken? Life itself is but motion, but they had no lungs, no spleen; and, in fact, though they spoke, they had no tongue. Was a devil in them? I think not. Yet why should men have taken all this trouble to make, not a man, but a trumpet?”

Our profound philosopher was right not to agitate the question whether these brazen heads had ever spoken. Why should not a man of brass speak, since a doll can whisper, a statue play chess,[200] and brass ducks have performed the whole process of digestion?[201] Another magical invention has been ridiculed with equal reason. A magician was annoyed, as philosophers still are, by passengers in the street; and he, particularly so, by having horses led to drink under his window. He made a magical horse of wood, according to one of the books of Hermes, which perfectly answered its purpose, by frightening away the horses, or rather the grooms! the wooden horse, no doubt, gave some palpable kick. The same magical story might have been told of Dr. Franklin, who finding that under his window the passengers had discovered a spot which they made too convenient for themselves, he charged it with his newly-discovered electrical fire. After a few remarkable incidents had occurred, which at a former period would have lodged the great discoverer of electricity in the Inquisition, the modern magician succeeded just as well as the ancient, who had the advantage of conning over the books of Hermes. Instead of ridiculing these works of magic, let us rather become magicians ourselves!

The works of the ancient alchemists have afforded numberless discoveries to modern chemists: nor is even their grand operation despaired

of. If they have of late not been so renowned, this has arisen from a want of what Ashmole calls “apertness;” a qualification early inculcated among these illuminated sages. We find authentic accounts of some who have lived three centuries, with tolerable complexions, possessed of nothing but a crucible and a bellows! but they were so unnecessarily mysterious, that whenever such a person was discovered, he was sure in an instant to disappear, and was never afterwards heard of.

In the “Liber Patris Sapientiæ” this selfish cautiousness is all along impressed on the student for the accomplishment of the great mystery. In the commentary on this precious work of the alchemist Norton, who counsels,

> Be thou in a place secret, by thyself alone,
> That no man see or hear what thou shalt say or done.
> Trust not thy friend too much wheresoe’er thou go,
> For he thou trustest best, sometyme may be thy foe;

Ashmole observes, that “Norton gives exceeding good advice to the student in this science where he bids him be secret in the carrying on of his studies and operations, and not to let any one know of his undertakings but his good angel and himself:” and such a close and retired breast had Norton’s master, who,

> When men disputed *of colours of the rose*,
> He would not speak, but kept himself full close!

We regret that by each leaving all his knowledge to “his good angel and himself,” it has happened that “the good angels” have kept it all to themselves!

It cannot, however, be denied, that if they could not always extract gold out of lead, they sometimes succeeded in washing away the pimples on ladies' faces, notwithstanding that Sir Kenelm Digby poisoned his most beautiful lady, because, as Sancho would have said, he was one of those who would "have his bread whiter than the finest wheaten." Van Helmont, who could not succeed in discovering the true elixir of life, however hit on the spirit of hartshorn, which for a good while he considered was the wonderful elixir itself, restoring to life persons who seemed to have lost it. And though this delightful enthusiast could not raise a ghost, yet he thought he had; for he raised something aerial from spa-water, which mistaking for a ghost, he gave it that very name; a name which we still retain in *gas*, from the German *geist*, or ghost! Paracelsus carried the tiny spirits about him in the hilt of his great sword! Having first discovered the qualities of laudanum, this illustrious quack made use of it as an universal remedy, and distributed it in the form of pills, which he carried in the basket-hilt of his sword; the operations he performed were as rapid as they seemed magical. Doubtless we have lost some inconceivable secrets by some unexpected occurrences, which the secret itself it would seem ought to have prevented taking place. When a philosopher had discovered the art of prolonging life to an indefinite period, it is most provoking to find that he should have allowed himself to die at an early age! We have a very authentic history from Sir Kenelm Digby himself, that when he went in disguise to visit Descartes at his retirement at Egmond, lamenting the brevity of life, which hindered philosophers getting on in their studies, the French philosopher assured him that "he had considered that matter; to render a man immortal was what he could not promise, but that he was very sure it was possible to lengthen out his life to the period of the patriarchs." And when his death was announced to the world, the Abbé Picot, an ardent disciple, for a long time would not believe it possible; and at length insisted, that if it had occurred, it must have been owing to some mistake of the philosopher's.

The late Holcroft, Loutherbourg, and Cosway, imagined that they should escape the vulgar era of scriptural life by reorganizing their old bones, and moistening their dry marrow; their new principles of vitality were supposed by them to be found in the powers of the mind; this seemed more reasonable, but proved to be as little efficacious as those other philosophers, who imagine they have detected the hidden principle of life in the eels frisking in vinegar, and allude to "the bookbinder who creates the book-worm!"

Paracelsus has revealed to us one of the grandest secrets of nature. When the world began to dispute on the very existence of the elementary folk, it was then that he boldly offered to give birth to a fairy, and has sent down to posterity the recipe. He describes the impurity which is to be transmuted into such purity, the gross elements of a delicate fairy, which, fixed in a phial, placed in fuming dung, will in due time settle into a full-grown fairy, bursting through its vitreous prison—on the vivifying principle by which the ancient Egyptians hatched their eggs in ovens. I recollect, at Dr. Farmer's sale, the leaf which preserved this recipe for making a fairy, forcibly folded down by the learned commentator; from which we must infer the credit he gave to the experiment. There was a greatness of mind in Paracelsus, who, having furnished a recipe to make a fairy, had the delicacy to refrain from its formation. Even Baptista Porta, one of the most enlightened philosophers, does not deny the possibility of engendering creatures which, "at their full growth, shall not exceed the size of a mouse;" but he adds, "they are only pretty little dogs to play with." Were these akin to the fairies of Paracelsus?202

They were well convinced of the existence of such elemental beings; frequent accidents in mines showed the potency of the metallic spirits, which so tormented the workmen in some of the German mines by blindness, giddiness, and sudden sickness, that they have been obliged to

abandon mines well known to be rich in silver. A metallic spirit at one sweep annihilated twelve miners, who were all found dead together. The fact was unquestionable; and the safety-lamp was undiscovered.

Never was a philosophical imagination more beautiful than that exquisite *Palingenesis*, as it has been termed from the Greek, or a regeneration: or rather the apparitions of animals and plants. Schott, Kircher, Gaffarel, Borelli, Digby, and the whole of that admirable school, discovered in the ashes of plants their primitive forms, which were again raised up by the force of heat. Nothing, they say, perishes in nature; all is but a continuation, or a revival. The semina of resurrection are concealed in extinct bodies, as in the blood of man; the ashes of roses will again revive into roses, though smaller and paler than if they had been planted; unsubstantial and unodoriferous, they are not roses which grow on rose-trees, but their delicate apparitions; and, like apparitions, they are seen but for a moment! The process of the *Palingenesis*, this picture of immortality, is described. These philosophers having burnt a flower, by calcination disengaged the salts from its ashes, and deposited them in a glass phial; a chemical mixture acted on it, till in the fermentation they assumed a bluish and a spectral hue. This dust, thus excited by heat, shoots upwards into its primitive forms; by sympathy the parts unite, and while each is returning to its destined place, we see distinctly the stalk, the leaves, and the flower arise; it is the pale spectre of a flower coming slowly forth from its ashes. The heat passes away, the magical scene declines, till the whole matter again precipitates itself into the chaos at the bottom. This vegetable phoenix lies thus concealed in its cold ashes till the presence of heat produces this resurrection—in its absence it returns to its death. Thus the dead naturally revive; and a corpse may give out its shadowy re-animation when not too deeply buried in the earth. Bodies corrupted in their graves have risen, particularly the murdered; for murderers are apt to bury their victims in a slight and hasty manner. Their salts, exhaled in vapour by means of their

fermentation, have arranged themselves on the surface of the earth, and formed those phantoms, which at night have often terrified the passing spectator, as authentic history witnesses. They have opened the graves of the phantom, and discovered the bleeding corpse beneath; hence it is astonishing how many ghosts may be seen at night, after a recent battle, standing over their corpses! On the same principle, my old philosopher Gaffarel conjectures on the raining of frogs; but these frogs, we must conceive, can only be the ghosts of frogs; and Gaffarel himself has modestly opened this fact by a "peradventure." A more satisfactory origin of ghosts modern philosophy has not afforded.

And who does not believe in the existence of ghosts? for, as Dr. More forcibly says—"That there should be so universal a *fame* and *fear* of that which never was, nor is, nor can be ever in the world, is to me the greatest miracle of all. If there had not been, at some time or other, true miracles, it had not been so easy to impose on the people by false. The alchemist would never go about to sophisticate metals to pass them off for true gold and silver, unless that such a thing was acknowledged as true gold and silver in the world."

The pharmacopœia of those times combined more of morals with medicine than our own. They discovered that the agate rendered a man eloquent and even witty; a laurel leaf placed on the centre of the skull fortified the memory; the brains of fowls and birds of swift wing wonderfully helped the imagination. All such specifics have now disappeared, and have greatly reduced the chances of an invalid recovering that which perhaps he never possessed. Lentils and rape-seed were a certain cure for the small-pox, and very obviously—their grains resembling the spots of this disease. They discovered that those who lived on "fair" plants became fair, those on fruitful ones were never barren: on the principle that Hercules acquired his mighty strength by feeding on the marrow of lions.

But their talismans, provided they were genuine, seem to have been wonderfully operative; and had we the same confidence, and melted down the guineas we give physicians, engraving on them talismanic figures, I would answer for the good effects of the experiment. Naudé, indeed, has utterly ridiculed the occult virtues of talismans, in his defence of Virgil, accused of being a magician: the poet, it seems, cast into a well a talisman of a horse-leech, graven on a plate of gold, to drive away the great number of horse-leeches which infested Naples. Naudé positively denies that talismans ever possessed any such occult virtues: Gaffarel regrets that so judicious a man as Naudé should have gone this length, giving the lie to so many authentic authors; and Naudé's paradox is indeed as strange as his denial; he suspects the thing is not true because it is so generally told! "It leads one to suspect," says he, "as animals are said to have been driven away from so many places by these talismans, whether they were ever driven from any one place." Gaffarel, suppressing by his good temper his indignant feelings at such reasoning, turns the paradox on its maker:—"As if, because of the great number of battles that Hannibal is reported to have fought with the Romans, we might not, by the same reason, doubt whether he fought any one with them." The reader must be aware that the strength of the argument lies entirely with the firm believer in talismans. Gaffarel, indeed, who passed his days in collecting "Curiosités inouïes," is a most authentic historian of unparalleled events, even in his own times! Such as that heavy rain in Poitou, which showered down "petites bestioles," little creatures like bishops with their mitres, and monks with their capuchins over their heads; it is true, afterwards they all turned into butterflies!

The museums, the cabinets, and the inventions of our early virtuosi were the baby-houses of philosophers. Baptista Porta, Bishop Wilkins, and old Ashmole, were they now living, had been enrolled among the quiet members of "The Society of Arts," instead of flying in the air, collecting "a wing of the phœnix, as tradition goes;" or catching the disjointed syllables

of an old doting astrologer. But these early dilettanti had not derived the same pleasure from the useful inventions of the aforesaid “Society of Arts” as they received from what Cornelius Agrippa, in a fit of spleen, calls “things vain and superfluous, invented to no other end but for pomp and idle pleasure.” Baptista Porta was more skilful in the mysteries of art and nature than any man in his day. Having founded the Academy *degli Oziosi*, he held an inferior association in his own house, called *di Secreti*, where none was admitted but those elect who had communicated some *secret*; for, in the early period of modern art and science, the slightest novelty became a secret, not to be confided to the uninitiated. Porta was unquestionably a fine genius, as his works still show; but it was his misfortune that he attributed his own penetrating sagacity to his skill in the art of divination. He considered himself a prognosticator; and, what was more unfortunate, some eminent persons really thought he was. Predictions and secrets are harmless, provided they are not believed: but his Holiness finding Porta’s were, warned him that magical sciences were great hindrances to the study of the Bible, and paid him the compliment to forbid his prophesying. Porta’s genius was now limited to astonish, and sometimes to terrify, the more ingenious part of *I Secreti*. On entering his cabinet, some phantom of an attendant was sure to be hovering in the air, moving as he who entered moved; or he observed in some mirror that his face was twisted on the wrong side of his shoulders, and did not quite think that all was right when he clapped his hand on it; or passing through a darkened apartment a magical landscape burst on him, with human beings in motion, the boughs of trees bending, and the very clouds passing over the sun; or sometimes banquets, battles, and hunting-parties were in the same apartment. “All these spectacles my friends have witnessed!” exclaims the self-delighted Baptista Porta. When his friends drank wine out of the same cup which he had used, they were mortified with wonder; for he drank wine, and they only water! or on a summer’s day, when all complained of the sirocco, he

would freeze his guests with cold air in the room; or, on a sudden, let off a flying dragon to sail along with a cracker in its tail, and a cat tied on his back; shrill was the sound, and awful was the concussion; so that it required strong nerves, in an age of apparitions and devils, to meet this great philosopher when in his best humour. Albertus Magnus entertained the Earl of Holland, as that earl passed through Cologne, in a severe winter, with a warm summer scene, luxuriant in fruits and flowers. The fact is related by Trithemius—and this magical scene connected with his vocal head, and his books *De Secretis Mulierum*, and *De Mirabilibus*, confirmed the accusations they raised against the great Albert for being a magician. His apologist, Theophilus Raynaud, is driven so hard to defend Albertus, that he at once asserts the winter changed to summer and the speaking head to be two infamous flams! He will not believe these authenticated facts, although he credits a miracle which proves the sanctity of Albertus,—after three centuries, the body of Albert the Great remained as sweet as ever!

"Whether such enchauntments," as old Mandeville cautiously observeth, two centuries preceding the days of Porta, were "by craft or by nygromancye, I wot nere." But that they were not unknown to Chaucer, appears in his "Frankelein's Tale," where, minutely describing them, he communicates the same pleasure he must himself have received from the ocular illusions of "the Tregetoure," or "Jogelour." Chaucer ascribes the miracle to a "naturall magique!" in which, however, it was as unsettled whether the "Prince of Darkness" was a party concerned.

> For I am siker that there be sciences
> By which men maken divers apparences
> Swiche as thise subtil tregetoures play.
> For oft at festes have I wel herd say
> That tregetoures, within an halle large,
> Have made come in a water and a barge,

And in the halle rowen up and doun.
Sometime hath semed come a grim leoun,
And sometime floures spring as in a mede,
Sometime a vine and grapes white and rede,
Sometime a castel al of lime and ston,
And whan hem liketh voideth it anon:
Thus semeth it to every mannes sight.

Bishop Wilkins's museum was visited by Evelyn, who describes the sort of curiosities which occupied and amused the children of science. "Here, too, there was a hollow statue, which gave a voice, and uttered words by a long concealed pipe that went to its mouth, whilst one speaks through it at a good distance:" a circumstance which, perhaps, they were not then aware revealed the whole mystery of the ancient oracles, which they attributed to demons rather than to tubes, pulleys, and wheels. The learned Charles Patin, in his scientific travels, records, among other valuable productions of art, a cherry-stone, on which were engraven about a dozen and a half of portraits! Even the greatest of human geniuses, Leonardo da Vinci, to attract the royal patronage, created a lion which ran before the French monarch, dropping *fleurs de lis* from its shaggy breast. And another philosopher who had a spinnet which played and stopped at command, might have made a revolution in the arts and sciences, had the half-stifled child that was concealed in it not been forced, unluckily, to crawl into daylight, and thus it was proved that a philosopher might be an impostor!

The arts, as well as the sciences, at the first institution of the Royal Society, were of the most amusing class. The famous Sir Samuel Moreland had turned his house into an enchanted palace. Everything was full of devices, which showed art and mechanism in perfection: his coach carried a travelling kitchen; for it had a fire-place and grate, with which he could make a soup, broil cutlets, and roast an egg; and he dressed his meat by

clock-work. Another of these virtuosi, who is described as “a gentleman of superior order, and whose house was a knickknackatory,” valued himself on his multifarious inventions, but most in “sowing salads in the morning, to be cut for dinner.” The house of Winstanley, who afterwards raised the first Eddystone lighthouse, must have been the wonder of the age. If you kicked aside an old slipper, purposely lying in your way, up started a ghost before you; or if you sat down in a certain chair, a couple of gigantic arms would immediately clasp you in. There was an arbour in the garden, by the side of a canal; you had scarcely seated yourself when you were sent out afloat to the middle of the canal—from whence you could not escape till this man of art and science wound you up to the arbour. What was passing at the “Royal Society” was also occurring at the “Académie des Sciences” at Paris. A great and gouty member of that philosophical body, on the departure of a stranger, would point to his legs, to show the impossibility of conducting him to the door; yet the astonished visitor never failed finding the virtuoso waiting for him on the outside, to make his final bow! While the visitor was going down stairs, this inventive genius was descending with great velocity in a machine from the window: so that he proved, that if a man of science cannot force nature to walk down stairs, he may drive her out at the window!

If they travelled at home, they set off to note down prodigies. Dr. Plott, in a magnificent project of journeying through England, for the advantage of “Learning and Trade,” and the discovery of “Antiquities and other Curiosities,” for which he solicited the royal aid which Leland enjoyed, among other notable designs, discriminates a class thus: “Next I shall inquire of animals; and first of strange people.”—“Strange accidents that attend corporations or families, as that the deans of Rochester ever since the foundation by turns have died deans and bishops; the bird with a white breast that haunts the family of Oxenham near Exeter just before the death of any of that family; the bodies of trees that are seen to swim in a pool near

Brereton in Cheshire, a certain warning to the heir of that honourable family to prepare for the next world." And such remarkables as "Number of children, such as the Lady Temple, who before she died saw seven hundred descended from her."[203] This fellow of the Royal Society, who lived nearly to 1700, was requested to give an edition of Pliny: we have lost the benefit of a most copious commentary! Bishop Hall went to "the Spa." The wood about that place was haunted not only by "freebooters, but by wolves and witches; although these last are ofttimes but one." They were called *loups-garoux*; and the Greeks, it seems, knew them by the name of λυκάνθρωποι, men-wolves: witches that have put on the shapes of those cruel beasts. "We sawe a boy there, whose half-face was devoured by one of them near the village; yet so, as that the eare was rather cut than bitten off." Rumour had spread that the boy had had half his face devoured; when it was examined, it turned out that his ear had only been scratched! However, there can be no doubt of the existence of "witch-wolves;" for Hall saw at Limburgh "one of those miscreants executed, who confessed on the wheel to have devoured two-and-forty children in that form." They would probably have found it difficult to have summoned the mothers who had lost the children. But observe our philosopher's reasoning: "It would aske a large volume to scan this problem of *lycanthropy*." He had laboriously collected all the evidence, and had added his arguments: the result offers a curious instance of acute reasoning on a wrong principle.[204]

Men of science and art then passed their days in a bustle of the marvellous. I will furnish a specimen of philosophical correspondence in a letter to old John Aubrey. The writer betrays the versatility of his curiosity by very opposite discoveries. "My hands are so full of work that I have no time to transcribe for Dr. Henry More an account of the Barnstable apparition—Lord Keeper North would take it kindly from you—give a sight of this letter from Barnstable to Dr. Whitchcot." He had lately heard of a Scotchman who had been carried by fairies into France; but the purpose of

his present letter is to communicate other sort of apparitions than the ghost of Barnstable. He had gone to Glastonbury, "to pick up a few berries from the holy thorn which flowered every Christmas day."[205] The original thorn had been cut down by a military saint in the civil wars; but the trade of the place was not damaged, for they had contrived not to have a single holy thorn, but several, "by grafting and inoculation."[206] He promises to send these "berries;" but requests Aubrey to inform "that person of quality who had rather have a *bush*, that it was impossible to get one for him. I am told," he adds, "that there is a person about Glastonbury who hath a nursery of them, which he sells for a crown a piece," but they are supposed not to be "of the right kind."

The main object of this letter is the writer's "suspicion of gold in this country;" for which he offers three reasons. Tacitus says there was gold in England, and that Agrippa came to a spot where he had a prospect of Ireland—from which place he writes; secondly, that "an honest man" had in this spot found stones from which he had extracted good gold, and that he himself "had seen in the broken stones a clear appearance of gold;" and thirdly, "there is a story which goes by tradition in that part of the country, that in the hill alluded to there was a door into a hole, that when any wanted money they used to go and knock there, that a woman used to appear, and give to such as came.[207] At a time one by greediness or otherwise gave her offence, she flung to the door, and delivered this old saying, still remembered in the country:

> 'When all *the Daws* be gone and dead,
>
> Then.... Hill shall shine gold red.'

My fancy is, that this relates to an ancient family of this name, of which there is now but one man left, and he not likely to have any issue." These are his three reasons; and some mines have perhaps been opened with no

better ones! But let us not imagine that this great naturalist was credulous; for he tells Aubrey that "he thought it was but a monkish tale forged in the abbey so famous in former time; but as I have learned not to despise our forefathers, I question whether this may not refer to some rich mine in the hill, formerly in use, but now lost. I shall shortly request you to discourse with my lord about it, to have advice, &c. In the mean time it will be best to *keep all private* for his majesty's service, his lordship's, and perhaps some private person's benefit." But he has also positive evidence: "A mason not long ago coming to the renter of the abbey for a freestone, and sawing it, out came divers pieces of gold of £3 10*s.* value apiece, of ancient *coins*. The stone belonged to some chimney-work; the gold was hidden in it, perhaps, when the Dissolution was near." This last incident of finding coins in a chimney-piece, which he had accounted for very rationally, serves only to confirm his dream, that they were coined out of the gold of the mine in the hill; and he becomes more urgent for "a private search into these mines, which I have, I think, a way to." In the postscript he adds an account of a well, which by washing, wrought a cure on a person deep in the king's evil. "I hope you don't forget your promise to communicate whatever thing you have relating to your IDEA."

This promised *Idea* of Aubrey may be found in his MSS., under the title of "The Idea of Universal Education." However whimsical, one would like to see it. Aubrey's life might furnish a volume of these philosophical dreams: he was a person who from his incessant bustle and insatiable curiosity was called "The Carrier of Conceptions of the Royal Society." Many pleasant nights were "privately" enjoyed by Aubrey and his correspondent about the "Mine in the Hill;" Ashmole's manuscripts at Oxford contain a collection of many secrets of the Rosicrucians; one of the completest inventions is "a Recipe how to walk invisible." Such were the fancies which rocked the children of science in their cradles! and so feeble

were the steps of our curious infancy!—But I start in my dreams! dreading the reader may also have fallen asleep!

"Measure is most excellent," says one of the oracles; "to which also we being in like manner persuaded, O most friendly and pious Asclepiades, here finish"—the dreams at the dawn of philosophy!

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197 Godwin's amusing *Lives of the Necromancers* abound in marvellous stories of the supernatural feats of these old students.

198 Agrippa was the most fortunate and honoured of occult philosophers. He was lodged at courts, and favoured by all his contemporaries. Scholars like Erasmus spoke of him with admiration; and royalty constantly sought his powers of divination. But in advanced life he was accused of sorcery, and died poor in 1534.

199 One of the most popular of our old English prose romances, "The Historie of Fryer Bacon," narrates how he had intended to "wall England about with brass," by means of such a brazen head, had not the stupidity of a servant prevented him. The tale may be read in Thoms' "Collection of Early English Prose Romances."

200 The allusion here is to the automaton chess-player, first exhibited by Kempelen (its inventor) in England about 1785. The figure was habited as a Turk, and placed behind a chest, this was opened by the exhibitor to display the machinery, which seemed to give the figure motion, while playing intricate games of chess with any of the spectators. But it has been fully demonstrated that this chest could conceal a full-grown man, who could place his arm down that of the figure, and direct its movements in the game; the machinery being really constructed to hide him, and disarm suspicion. As the whole trick has been demonstrated by diagrams, the marvellous nature of the machinery is exploded.

201 This brass duck was the work of a very ingenious mechanist, M. Vaucanson; it is reported to have uttered its natural voice, moved its wings, drank water, and ate corn. In 1738, he delighted the Parisians by a figure of a shepherd which played on a pipe and beat a tabor; and a flute-player who performed twelve tunes.

202 This great charlatan, after many successful impositions, ended his life in poverty in the hospital at Saltzbourg, in 1541.

203 Similar popular fallacies may be seen carefully noted in R. Burton's "Admirable Curiosities, Rarities, and Wonders in England, Scotland, and Ireland," 1684. It is one of those curious volumes of "folk-lore" sent out by Nat. Crouch the bookseller, under a fictitious name.

204 Hall's postulate is, that God's work could not admit of any substantial change, which is above the reach of all infernal powers; but "Herein the divell plays the double sophister; the sorcerer with sorcerers. Hee both deludes the witch's conceit and the beholder's eyes." In a word, Hall believes in what he cannot understand! Yet Hall will not believe one of the Catholic miracles of "the Virgin of Louvain," though Lipsius had written a book to commemorate "the goddess," as Hall sarcastically calls her. Hall was told, with great indignation, in the shop of the bookseller of Lipsius, that when James the First had just looked over this work, he flung it down, vociferating "Damnation to him that made it, and to him that believes it!"

205 Thousands flocked to see this "miracle" in the middle ages, and their presence brought great wealth to the abbey. It was believed to have grown miraculously from the staff used by St. Joseph. It appears to have been brought from Palestine, and merely to have flowered in accordance with its natural season, though differing with ours.

206 Taylor, the water poet, in his "Wonders of the West," 1649, says that a slip was preserved by a vintner dwelling at Glastonbury, when the soldiers cut down the tree; that he set it in his garden, "and he with others did tell me that the same doth likewise bloom on the 25th day of December, yearly."

207 Many of these tales of treasures in hills, are now reduced to the simple facts of discoveries being made of coins and personal ornaments, in tumuli of Roman and Saxon settlers in England. In the British Museum is a gold breastplate found in a grave at Mold, in Flintshire. The grave-hills of Bohemia have furnished the museum at Vienna with a large number of gold objects of great size and value. In Russia the dead have been found placed between large plates of pure gold in the centre of such tumuli; and in Ireland very large and valuable gold personal ornaments have been frequently found in grave-hills.

ON PUCK THE COMMENTATOR.

LITERARY forgeries recently have been frequently indulged in, and it is urged that they are of an innocent nature; but impostures more easily practised than detected leave their mischief behind, to take effect at a distant period; and as I shall show, may entrap even the judicious! It may require no high exertion of genius to draw up a grave account of an ancient play-wright whose name has never reached us, or to give an extract from a volume inaccessible to our inquiries and, as dulness is no proof of spuriousness, forgeries, in time, mix with authentic documents.[208]

We have ourselves witnessed versions of Spanish and Portuguese poets, which are passed on their unsuspicious readers without difficulty, but in which no parts of the pretended originals can be traced; and to the present hour, whatever antiquaries may affirm, the poems of Chatterton[209] and Ossian[210] are veiled in mystery!

If we possessed the secret history of the literary life of George Steevens, it would display an unparalleled series of arch deception and malicious ingenuity. He has been happily characterised by Gifford as “the Puck of Commentators!” Steevens is a creature so spotted over with literary forgeries and adulterations, that any remarkable one about the time he flourished may be attributed to him. They were the habits of a depraved mind, and there was a darkness in his character many shades deeper than

belonged to Puck; even in the playfulness of his invention there was usually a turn of personal malignity, and the real object was not so much to raise a laugh, as to "grin horribly a ghastly smile," on the individual. It is more than rumoured that he carried his ingenious malignity into the privacies of domestic life; and it is to be regretted that Mr. Nichols, who might have furnished much secret history of this extraordinary literary forger, has, from delicacy, mutilated his collective vigour.

George Steevens usually commenced his operations by opening some pretended discovery in the evening papers, which were then of a more literary cast than they are at present; the *St. James's Chronicle*, the *General Evening Post*, or the *Whitehall*, were they not dead in body and in spirit, would now bear witness to his successful efforts. The late Mr. Boswell told me, that Steevens frequently wrote notes on Shakspeare, purposely to mislead or entrap Malone, and obtain for himself an easy triumph in the next edition! Steevens loved to assist the credulous in getting up for them some strange new thing, dancing them about with a Will-o'-the-wisp—now alarming them by a shriek of laughter! and now like a grinning Pigwigging sinking them chin-deep into a quagmire! Once he presented them with a fictitious portrait of Shakspeare, and when the brotherhood were sufficiently divided in their opinions, he pounced upon them with a demonstration, that every portrait of Shakspeare partook of the same doubtful authority! Steevens usually assumed a *nom de guerre* of Collins, a pseudo-commentator, and sometimes of Amner, who was discovered to be an obscure puritanic minister who never read text or notes of a play-wright, whenever he explored into a "thousand notable secrets" with which he has polluted the pages of Shakspeare! The marvellous narrative of the upas-tree of Java, which Darwin adopted in his plan of "enlisting imagination under the banner of science," appears to have been another forgery which amused our "Puck." It was first given in the *London Magazine*, as an extract from a Dutch traveller, but the extract was never discovered in the original author,

and “the effluvia of this noxious tree, which through a district of twelve or fourteen miles had killed all vegetation, and had spread the skeletons of men and animals, affording a scene of melancholy beyond what poets have described, or painters delineated,” is perfectly chimerical. A splendid flim-flam! When Dr. Berkenhout was busied in writing, without much knowledge or skill, a history of our English authors, Steevens allowed the good man to insert a choice letter by George Peele, giving an account of a “merry meeting at the Globe,” wherein Shakspeare said Ben Jonson and Ned Alleyne are admirably made to perform their respective parts. As the nature of the “Biographia Literaria” required authorities, Steevens ingeniously added, “Whence I copied this letter I do not recollect.” However, he well knew it came from the “Theatrical Mirror,” where he had first deposited the precious original, to which he had unguardedly ventured to affix the date of 1600; unluckily, Peele was discovered to have died two years before he wrote his own letter! The *date* is adroitly dropped in Berkenhout! Steevens did not wish to refer to his original, which I have often seen quoted as authority. One of these numerous forgeries of our Puck appears in an article in Isaac Reed’s catalogue, art. 8708. “The Boke of the Soldan, conteyninge strange matters touchynge his lyfe and deathe, and the ways of his course, in two partes, 12mo,” with this marginal note by Reed —“The foregoing was written by George Steevens, Esq., from whom I received it. It was composed merely to impose on ‘a literary friend,’ and had its effect; for he was so far deceived as to its authenticity, that he gave implicit credit to it, and put down the person’s name in whose possession the original books were supposed to be.”

One of the sort of inventions which I attribute to Steevens has been got up with a deal of romantic effect, to embellish the poetical life of Milton; and unquestionably must have sadly perplexed his last matter-of-fact editor, who is not a man to comprehend a flim-flam!—for he has sanctioned the whole fiction, by preserving it in his biographical narrative! The first

impulse of Milton to travel in Italy is ascribed to the circumstance of his having been found asleep at the foot of a tree in the vicinity of Cambridge, when two foreign ladies, attracted by the loveliness of the youthful poet, alighted from their carriage, and having admired him for some time as they imagined unperceived, the youngest, who was very beautiful, drew a pencil from her pocket, and having written some lines, put the paper with her trembling hand into his own! But it seems,—for something was to account how the sleeping youth could have been aware of these minute particulars, unless he had been dreaming them,—that the ladies had been observed at a distance by some friends of Milton, and they explained to him the whole silent adventure. Milton on opening the paper read *four verses* from Guarini, addressed to those "human stars," his own eyes! On this romantic adventure, Milton set off for Italy, to discover the fair "incognita," to which undiscovered lady we are told we stand indebted for the most impassioned touches in the Paradise Lost! We know how Milton passed his time in Italy, with Dati, and Gaddi, and Frescobaldi, and other literary friends, amidst its academies, and often busied in book-collecting. Had Milton's tour in Italy been an adventure of knight-errantry, to discover a lady whom he had never seen, at least he had not the merit of going out of the direct road to Florence and Rome, nor of having once alluded to this *Dame de ses pensées*, in his letters or inquiries among his friends, who would have thought themselves fortunate to have introduced so poetical an adventure in the numerous *canzoni* they showered on our youthful poet.

This *historiette*, scarcely fitted for a novel, first appeared where generally Steevens's literary amusements were carried on, in the *General Evening Post*, or the *St. James's Chronicle*: and Mr. Todd, in the improved edition of Milton's Life, obtained this spurious original, where the reader may find it; but the more curious part of the story remains to be told. Mr. Todd proceeds, "The preceding highly-coloured relation, however, is *not singular*; my friend, Mr. Walker, points out to me a counterpart in the

extract from the preface to *Poésies de Marguerite-Eleanore Clotilde, depuis Madame de Surville, Poète François du XV. Siècle. Paris, 1803*."

And true enough we find among "the family traditions" of the same Clotilde, that Justine de Levis, great-grandmother of this unknown poetess of the fifteenth century, walking in a forest, witnessed the same beautiful *spectacle* which the Italian Unknown had at Cambridge; never was such an impression to be effaced, and she could not avoid leaving her tablets by the side of the beautiful sleeper, declaring her passion in her tablets by *four Italian verses*! The very number our Milton had meted to him! Oh! these *four* verses! they are as fatal in their *number* as the *date* of Peele's letter proved to George Steevens! Something still escapes in the most ingenious fabrication which serves to decompose the materials. It is well our veracious historian dropped all mention of Guarini—else that would have given that *coup de grace*—a fatal anachronism! However, his invention supplied him with more originality than the adoption of this story and the *four* verses would lead us to infer. He tells us how Petrarch was jealous of the genius of his Clotilde's grandmother, and has even pointed out a sonnet which, "among the traditions of the family," was addressed to her! He narrates, that the gentleman, when he fairly awoke, and had read the "four verses," set off for Italy, which he run over till he found Justine, and Justine found him, at a tournament at Modena! This parallel adventure disconcerted our two grave English critics—they find a tale which they wisely judge improbable, and because they discover the tale copied, they conclude that "it is not singular!" This knot of perplexity is, however, easily cut through, if we substitute, which we are fully justified in, for "Poète du XV. Siècle"—"du XIX. Siècle." The "Poésies" of Clotilde are as genuine a fabrication as Chatterton's; subject to the same objections, having many ideas and expressions which were unknown in the language at the time they are pretended to have been composed, and exhibiting many imitations of Voltaire and other poets. The present story of the FOUR *Italian verses*, and

the beautiful *Sleeper*, would be quite sufficient evidence of the authenticity of "the family traditions" of *Clotilde, depuis Madame de Surville*, and also of Monsieur De Surville himself; a pretended editor, who is said to have found by mere accident the precious manuscript, and while he was copying from the press, in 1793, these pretty poems, for such they are, of his *grande tante*, was shot in the Reign of Terror, and so completely expired, that no one could ever trace his existence! The real editor, who we must presume to be the poet, published them in 1803.

Such, then, is the history of a literary forgery! A Puck composes a short romantic adventure, which is quietly thrown out to the world in a newspaper or a magazine; some collector, such as the late Mr. Bindley, who procured for Mr. Todd his original, as idle at least as he is curious, houses the forlorn fiction—and it enters into literary history! A French Chatterton picks up the obscure tale, and behold, astonishes the literary inquirers of the very country whence the imposture sprung! But the FOUR *Italian verses*, and the *Sleeping Youth*! Oh! Monsieur Vanderbourg! for that gentleman is the ostensible editor of Clotilde's poesies of the fifteenth century, some ingenious persons are unlucky in this world! Perhaps one day we may yet discover that this "romantic adventure" of *Milton* and *Justine de Levis* is not so original as it seems—it may lie hid in the *Astrée* of D'Urfé, or some of the long romances of the Scuderies, whence the English and the French Chattertons may have drawn it. To such literary inventors we say with Swift:—

——— Such are your tricks;

But since you hatch, pray own your chicks!

Will it be credited that for the enjoyment of a temporary piece of malice, Steevens would even risk his own reputation as a poetical critic? Yet this he ventured, by throwing out of his edition the poems of Shakspeare, with a

remarkable hyper-criticism, that “the strongest act of parliament that could be framed would fail to compel readers into their service.” Not only he denounced the sonnets of Shakspeare, but the sonnet itself, with an absurd question, “What has truth or nature to do with sonnets?” The secret history of this unwarrantable mutilation of a great author by his editor was, as I was informed by the late Mr. Boswell, merely done to spite his rival commentator Malone, who had taken extraordinary pains in their elucidation. Steevens himself had formerly reprinted them, but when Malone from these sonnets claimed for himself one ivy leaf of a commentator’s pride, behold, Steevens in a rage would annihilate even Shakspeare himself, that he might gain a triumph over Malone! In the same spirit, but with more caustic pleasantry, he opened a controversy with Malone respecting Shakspeare’s wife! It seems that the poet had forgotten to mention his wife in his copious will; and his recollection of Mrs. Shakspeare seems to mark the slightness of his regard, for he only introduced by an interlineation, a legacy to her of his “second best bed with the furniture”—and nothing more! Malone naturally inferred that the poet had forgot her, and so recollected her as more strongly to mark how little he esteemed her. He had already, as it is vulgarly expressed, “cut her off, not indeed with a shilling, but with an old bed!”[211] All this seems judicious, till Steevens asserts the conjugal affection of the bard, tells us, that the poet having, when in health, provided for her by settlement, or knowing that her father had already done so (circumstances entirely conjectural), he bequeathed to her at his death not *merely an old piece of furniture, but*, PERHAPS, *as a mark of peculiar tenderness*,

> The very bed that on his bridal night
> Received him to the arms of Belvidera!

Steevens' severity of satire marked the deep malevolence of his heart; and Murphy has strongly pourtrayed him in his address to the *Malevoli*.

Such another Puck was Horace Walpole! The King of Prussia's "Letter" to Rousseau, and "The Memorial" pretended to have been signed by noblemen and gentlemen, were fabrications, as he confesses, only to make mischief. It well became him, whose happier invention, the Castle of Otranto, was brought forward in the guise of forgery, so unfeelingly to have reprobated the innocent inventions of a Chatterton.

We have Pucks busied among our contemporaries: whoever shall discover their history will find it copious though intricate; the malignity at least will exceed tenfold the merriment.

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208 A remarkable instance is afforded in the present work; see the note to the article on *Newspapers*, in Vol. I., detailing one which has spread falsity to an enormous extent throughout our general literature.

209 The pretended "antique manuscripts" preserved among the Chatterton papers in the British Museum, as well as the fac-simile of the "Yellow Roll," published in the Cambridge edition of Chatterton's works, are, however, so totally unlike the writing of the era to which they purport to belong, that no doubt need be entertained as to their falsity.

210 They are, however, so far determined by the fragments of Gaelic originals, since published by Scottish antiquaries, that the amplifications of Macpherson can be detected.

211 Mr. Charles Knight, in his edition of Shakspeare, first clearly pointed out the true nature of the bequest. The great poet's estates, with the exception of a copyhold tenement, expressly mentioned in the will, were freehold. *His wife was entitled to dower*, or a life interest of one-third of the proceeds arising from lands or tenements the property of Shakspeare, and which were of considerable value, she was thus amply provided for by the clear and undeniable operation of the law of England. Mr. Halliwell has further proved that such bequests were the constant modes of showing regard to such relatives as were well provided for by the usual legal

course of events; and he adds, “so far from this bequest being one of slight importance, and exhibiting small esteem, it was the usual mode of expressing a mark of great affection.”

LITERARY FORGERIES.

THE preceding article has reminded me of a subject by no means incurious to the lovers of literature. A large volume might be composed on literary impostors; their modes of deception, however, were frequently repetitions; particularly those at the restoration of letters, when there prevailed a *mania* for burying spurious antiquities, that they might afterwards be brought to light to confound their contemporaries. They even perplex us at the present day. More sinister forgeries have been performed by Scotchmen, of whom Archibald Bower, Lauder, and Macpherson, are well known.

Even harmless impostures by some unexpected accident have driven an unwary inquirer out of the course. George Steevens must again make his appearance for a memorable trick played on the antiquary Gough. This was the famous tombstone on which was engraved the drinking-horn of Hardyknute, to indicate his last fatal carouse; for this royal Dane died drunk! To prevent any doubt, the name, in Saxon characters, was sufficiently legible. Steeped in pickle to hasten a precocious antiquity, it was then consigned to the corner of a broker’s shop, where the antiquarian eye of Gough often pored on the venerable odds and ends; it perfectly succeeded on the “Director of the Antiquarian Society.” He purchased the

relic for a trifle, and dissertations of a due size were preparing for the Archæologia![212] Gough never forgave himself nor Steevens for this flagrant act of ineptitude. On every occasion in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, when compelled to notice this illustrious imposition, he always struck out his own name, and muffled himself up under his titular office of "The Director!" Gough never knew that this "modern antique" was only a piece of retaliation. In reviewing Masters's Life of Baker he found two heads, one scratched down from painted glass by George Steevens, who would have passed it off for a portrait of one of our kings. Gough, on the watch to have a fling at George Steevens, attacked his graphic performance, and reprobated a portrait which had nothing human in it! Steevens vowed, that wretched as Gough deemed his pencil to be, it should make "The Director" ashamed of his own eyes, and be fairly taken in by something scratched much worse. Such was the origin of his adoption of this fragment of a chimney-slab, which I have seen, and with a better judge wondered at the injudicious antiquary, who could have been duped by the slight and ill-formed scratches, and even with a false spelling of the name, which, however, succeeded in being passed off as a genuine Saxon inscription: but he had counted on his man.[213] The trick is not so original as it seems. One De Grassis had engraved on marble the epitaph of a mule, which he buried in his vineyard: some time after, having ordered a new plantation on the spot, the diggers could not fail of disinterring what lay ready for them. The inscription imported that one Publius Grassus had raised this monument to his mule! De Grassis gave it out as an odd coincidence of names, and a prophecy about his own mule! It was a simple joke! The marble was thrown by, and no more thought of. Several years after it rose into celebrity, for with the erudite it then passed for an ancient inscription, and the antiquary Poracchi inserted the epitaph in his work on "Burials." Thus De Grassis and his mule, equally respectable, would have come down to posterity, had not the story by some means got wind! An incident of this nature is recorded in

Portuguese history, contrived with the intention to keep up the national spirit, and diffuse hopes of the new enterprise of Vasco de Gama, who had just sailed on a voyage of discovery to the Indies. Three stones were discovered near Cintra, bearing in ancient characters a Latin inscription; a sibylline oracle addressed prophetically “To the Inhabitants of the West!” stating that when these three stones shall be found, the Ganges, the Indus, and the Tagus should exchange their commodities! This was the pious fraud of a Portuguese poet, sanctioned by the approbation of the king. When the stones had lain a sufficient time in the damp earth, so as to become apparently antique, our poet invited a numerous party to a dinner at his country-house; in the midst of the entertainment a peasant rushed in, announcing the sudden discovery of this treasure! The inscription was placed among the royal collections as a sacred curiosity! The prophecy was accomplished, and the oracle was long considered genuine!

In such cases no mischief resulted; the annals of mankind were not confused by spurious dynasties and fabulous chronologies; but when literary forgeries are published by those whose character hardly admits of a suspicion that they are themselves the impostors, the difficulty of assigning a motive only increases that of forming a decision; to adopt or reject them may be equally dangerous.

In this class we must place Annius of Viterbo,214 who published a pretended collection of historians of the remotest antiquity, some of whose *names* had descended to us in the works of ancient writers, while their works themselves had been lost. Afterwards he subjoined commentaries to confirm their authority by passages from known authors. These at first were eagerly accepted by the learned; the blunders of the presumed editor, one of which was his mistaking the right name of the historian he forged, were gradually detected, till at length the imposture was apparent! The pretended originals were more remarkable for their number than their volume; for the

whole collection does not exceed 171 pages, which lessened the difficulty of the forgery; while the commentaries which were afterwards published must have been manufactured at the same time as the text. In favour of Annius, the high rank he occupied at the Roman Court, his irreproachable conduct, and his declaration that he had recovered some of these fragments at Mantua, and that others had come from Armenia, induced many to credit these pseudo-historians. A literary war soon kindled; Niceron has discriminated between four parties engaged in this conflict. One party decried the whole of the collection as gross forgeries; another obstinately supported their authenticity; a third decided that they were forgeries before Annius possessed them, who was only credulous; while a fourth party considered them as partly authentic, and ascribed their blunders to the interpolations of the editor, to increase their importance. Such as they were, they scattered confusion over the whole face of history. The false Berosus opens his history before the deluge, when, according to him, the Chaldeans through preceding ages had faithfully preserved their historical evidences! Annius hints, in his commentary, at the archives and public libraries of the Babylonians: the days of Noah comparatively seemed modern history with this dreaming editor. Some of the fanciful writers of Italy were duped: Sansovino, to delight the Florentine nobility, accommodated them with a new title of antiquity in their ancestor Noah, *Imperatore e monarcha delle genti, visse e morì in quelle parti.* The Spaniards complained that in forging these fabulous origins of different nations, a new series of kings from the ark of Noah had been introduced by some of their rhodomontade historians to pollute the sources of their history. Bodin's otherwise valuable works are considerably injured by Annius's supposititious discoveries. One historian died of grief, for having raised his elaborate speculations on these fabulous originals; and their credit was at length so much reduced, that Pignori and Maffei both announced to their readers that they had not referred in their works to the pretended writers of Annius! Yet, to the present hour, these

presumed forgeries are not always given up. The problem remains unsolved —and the silence of the respectable Annius, in regard to the forgery, as well as what he affirmed when alive, leave us in doubt whether he really intended to laugh at the world by these fairy tales of the giants of antiquity. Sanchoniathon, as preserved by Eusebius, may be classed among these ancient writings or forgeries, and has been equally rejected and defended.

Another literary forgery, supposed to have been grafted on those of Annius, involved the Inghirami family. It was by digging in their grounds that they discovered a number of Etruscan antiquities, consisting of inscriptions, and also fragments of a chronicle, pretended to have been composed sixty years before the vulgar era. The characters on the marbles were the ancient Etruscan, and the historical work tended to confirm the pretended discoveries of Annius. They were collected and enshrined in a magnificent folio by Curtius Inghirami, who, a few years after, published a quarto volume exceeding one thousand pages to support their authenticity. Notwithstanding the erudition of the forger, these monuments of antiquity betrayed their modern condiment.[215] There were uncial letters which no one knew; but these were said to be undiscovered ancient Etruscan characters; it was more difficult to defend the small italic letters, for they were not used in the age assigned to them; besides that, there were dots on the letter *i*, a custom not practised till the eleventh century. The style was copied from the Latin of the Psalms and the Breviary; but Inghirami discovered that there had been an intercourse between the Etruscans and the Hebrews, and that David had imitated the writings of Noah and his descendants! Of Noah the chronicle details speeches and anecdotes!

The Romans, who have preserved so much of the Etruscans, had not, however, noticed a single fact recorded in these Etruscan antiquities. Inghirami replied that the manuscript was the work of the secretary of the college of the Etrurian augurs, who alone was permitted to draw his

materials from the archives, and who, it would seem, was the only scribe who has favoured posterity with so much secret history. It was urged in favour of the authenticity of these Etruscan monuments, that Inghirami was so young an antiquary at the time of the discovery, that he could not even explain them; and that when fresh researches were made on the spot, other similar monuments were also disinterred, where evidently they had long lain; the whole affair, however contrived, was confined to the *Inghirami family*. One of them, half a century before, had been the librarian of the Vatican, and to him is ascribed the honour of the forgeries which he buried where he was sure they would be found. This, however, is a mere conjecture! Inghirami, who published and defended their authenticity, was not concerned in their fabrication; the design was probably merely to raise the antiquity of Volaterra, the family estate of the Inghirami; and for this purpose one of its learned branches had bequeathed his posterity a collection of spurious historical monuments, which tended to overturn all received ideas on the first ages of history.216

It was probably such impostures, and those of *false decretals of* Isidore, which were forged for the maintenance of the papal supremacy, and for eight hundred years formed the fundamental basis of the canon law, the discipline of the church, and even the faith of Christianity, which led to the monstrous pyrrhonism of father Hardouin, who, with immense erudition, had persuaded himself that, excepting the Bible and Homer, Herodotus, Plautus, Pliny the elder, with fragments of Cicero, Virgil, and Horace, all the remains of classical literature were forgeries of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries! In two dissertations he imagined that he had proved that the Æneid was not written by Virgil, nor the Odes of Horace by that poet. Hardouin was one of those wrong-headed men who, once having fallen into a delusion, whatever afterwards occurs to them on their favourite subject only tends to strengthen it. He died in his own faith! He seems not to have been aware that by ascribing such prodigal inventions as Plutarch,

Thucydides, Livy, Tacitus, and other historians, to the men he did, he was raising up an unparalleled age of learning and genius when monks could only write meagre chronicles, while learning and genius themselves lay in an enchanted slumber with a suspension of all their vital powers.

There are numerous instances of the forgeries of smaller documents. The Prayer-book of Columbus, presented to him by the Pope, which the great discoverer of a new world bequeathed to the Genoese republic, has a codicil in his own writing, as one of the leaves testifies, but as volumes composed against its authenticity deny. The famous description in Petrarch's Virgil, so often quoted, of his first *rencontre* with Laura in the church of St. Clair on a Good Friday, 6th April, 1327, it has been recently attempted to be shown is a forgery. By calculation, it appears that the 6th April, 1327, fell on a Monday! The Good Friday seems to have been a blunder of the manufacturer of the note. He was entrapped by reading the second sonnet, as it appears in the *printed* editions!

Era il giorno ch' al sol *si scolorana*
Per la pietà del suo fattore i rai.

"It was on the day when the rays of the sun were obscured by compassion for his Maker." The forger imagined this description alluded to Good Friday and the eclipse at the Crucifixion. But how stands the passage in the MS. in the Imperial Library of Vienna, which Abbé Costaing has found?

Era il giorno ch' al sol *di color raro*
Parve la pietà da suo fattore, *ai rai*
Quand Io fu preso; e non mi guardai
Che ben vostri occhi dentro mi legaro.

“It was on the day that I was captivated, devotion for its Maker appeared in the rays of a brilliant sun, and I did not well consider that it was your eyes that enchained me!”

The first meeting, according to the Abbé Costaing, was not in a *church*, but in a *meadow*—as appears by the ninety-first sonnet. The Laura of Sade was *not* the Laura of Petrarch, but Laura de Baux, unmarried, and who died young, residing in the vicinity of Vaucluse. Petrarch had often viewed her from his own window, and often enjoyed her society amidst her family.[217] If the Abbé Costaing’s discovery be confirmed, the good name of Petrarch is freed from the idle romantic passion for a married woman. It would be curious if the famous story of the first meeting with Laura in the church of St. Clair originated in the blunder of the forger’s misconception of a passage which was incorrectly printed, as appears by existing manuscripts!

Literary forgeries have been introduced into bibliography; dates have been altered; fictitious titles affixed; and books have been reprinted, either to leave out or to interpolate whole passages! I forbear entering minutely into this part of the history of literary forgery, for this article has already grown voluminous. When we discover, however, that one of the most magnificent of *amateurs*, and one of the most critical of bibliographers, were concerned in a forgery of this nature, it may be useful to spread an alarm among collectors. The Duke de la Vallière, and the Abbé de St. Leger once concerted together to supply the eager purchaser of literary rarities with a copy of *De Tribus Impostoribus*, a book, by the date, pretended to have been printed in 1598, though probably a modern forgery of 1698. The title of such a work had long existed by rumour, but never was a copy seen by man! Works printed with this title have all been proved to be modern fabrications. A copy, however, of the *introuvable* original was sold at the Duke de la Vallière’s sale! The history of this volume is curious. The Duke and the Abbé having manufactured a text, had it printed in the old Gothic

character, under the title, *De Tribus Impostoribus*. They proposed to put the great bibliopolist, De Bure, in good humour, whose agency would sanction the imposture. They were afterwards to dole out copies at twenty-five louis each, which would have been a reasonable price for a book which no one ever saw! They invited De Bure to dinner, flattered and cajoled him, and, as they imagined, at a moment they had wound him up to their pitch, they exhibited their manufacture; the keen-eyed glance of the renowned cataloguer of the "Bibliographie Instructive" instantly shot like lightning over it, and, like lightning, destroyed the whole edition. He not only discovered the forgery, but reprobated it! He refused his sanction; and the forging Duke and Abbé, in confusion, suppressed the *livre introuvable*; but they owed a grudge to the honest bibliographer, and attempted to write down the work whence the De Bures derive their fame.

Among the extraordinary literary impostors of our age—if we except Lauder, who, detected by the Ithuriel pen of Bishop Douglas, lived to make his public recantation of his audacious forgeries, and Chatterton, who has buried his inexplicable story in his own grave, a tale, which seems but half told—we must place a man well known in the literary world under the assumed name of George Psalmanazar. He composed his autobiography as the penance of contrition, not to be published till he was no more, when all human motives have ceased which might cause his veracity to be suspected. The life is tedious; but I have curiously traced the progress of the mind in an ingenious imposture, which is worth preservation. The present literary forgery consisted of personating a converted islander of Formosa: a place then little known but by the reports of the Jesuits, and constructing a language and a history of a new people and a new religion, entirely of his own invention! This man was evidently a native of the south of France; educated in some provincial college of the Jesuits, where he had heard much of their discoveries of Japan; he had looked over their maps, and listened to their comments. He forgot the manner in which the Japanese

wrote; but supposed, like orientalists, they wrote from the right to the left, which he found difficult to manage. He set about excogitating an alphabet; but actually forgot to give names to his letters, which afterwards baffled him before literary men.

He fell into gross blunders; having inadvertently affirmed that the Formosans sacrificed eighteen thousand male infants annually, he persisted in not lessening the number. It was proved to be an impossibility in so small an island, without occasioning a depopulation. He had made it a principle in this imposture never to vary when he had once said a thing. All this was projected in haste, fearful of detection by those about him.

He was himself surprised at his facility of invention, and the progress of his forgery. He had formed an alphabet, a considerable portion of a new language, a grammar, a new division of the year into twenty months, and a new religion! He had accustomed himself to write his language; but being an inexpert writer with the unusual way of writing backwards, he found this so difficult, that he was compelled to change the complicated forms of some of his letters. He now finally quitted his home, assuming the character of a Formosan convert, who had been educated by the Jesuits. He was then in his fifteenth or sixteenth year. To support his new character, he practised some religious mummeries; he was seen worshipping the rising and setting sun. He made a prayer-book with rude drawings of the sun, moon, and stars, to which he added some gibberish prose and verse, written in his invented character, muttering or chanting it, as the humour took him. His custom of eating raw flesh seemed to assist his deception more than the sun and moon.[218]

In a garrison at Sluys he found a Scotch regiment in the Dutch pay; the commander had the curiosity to invite our Formosan to confer with Innes, the chaplain to his regiment. This Innes was probably the chief cause of the imposture being carried to the extent it afterwards reached. Innes was a

clergyman, but a disgrace to his cloth. As soon as he fixed his eye on our Formosan, he hit on a project; it was nothing less than to make Psalmanazar the ladder of his own ambition, and the stepping-place for him to climb up to a good living! Innes was a worthless character; as afterwards appeared, when by an audacious imposition Innes practised on the Bishop of London, he avowed himself to be the author of an anonymous work, entitled "A Modest Inquiry after Moral Virtue;" for this he obtained a good living in Essex: the real author, a poor Scotch clergyman, obliged him afterwards to disclaim the work in print, and to pay him the profit of the edition which Innes had made! He lost his character, and retired to the solitude of his living; if not penitent, at least mortified.

Such a character was exactly adapted to become the foster-father of imposture. Innes courted the Formosan, and easily won on the adventurer, who had hitherto in vain sought for a patron. Meanwhile no time was lost by Innes to inform the unsuspicious and generous Bishop of London of the prize he possessed—to convert the Formosan was his ostensible pretext; to procure preferment his concealed motive. It is curious enough to observe, that the ardour of conversion died away in Innes, and the most marked neglect of his convert prevailed, while the answer of the bishop was protracted or doubtful. He had at first proposed to our Formosan impostor to procure his discharge, and convey him to England; this was eagerly consented to by our pliant adventurer. A few Dutch schellings, and fair words, kept him in good humour; but no letter coming from the bishop, there were fewer words, and not a stiver! This threw a new light over the character of Innes to the inexperienced youth. Psalmanazar sagaciously now turned all his attention to some Dutch ministers; Innes grew jealous lest they should pluck the bird which he had already in his net. He resolved to baptize the impostor—which only the more convinced Psalmanazar that Innes was one himself; for before this time Innes had practised a stratagem on him which had clearly shown what sort of a man his Formosan was.

This stratagem was this: he made him translate a passage in Cicero, of some length, into his pretended language, and give it him in writing; this was easily done, by Psalmanazar's facility of inventing characters. After Innes had made him construe it, he desired to have another version of it on another paper. The proposal, and the arch manner of making it, threw our impostor into the most visible confusion. He had had but a short time to invent the first paper, less to recollect it; so that in the second transcript not above half the words were to be found which existed in the first. Innes assumed a solemn air, and Psalmanazar was on the point of throwing himself on his mercy, but Innes did not wish to unmask the impostor; he was rather desirous of fitting the mask closer to his face. Psalmanazar, in this hard trial, had given evidence of uncommon facility, combined with a singular memory. Innes cleared his brow, smiled with a friendly look, and only hinted in a distant manner that he ought to be careful to be better provided for the future! An advice which Psalmanazar afterwards bore in mind, and at length produced the forgery of an entire new language; and which, he remarkably observes, "by what I have tried since I came into England, I cannot say but I could have compassed it with less difficulty than can be conceived had I applied closely to it." When a version of the catechism was made into the pretended Formosan language, which was submitted to the judgment of the first scholars, it appeared to them grammatical, and was pronounced to be a real language, from the circumstance that it resembled no other! and they could not conceive that a stripling could be the inventor of a language. If the reader is curious to examine this extraordinary imposture, I refer him to that literary curiosity, "An Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa, with Accounts of the Religion, Customs and Manners of the Inhabitants, by George Psalmanazar, a Native of the said Isle," 1704; with numerous plates, wretched inventions! of their dress! religious ceremonies! their tabernacle and altars to the sun, the moon, and the ten stars! their architecture! the

viceroy's castle! a temple! a city house! a countryman's house! and the Formosan alphabet! In his conferences before the Royal Society with a Jesuit just returned from China, the Jesuit had certain strong suspicions that our hero was an impostor. The good father remained obstinate in his own conviction, but could not satisfactorily communicate it to others; and Psalmanazar, after politely asking pardon for the expression, complains of the Jesuit that "HE *lied most impudently," mentitur impudentissime!* Dr. Mead absurdly insisted Psalmanazar was a Dutchman or a German; some thought him a Jesuit in disguise, a tool of the non-jurors; the Catholics thought him bribed by the Protestants to expose their church; the Presbyterians that he was paid to explode their doctrine, and cry up episcopacy! This fabulous history of Formosa seems to have been projected by his artful prompter Innes, who put Varenius into Psalmanazar's hands to assist him; trumpeted forth in the domestic and foreign papers an account of this converted Formosan; maddened the booksellers to hurry the author, who was scarcely allowed two months to produce this extraordinary volume; and as the former accounts which the public possessed of this island were full of monstrous absurdities and contradictions, these assisted the present imposture. Our forger resolved not to describe new and surprising things as they had done, but rather studied to clash with them, probably that he might have an opportunity of pretending to correct them. The first edition was immediately sold; the world was more divided than ever in opinion; in a second edition he prefixed a vindication!—the unhappy forger got about twenty guineas for an imposture, whose delusion spread far and wide! Some years afterwards Psalmanazar was engaged in a minor imposture; one man had persuaded him to father a white composition called the *Formosan japan!* which was to be sold at a high price! It was curious for its whiteness, but it had its faults. The project failed, and Psalmanazar considered the miscarriage of the *white Formosan japan* as a providential warning to repent of all his impostures of Formosa!

Among these literary forgeries may be classed several ingenious ones fabricated for a *political* purpose. We had certainly numerous ones during our civil wars in the reign of Charles the First. This is not the place to continue the controversy respecting the mysterious *Eikon Basiliké*, which has been ranked among them, from the ambiguous claim of Gauden.[219] A recent writer who would probably incline not to leave the monarch, were he living, not only his head but the little fame he might obtain by the "Verses" said to be written by him at Carisbrook Castle, would deprive him also of these. Henderson's death-bed recantation is also reckoned among them; and we have a large collection of "Letters of Sir Henry Martin to his Lady of Delight," which were the satirical effusions of a wit of that day, but by the price they have obtained, are probably considered as genuine ones, and exhibit an amusing picture of his loose rambling life.[220] There is a ludicrous speech of the strange Earl of Pembroke, which was forged by the inimitable Butler. Sir John Birkenhead, a great humourist and wit, had a busy pen in these spurious letters and speeches.[221]

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212 I have since been informed that this famous invention was originally a flim-flam of a Mr. Thomas White, a noted collector and dealer in antiquities. But it was Steevens who placed it in the broker's shop, where he was certain of *catching* the antiquary. When the late Mr. Pegge, a profound brother, was preparing to write a dissertation on it, the first inventor of the flam stepped forward to save any further tragical termination; the wicked wit had already succeeded too well.

213 The stone may be found in the British Museum. HARDCNVT is the reading on the *Harthacnut* stone; but the true orthography of the name is HARÐACNVT. It was reported to have been discovered in Kennington-lane, where the palace of the monarch was said to have been located, and the inscription carefully made in Anglo-Saxon characters, was to the effect that "Here Hardcnut drank a wine horn dry, stared about him, and died."

Sylvanus Urban, my once excellent and old friend, seems a trifle uncourteous on this grave occasion.—He tells us, however, that "The history of this wanton trick, with a *fac-simile* of Schnebbelie's drawing, may be seen in his volume lx. p. 217." He says that this wicked contrivance of George Steevens was to entrap this famous draughtsman! Does Sylvanus then deny that "the Director" was not also "entrapped?" and that he always struck out his own *name* in the proof-sheets of the Magazine, substituting his official designation, by which the whole society itself seemed to screen "the Director!"

214 He was a Dominican monk, his real name being Giovanni Nanni, which he Latinized in conformity with the custom of his era. He was born 1432, and died 1502. His great work, *Antiquitatem Rariorum*, professes to contain the works of Manetho, Berosus, and other authors of equal antiquity.

215 A forgery of a similar character has been recently effected in the *débris* of the Chapelle St. Eloi (Département de L'Eure, France), where many inscriptions connected with the early history of France were exhumed, which a deputation of antiquaries, convened to examine their authenticity, have since pronounced to be forgeries!

216 The volume of these pretended Antiquities is entitled *Etruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta, fo. Franc.* 1637. That which Inghirami published to defend their authenticity is in Italian, *Discorso sopra l'Opposizioni fatte all' Antichita Toscane*, 4to, *Firenze*, 1645.

217 I draw this information from a little "new year's gift," which my learned friend, the Rev. S. Weston, presented to his friends in 1822, entitled "A Visit to Vaucluse," accompanied by a Supplement. He derives his account apparently from a curious publication of L'Abbé Costaing de Pusigner d'Avignon, which I with other inquirers have not been able to procure, but which it is absolutely necessary to examine, before we can decide on the very curious but unsatisfactory accounts we have hitherto possessed of the Laura of Petrarch.

218 For some further notices of Psalmanazar and his literary labours, we may refer the reader to vol. i. p. 137, note.

219 The question has been discussed with great critical acumen by Dr. Wordsworth.

220 Since this was published I have discovered that Harry Martin's Letters are not forgeries, but I cannot immediately recover my authority.

221 One of the most amusing of these tricks was perpetrated on William Prynne, the well-known puritanic hater of the stage, by some witty cavalier. Prynne's great work, "Histriomastix, the Player's Scourge; or, Actor's Tragedy," an immense quarto, of 1100 pages, was a complete condemnation of all theatrical amusements; but in 1649 appeared a tract of four leaves, entitled "Mr. William Prynne, his Defence of Stage Playes; or, a Retractation of a former Book of his called Histriomastix." It must have astonished many readers in his own day, and would have passed for his work in more modern times, but for the accidental preservation of a single copy of a handbill Prynne published disclaiming the whole thing. His style is most amusingly imitated throughout, and his great love for quoting authorities in his margin. He is made to complain that "this wicked and tyrannical army did lately in a most inhumane, cruell, rough, and barbarous manner, take away the poor players from their houses, being met there to discharge the duty of their callings: as if this army were fully bent, and most trayterously and maliciously set, to put down and depresse all the King's friends, not only in the parliament but in the very theatres; they have no care of covenant or any thing else." And he is further made to declare, in spite of "what the malicious, clamorous, and obstreperous people" may object, that he once wrote against stage-plays,—that it was "when I had not so clear a light as now I have." We can fancy the amusement this pamphlet must have been to many readers during the great Civil War.

OF LITERARY FILCHERS.

An honest historian at times will have to inflict severe stroke on his favourites. This has fallen to my lot, for in the course of my researches, I have to record that we have both forgers and purloiners, as well as other more obvious impostors, in the republic of letters! The present article descends to relate anecdotes of some contrivances to possess our literary curiosities by other means than by purchase; and the only apology which can be alleged for the *splendida peccata*, as St. Austin calls the virtues of the heathen, of the present innocent criminals, is their excessive passion for literature, and otherwise the respectability of their names. According to Grose's "Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue," we have had celebrated *collectors*, both in the learned and vulgar idioms. But one of them, who had some reasons too to be tender on this point, distinguished this mode of completing his collections, not by *book-stealing*, but by *book-coveting*. On some occasions, in mercy, we must allow of softening names. Were not the Spartans allowed to steal from one another, and the bunglers only punished?

It is said that Pinelli made occasional additions to his literary treasures sometimes by his skill in an art which lay much more in the hand than in the head: however, as Pinelli never stirred out of his native city but once in his lifetime, when the plague drove him from home, his field of action was so restricted, that we can hardly conclude that he could have been so great an enterpriser in this way. No one can have lost their character by this sort of exercise in a confined circle, and be allowed to prosper! A light-fingered Mercury would hardly haunt the same spot: however, this is as it may be! It is probable that we owe to this species of accumulation many precious manuscripts in the Cottonian collection. It appears by the manuscript note-book of Sir Nicholas Hyde, chief justice of the King's Bench from the second to the seventh year of Charles the First, that Sir Robert Cotton had in his library, records, evidences, ledger-books, original letters, and other state papers, belonging to the king; for the attorney-general of that time, to

prove this, showed a copy of the *pardon* which Sir Robert had obtained from King James for *embezzling records*, &c.[222]

Gough has more than insinuated that Rawlinson and his friend Umfreville "lie under very strong suspicions;" and he asserts that the collector of the Wilton treasures made as free as Dr. Willis with his friend's coins.[223] But he has also put forth a declaration relating to Bishop More, the famous collector, that "the bishop collected his library by *plundering* those of the clergy in his diocese; some he paid with sermons or more modern books; others, less civilly, only with a *quid illiterati cum libris?*" This *plundering* then consisted rather of *cajoling* others out of what they knew not how to value; and this is an advantage which every skilful lover of books must enjoy over those whose apprenticeship has not expired. I have myself been plundered by a very dear friend of some such literary curiosities, in the days of my innocence and of his precocity of knowledge. However, it does appear that Bishop More did actually lay violent hands in a snug corner on some irresistible little charmer; which we gather from a precaution adopted by a friend of the bishop, who one day was found busy in *hiding his rarest books*, and locking up as many as he could. On being asked the reason of this odd occupation, the bibliopolist ingenuously replied, "The Bishop of Ely dines with me to-day." This fact is quite clear, and here is another as indisputable. Sir Robert Saville writing to Sir Robert Cotton, appointing an interview with the founder of the Bodleian Library, cautions Sir Robert, that "If he held any book so dear as that he would be loath to lose it, he should *not let Sir Thomas out of his sight*, but set 'the boke' aside beforehand." A surprise and detection of this nature has been revealed in a piece of secret history by Amelot de la Houssaie, which terminated in very important political consequences. He assures us that the personal dislike which Pope Innocent X. bore to the French had originated in his youth, when cardinal, from having been detected in the library of an eminent French collector, of having purloined a most rare volume. The

delirium of a collector's rage overcame even French politesse; the Frenchman not only openly accused his illustrious culprit, but was resolved that he should not quit the library without replacing the precious volume—from accusation and denial both resolved to try their strength: but in this literary wrestling-match the book dropped out of the cardinal's robes!—and from that day he hated the French—at least their more curious collectors!

Even an author on his dying bed, at those awful moments, should a collector be by his side, may not be considered secure from his too curious hands. Sir William Dugdale possessed the minutes of King James's life, written by Camden, till within a fortnight of his death; as also Camden's own life, which he had from Hacket, the author of the folio life of Bishop Williams: who, adds Aubrey, "did *filch* it from Mr. Camden, as he lay a dying!" He afterwards corrects his information, by the name of Dr. Thorndyke, which, however, equally answers our purpose, to prove that even dying authors may dread such collectors!

The medalists have, I suspect, been more predatory than these subtractors of our literary treasures; not only from the facility of their conveyance, but from a peculiar contrivance which of all those things which admit of being secretly purloined, can only be practised in this department—for they can steal and no human hand can search them with any possibility of detection; they can pick a cabinet and swallow the curious things, and transport them with perfect safety, to be digested at their leisure. An adventure of this kind happened to Baron Stosch, the famous antiquary. It was in looking over the gems of the royal cabinet of medals, that the keeper perceived the loss of one; his place, his pension, and his reputation were at stake: and he insisted that Baron Stosch should be most minutely examined; in this dilemma, forced to confession, this erudite collector assured the keeper of the royal cabinet, that the strictest search would not avail: "Alas, sir! I have it here within," he said, pointing to his breast—an emetic was suggested by the

learned practitioner himself, probably from some former experiment. This was not the first time that such a natural cabinet had been invented; the antiquary Vaillant, when attacked at sea by an Algerine, zealously swallowed a whole series of Syrian kings; when he landed at Lyons, groaning with his concealed treasure, he hastened to his friend, his physician, and his brother antiquary Dufour,—who at first was only anxious to inquire of his patient, whether the medals were of the higher empire? Vaillant showed two or three, of which nature had kindly relieved him. A collection of medals was left to the city of Exeter, and the donor accompanied the bequest by a clause in his will, that should a certain antiquary, his old friend and rival, be desirous of examining the coins, he should be watched by two persons, one on each side. La Croze informs us in his life, that the learned Charles Patin, who has written a work on medals, was one of the present race of collectors: Patin offered the curators of the public library at Basle to draw up a catalogue of the cabinet of Amberback there preserved, containing a good number of medals; but they would have been more numerous, had the catalogue-writer not diminished both them and his labour, by sequestrating some of the most rare, which was not discovered till this plunderer of antiquity was far out of their reach.

When Gough touched on this odd subject in the first edition of his "British Topography," "An Academic" in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1772, insinuated that this charge of literary pilfering was only a jocular one; on which Gough, in his second edition, observed that this was not the case, and that "one might point out enough *light-fingered antiquaries* in the present age, to render such a charge extremely probable against earlier ones." The most extraordinary part of this slight history is, that our public denouncer some time after proved himself to be one of these "light-fingered antiquaries:" the deed itself, however, was more singular than disgraceful. At the disinterment of the remains of Edward the First, around which thirty years ago assembled our most erudite antiquaries,

Gough was observed, as Steevens used to relate, in a wrapping great-coat of unusual dimensions; that witty and malicious "Puck," so capable himself of inventing mischief, easily suspected others, and divided his glance as much on the living piece of antiquity as on the elder. In the act of closing up the relics of royalty, there was found wanting an entire fore-finger of Edward the First; and as the body was perfect when opened, a murmur of dissatisfaction was spreading, when "Puck" directed their attention to the great antiquary in the watchman's great-coat—from whence—too surely was extracted Edward the First's great fore-finger!—so that "the light-fingered antiquary" was recognised ten years after he denounced the race, when he came to "try his hand."[224]

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222 Lansdowne MSS. 888, in the former printed catalogue, art. 79.

223 Coins are the most dangerous things which can be exhibited to a professed *collector*. One of the fraternity, who died but a few years since, absolutely kept a record of his pilferings; he succeeded in improving his collection by attending sales also, and changing his own coins for others in better preservation.

224 It is probable that this story of Gough's pocketing the fore-finger of Edward the First, was one of the malicious inventions of George Steevens, after he discovered that the antiquary was among the few admitted to the untombing of the royal corpse; Steevens himself was not there! Sylvanus Urban (the late respected John Nichols), who must know much more than he cares to record of "Puck,"—has, however, given the following "secret history" of what he calls "ungentlemanly and unwarrantable attacks" on Gough by Steevens. It seems that Steevens was a collector of the works of Hogarth, and while engaged in forming his collection, wrote an abrupt letter to Gough to obtain from him some early impressions, by purchase or exchange. Gough resented the manner of his address by a rough refusal, for it is admitted to have been "a peremptory one." Thus arose the implacable vengeance of Steevens, who used to boast that all the mischievous tricks he played on the grave antiquary, who was rarely over-kind to any one, was but a pleasant kind of revenge.

OF LORD BACON AT HOME.

THE history of Lord Bacon would be that of the intellectual faculties, and a theme so worthy of the philosophical biographer remains yet to be written. The personal narrative of this master-genius or inventor must for ever be separated from the *scala intellectûs* he was perpetually ascending: and the domestic history of this creative mind must be consigned to the most humiliating chapter in the volume of human life; a chapter already sufficiently enlarged, and which has irrefutably proved how the greatest minds are not freed from the infirmities of the most vulgar.

The parent of our philosophy is now to be considered in a new light, one which others do not appear to have observed. My researches into contemporary notices of Bacon have often convinced me that his philosophical works, in his own days and among his own countrymen, were not only not comprehended, but often ridiculed, and sometimes reprobated; that they were the occasion of many slights and mortifications which this depreciated man endured; but that from a very early period in his life, to that last record of his feelings which appears in his will, this "servant of posterity," as he prophetically called himself, sustained his mighty spirit with the confidence of his own posthumous greatness. Bacon cast his views through the maturity of ages, and perhaps amidst the sceptics and the rejectors of his plans, may have felt at times all that idolatry of fame, which has now consecrated his philosophical works.

At college, Bacon discovered how “that scrap of Grecian knowledge, the peripatetic philosophy,” and the scholastic babble, could not serve the ends and purposes of knowledge; that syllogisms were not things, and that a new logic might teach us to invent and judge by induction. He found that theories were to be built upon experiments. When a young man, abroad, he began to make those observations on nature, which afterwards led on to the foundations of the new philosophy. At sixteen, he philosophised; at twenty-six, he had framed his system into some form; and after forty years of continued labours, unfinished to his last hour, he left behind him sufficient to found the great philosophical reformation.

On his entrance into active life, study was not however his prime object. With his fortune to make, his court connexions and his father’s example opened a path for ambition. He chose the practice of common law as his means, while his inclinations were looking upwards to political affairs as his end. A passion for study, however, had strongly marked him; he had read much more than was required in his professional character, and this circumstance excited the mean jealousies of the minister Cecil, and the Attorney-General Coke. Both were mere practical men of business, whose narrow conceptions and whose stubborn habits assume that whenever a man acquires much knowledge foreign to his profession, he will know less of professional knowledge than he ought. These men of strong minds, yet limited capacities, hold in contempt all studies alien to their habits.

Bacon early aspired to the situation of Solicitor-General; the court of Elizabeth was divided into factions; Bacon adopted the interests of the generous Essex, which were inimical to the party of Cecil. The queen, from his boyhood, was delighted by conversing with her “young lord-keeper,” as she early distinguished the precocious gravity and the ingenious turn of mind of the future philosopher. It was unquestionably to attract her favour, that Bacon presented to the queen his “Maxims and Elements of the

Common Law," not published till after his death. Elizabeth suffered her minister to form her opinions on the legal character of Bacon. It was alleged that Bacon was addicted to more general pursuits than law, and the miscellaneous books which he was known to have read confirmed the accusation. This was urged as a reason why the post of Solicitor-General should not be conferred on a man of speculation, more likely to distract than to direct her affairs. Elizabeth, in the height of that political prudence which marked her character, was swayed by the vulgar notion of Cecil, and believed that Bacon, who afterwards filled the situation both of Solicitor-General and Lord Chancellor, was "a man rather of show than of depth." We have recently been told by a great lawyer that "Bacon was a master."

On the accession of James the First, when Bacon still found the same party obstructing his political advancement, he appears, in some momentary fit of disgust, to have meditated on a retreat into a foreign country; a circumstance which has happened to several of our men of genius, during a fever of solitary indignation. He was for some time thrown out of the sunshine of life, but he found its shade more fitted for contemplation; and, unquestionably, philosophy was benefited by his solitude at Gray's Inn. His hand was always on his work, and better thoughts will find an easy entrance into the mind of those who feed on their thoughts, and live amidst their reveries. In a letter on this occasion, he writes, "My ambition now I shall only put upon my PEN, whereby I shall be able to maintain memory and merit, of THE TIMES SUCCEEDING." And many years after, when he had finally quitted public life, he told the king, "I would live to study, and not study to live: yet I am prepared for *date obolum Belisario*; and, I that have borne a bag, can bear a wallet."

Ever were THE TIMES SUCCEEDING in his mind. In that delightful Latin letter to Father Fulgentio, where, with the simplicity of true grandeur, he takes a view of all his works, and in which he describes himself as "one

who served posterity," in communicating his past and his future designs, he adds that "they require some ages for the ripening of them." There, while he despairs of finishing what was intended for the sixth part of his Instauration, how nobly he despairs! "Of the perfecting this I have cast away all hopes; but in future ages, perhaps, the design may bud again." And he concludes by avowing, that the zeal and constancy of his mind in the great design, after so many years, had never become cold and indifferent. He remembers how, forty years ago, he had composed a juvenile work about those things, which with confidence, but with too pompous a title, he had called *Temporis Partus Maximus*; the great birth of time! Besides the public dedication of his *Novum Organum* to James the First, he accompanied it with a private letter. He wishes the king's favour to the work, which he accounts as much as a hundred years' time; for he adds, "I am persuaded *the work will gain upon men's minds in* AGES."

In his last will appears his remarkable legacy of fame. "My name and memory I leave to foreign nations, and to mine own countrymen, AFTER SOME TIME BE PAST OVER." Time seemed always personated in the imagination of our philosopher, and with time he wrestled with a consciousness of triumph.

I shall now bring forward sufficient evidence to prove how little Bacon was understood, and how much he was even despised, in his philosophical character.

In those prescient views by which the genius of Verulam has often anticipated the institutions and the discoveries of succeeding times, there was one important object which even his foresight does not appear to have contemplated. Lord Bacon did not foresee that the English language would one day be capable of embalming all that philosophy can discover, or poetry can invent; that his country would at length possess a national literature of its own, and that it would exult in classical compositions which might be

appreciated with the finest models of antiquity. His taste was far unequal to his invention. So little did he esteem the language of his country, that his favourite works are composed in Latin; and he was anxious to have what he had written in English preserved in that "universal language which may last as long as books last." It would have surprised Bacon to have been told, that the most learned men in Europe have studied English authors to learn to think and to write. Our philosopher was surely somewhat mortified, when in his dedication of the Essays he observed, that "of all my other works my Essays have been most current; for that, *as it seems*, they come home to men's business and bosoms." It is too much to hope to find in a vast and profound inventor a writer also who bestows immortality on his language. The English language is the only object in his great survey of art and of nature, which owes nothing of its excellence to the genius of Bacon.

He had reason indeed to be mortified at the reception of his philosophical works; and Dr. Rawley, even some years after the death of his illustrious master, had occasion to observe, that "His fame is greater and sounds louder in foreign parts abroad than at home in his own nation"; thereby verifying that divine sentence, a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country and in his own house. Even the men of genius, who ought to have comprehended this new source of knowledge thus opened to them, reluctantly entered into it; so repugnant are we suddenly to give up ancient errors which time and habit have made a part of ourselves. Harvey, who himself experienced the sluggish obstinacy of the learned, which repelled a great but a novel discovery, could, however, in his turn deride the amazing novelty of Bacon's *Novum Organum*. Harvey said to Aubrey, that "Bacon was no great philosopher; he writes philosophy like a lord chancellor." It has been suggested to me that Bacon's philosophical writings have been much overrated.—His experimental philosophy from the era in which they were produced must be necessarily defective: the time he gave to them could only have been had at spare hours; but like the great prophet on the

mount, Bacon was doomed to view the land afar, which he himself could never enter.

Bacon found but small encouragement for his *new learning* among the most eminent scholars, to whom he submitted his early discoveries. A very copious letter by Sir Thomas Bodley on Bacon's desiring him to return the manuscript of the *Cogitata et Visa*, some portion of the *Novum Organum*, has come down to us; it is replete with objections to the new philosophy. "I am one of that crew," says Sir Thomas, "that say we possess a far greater holdfast of certainty in the sciences than you will seem to acknowledge." He gives a hint too that Solomon complained "of the infinite making of books in his time;" that all Bacon delivers is only "by averment without other force of argument, to disclaim all our axioms, maxims, &c., left by tradition from our elders unto us, which have passed all probations of the sharpest wits that ever were;" and he concludes that the end of all Bacon's philosophy, by "a fresh creating new principles of sciences, would be to be dispossessed of the learning we have;" and he fears that it would require as many ages as have marched before us that knowledge should be perfectly achieved. Bodley truly compares himself to "the carrier's horse which cannot blanch the beaten way in which I was trained."[225]

Bacon did not lose heart by the timidity of the "carrier's horse:" a smart vivacious note in return shows his quick apprehension.

"As I am going to my house in the country, I shall want my papers, which I beg you therefore to return. You are slothful, and you help me nothing, so that I am half in conceit you affect not the argument; for myself I know well you love and affect. I can say no more, but *non canimus surdis, respondent omnia sylvæ*. If you be not *of the lodgings chalked up*, whereof I speak in my preface, I am but to pass by your door. But if I had you a fortnight at Gorhambury, I would make you tell another tale; or else I would add a cogitation *against libraries*, and be revenged on you that way."

A keen but playful retort of a great author too conscious of his own views to be angry with his critic! The singular phrase of the *lodgings chalked up* is a sarcasm explained by this passage in "The Advancement of Learning." "As Alexander Borgia was wont to say of the expedition of the French for Naples, that they came with chalk in their hands to mark up their lodgings, and not with weapons to fight; so I like better that entry of truth that cometh peaceably with chalk to mark up those minds which are capable to lodge and harbour it, than that which cometh with pugnacity and contention."[226] The threatened agitation *against libraries* must have caused Bodley's cheek to tingle.

Let us now turn from the scholastic to the men of the world, and we shall see what sort of notion these critics entertained of the philosophy of Bacon. Chamberlain writes, "This week the lord chancellor hath set forth his new work, called *Instauratio Magna*, or a kind of *Novum Organum* of all philosophy. In sending it to the king, he wrote that he wished his majesty might be so long in reading it as he hath been in composing and polishing it, which is well near thirty years. I have read no more than the bare title, and am not greatly encouraged by Mr. Cuffe's judgment,[227] who having long since perused it, gave this censure, that a fool could not have written such a work, and a wise man would not." A month or two afterwards we find that "the king cannot forbear sometimes in reading the lord chancellor's last book to say, that it is like *the peace of God, that surpasseth all understanding*."

Two years afterwards the same letter-writer proceeds with another literary paragraph about Bacon. "This lord busies himself altogether about *books*, and hath set out two lately, *Historia Ventorum* and *De Vitâ et Morte*, with promise of more. I have yet seen neither of them, because I have not leisure; but if the Life of Henry the Eighth (the Seventh), which they say he is about, might *come out after his own manner* (meaning his Moral Essays),

I should find time and means enough to read it." When this history made its appearance, the same writer observes, "My Lord Verulam's history of Henry the Seventh is come forth; I have not read much of it, but they say it is a very pretty book."[228]

Bacon, in his vast survey of human knowledge, included even its humbler provinces, and condescended to form a collection of apophthegms: his lordship regretted the loss of a collection made by Julius Cæsar, while Plutarch indiscriminately drew much of the dregs. The wits, who could not always comprehend his plans, ridiculed the sage. I shall now quote a contemporary poet, whose works, for by their size they may assume that distinction, were never published. A Dr. Andrews wasted a sportive pen on fugitive events; but though not always deficient in humour and wit, such is the freedom of his writings, that they will not often admit of quotation. The following is indeed but a strange pun on Bacon's title, derived from the town of St. Albans and his collection of apophthegms:—

ON LORD BACON PUBLISHING APOPHTHEGMS

When learned Bacon wrote Essays,
He did deserve and hath the praise;
But now he writes his *Apophthegms*,
Surely he dozes or he dreams;
One said, *St. Albans* now is grown unable,
And is in the high-road way—*to Dunstable* [i. e., *Dunce-table*.]

To the close of his days were Lord Bacon's philosophical pursuits still disregarded and depreciated by ignorance and envy, in the forms of friendship or rivality. I shall now give a remarkable example. Sir Edward Coke was a mere great lawyer, and, like all such, had a mind so walled in by law-knowledge, that in its bounded views it shut out the horizon of the

intellectual faculties, and the whole of his philosophy lay in the statutes. In the library at Holkham there will be found a presentation copy of Lord Bacon's *Novum Organum*, the *Instauratio Magna*, 1620. It was given to Coke, for it bears the following note on the title-page, in the writing of Coke:—

Edw. Coke, *Ex dono authoris,*
Auctori consilium
Instaurare paras veterum documenta sophorum
Instaura leges, justitiamque prius.

The verses not only reprove Bacon for going out of his profession, but must have alluded to his character as a prerogative lawyer, and his corrupt administration of the chancery. The book was published in October, 1620, a few months before his impeachment. And so far one may easily excuse the causticity of Coke; but how he really valued the philosophy of Bacon appears by this: in this first edition there is a device of a ship passing between Hercules's pillars; the *plus ultra*, the proud exultation of our philosopher. Over this device Coke has written a miserable distich in English, which marks his utter contempt of the philosophical pursuits of his illustrious rival. This ship passing beyond the columns of Hercules he sarcastically conceits as "The Ship of Fools," the famous satire of the German Sebastian Brandt, translated by Alexander Barclay.

It deserveth not to be read in schools,
But to be freighted in the Ship of Fools.

Such then was the fate of Lord Bacon; a history not written by his biographers, but which may serve as a comment on that obscure passage

dropped from the pen of his chaplain, and already quoted, that he was more valued abroad than at home.

225 This letter may be found in *Reliquiæ Bodleianæ*, p. 369.

226 I have been favoured with this apt illustration by an anonymous communicator, who dates from the "London University." I request him to accept my grateful acknowledgments.

227 Henry Cuffe, secretary to Robert, Earl of Essex, and executed, being concerned in his treason. A man noted for his classical acquirements and his genius, who perished early in life.

228 Chamberlain adds the price of this moderate-sized folio, which was six shillings. It would be worth the while of some literary student to note the prices of our earlier books, which are often found written upon them by their original possessor. A rare tract first purchased for twopence has often realized four guineas or more in modern days.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

It is an extraordinary circumstance in our history, that the succession to the English dominion, in two remarkable cases, was never settled by the possessors of the throne themselves during their lifetime; and that there is every reason to believe that this mighty transfer of three kingdoms became the sole act of their ministers, who considered the succession merely as a state expedient. Two of our most able sovereigns found themselves in this

predicament: Queen Elizabeth and the Protector Cromwell! Cromwell probably had his reasons not to name his successor; his positive election would have dissatisfied the opposite parties of his government, whom he only ruled while he was able to cajole them. He must have been aware that latterly he had need of conciliating all parties to his usurpation, and was probably as doubtful on his death-bed whom to appoint his successor as at any other period of his reign. Ludlow suspects that Cromwell was "so discomposed in body or mind, that he could not attend to that matter; and whether he named any one is to me uncertain." All that we know is the report of the Secretary Thurlow and his chaplains, who, when the protector lay in his last agonies, suggested to him the propriety of choosing his eldest son, and they tell us that he agreed to this choice. Had Cromwell been in his senses, he would have probably fixed on *Henry*, the lord-lieutenant of Ireland, rather than on *Richard*, or possibly had not chosen either of his sons!

Elizabeth, from womanish infirmity, or from state-reasons, could not endure the thoughts of her successor; and long threw into jeopardy the politics of all the cabinets of Europe, each of which had its favourite candidate to support. The legitimate heir to the throne of England was to be the creature of her breath, yet Elizabeth would not speak him into existence! This had, however, often raised the discontents of the nation, and we shall see how it harassed the queen in her dying hours. It is even suspected that the queen still retained so much of the woman, that she could never overcome her perverse dislike to name a successor; so that, according to this opinion, she died and left the crown to the mercy of a party! This would have been acting unworthy of the magnanimity of her great character—and as it is ascertained that the queen was very sensible that she lay in a dying state several days before the natural catastrophe occurred, it is difficult to believe that she totally disregarded so important a circumstance. It is therefore, reasoning *à priori*, most natural to conclude that the choice of a

successor must have occupied her thoughts, as well as the anxieties of her ministers; and that she would not have left the throne in the same unsettled state at her death as she had persevered in during her whole life. How did she express herself when bequeathing the crown to James the First, or did she bequeath it at all?

In the popular pages of her female historian Miss Aikin, it is observed that "the closing scene of the long and eventful life of Queen Elizabeth was marked by that peculiarity of character and destiny which attended her from the cradle, and pursued her to the grave." The last days of Elizabeth were indeed most melancholy—she died a victim of the higher passions, and perhaps as much of grief as of age, refusing all remedies and even nourishment. But in all the published accounts, I can nowhere discover how she conducted herself respecting the circumstance of our present inquiry. The most detailed narrative, or as Gray the poet calls it, "the Earl of Monmouth's *odd account* of Queen Elizabeth's death," is the one most deserving notice; and there we find the circumstance of this inquiry introduced. The queen at that moment was reduced to so sad a state, that it is doubtful whether her majesty was at all sensible of the inquiries put to her by her ministers respecting the succession. The Earl of Monmouth says, "On Wednesday, the 23rd of March, she grew speechless. That afternoon, by signs, she called for her council, and by putting her hand to her head when the King of Scots was named to succeed her, they all knew he was the man she desired should reign after her." Such a sign as that of a dying woman putting her hand to her head was, to say the least, a very ambiguous acknowledgment of the right of the Scottish monarch to the English throne. The "odd" but very *naïve* account of Robert Cary, afterwards Earl of Monmouth, is not furnished with dates, nor with the exactness of a diary. Something might have occurred on a preceding day which had not reached him. Camden describes the death-bed scene of Elizabeth; by this authentic writer it appears that she had confided her state-secret of the succession to

the lord admiral (the Earl of Nottingham); and when the earl found the queen almost at her extremity, *he communicated her majesty's secret to the council*, who commissioned the lord admiral, the lord keeper, and the secretary, to wait on her majesty, and acquaint her that they came in the name of the rest to learn her pleasure in reference to *the succession*. The queen was then very weak, and answered them with a faint voice, that she had already declared, that as she held a regal sceptre, so she desired no other than a royal successor. When the secretary requested her to explain herself, the queen said, "I would have a king succeed me; and who should that he but my nearest kinsman, the King of Scots?" Here this state conversation was put an end to by the interference of the archbishop advising her majesty to turn her thoughts to God. "Never," she replied, "has my mind wandered from him."

An historian of Camden's high integrity would hardly have forged a fiction to please the new monarch: yet Camden has not been referred to on this occasion by the exact Birch, who draws his information from the letters of the French ambassador, Villeroy; information which it appears the English ministers had confided to this ambassador; nor do we get any distinct ideas from Elizabeth's more recent popular historian, who could only transcribe the account of Cary. He had told us a fact which he could not be mistaken in, that the queen fell speechless on Wednesday, 23rd of March, on which day, however, she called her council, and made that sign with her hand, which, as the lords choose to understand, for ever united the two kingdoms. But the noble editor of Cary's Memoirs (the Earl of Cork and Orrery) has observed that "the speeches made for Elizabeth on her death-bed are all forged." Echard, Rapin, and a long string of historians, make her say faintly (so faintly indeed that it could not possibly be heard), "I will that a king succeed me, and who should that be but my nearest kinsman, the King of Scots?" A different account of this matter will be found in the following memoirs. "She was speechless, and almost expiring,

when the chief councillors of state were called into her bedchamber. As soon as they were perfectly convinced that she could not utter an articulate word, and scarce could hear or understand one, they named the King of Scots to her, *a liberty they dared not to have taken if she had been able to speak*; she put her hand to her head, which was probably at that time in agonising pain. *The lords, who interpreted her signs just as they pleased*, were immediately convinced that the *motion of her hand to her head was a declaration of James the Sixth as her successor*. What was this but the unanimous interpretation of persons who were adoring the rising sun?"

This is lively and plausible; but the noble editor did not recollect that "the speeches made by Elizabeth on her death-bed," which he deems "forgeries," in consequence of the circumstance he had found in Cary's Memoirs, originate with Camden, and were only repeated by Rapin and Echard, &c. I am now to confirm the narrative of the elder historian, as well as the circumstance related by Cary, describing the sign of the queen a little differently, which happened on Wednesday, 23rd. A hitherto unnoticed document pretends to give a fuller and more circumstantial account of this affair, which commenced on *the preceding day*, when the queen retained the power of speech; and it will be confessed that the language here used has all that loftiness and brevity which was the natural style of this queen. I have discovered a curious document in a manuscript volume formerly in the possession of Petyt, and seemingly in his own handwriting. I do not doubt its authenticity, and it could only have come from some of the illustrious personages who were the actors in that solemn scene, probably from Cecil. This memorandum is entitled

"Account of the last words of Queen Elizabeth about her Successor.

"On the Tuesday before her death, being the twenty-third of March, the admiral being on the right side of her bed, the lord keeper on the left, and Mr. Secretary Cecil (afterwards Earl of Salisbury) at the bed's feet, all

standing, the lord admiral put her in mind of her speech concerning the succession had at Whitehall, and that they, in the name of all the rest of her council, came unto her to know her pleasure who should succeed; whereunto she thus replied:

"*I told you my seat had been the seat of kings, and I will have no rascal to succeed me. And who should succeed me but a king?*

"The lords not understanding this dark speech, and looking one on the other; at length Mr. Secretary boldly asked her what she meant by those words, that *no rascal should succeed her*. Whereto she replied, that *her meaning was, that a king should succeed: and who*, quoth she, *should, that be but our cousin of Scotland*?

"They asked her whether that were her absolute resolution? whereto she answered, *I pray you trouble me no more; for I will have none but him*. With which answer they departed.

"Notwithstanding, after again, about four o'clock in the afternoon the next day, being Wednesday, after the Archbishop of Canterbury and other divines had been with her, and left her in a manner speechless, the three lords aforesaid repaired unto her again, asking her if she remained in her former resolution, and who should succeed her? but not being able to speak, was asked by Mr. Secretary in this sort, 'We beseech your majesty, if you remain in your former resolution, and that you would have the King of Scots to succeed you in your kingdom, show some sign unto us: whereat, *suddenly heaving herself upwards in her bed, and putting her arms out of bed, she held her hands jointly over her head in manner of a crown*; whence as they guessed, she signified that she did not only wish him the kingdom, but desire continuance of his estate: after which they departed, and the next morning she died. Immediately after her death, all the lords, as well of the council as other noblemen that were at the court, came from Richmond to

Whitehall by six o'clock in the morning, where other noblemen that were in London met them. Touching the succession, after some speeches of divers competitors and matters of state, at length the admiral rehearsed all the aforesaid premises which the late queen had spoken to him, and to the lord keeper, and Mr. Secretary (Cecil), with the manner thereof; which they, being asked, did affirm to be true upon their HONOUR."

Such is this singular document of secret history. I cannot but value it as authentic, because the one part is evidently alluded to by Camden, and the other is fully confirmed by Cary; and besides this, the remarkable expression of "rascal" is found in the letter of the French ambassador. There were two interviews with the queen, and Cary appears only to have noticed the last on Wednesday, when the queen lay speechless. Elizabeth all her life had persevered in an obstinate mysteriousness respecting the succession, and it harassed her latest moments. The second interview of her ministers may seem to us quite supernumerary; but Cary's "putting her hand to her head," too meanly describes the "joining her hands in manner of a crown."

JAMES THE FIRST AS A FATHER AND A HUSBAND.

CALUMNIES and sarcasms have reduced the character of James the First to contempt among general readers; while the narrative of historians, who have related facts in spite of themselves, is in perpetual contradiction with their own opinions. Perhaps no sovereign has suffered more by that art, which is described by an old Irish proverb, of "killing a man by lies." The surmises and the insinuations of one party, dissatisfied with the established government in church and state; the misconceptions of more modern writers, who have not possessed the requisite knowledge; and the anonymous libels, sent forth at a particular period to vilify the Stuarts; all these cannot be treasured up by the philosopher as the authorities of history. It is at least more honourable to resist popular prejudice than to yield to it a passive obedience; and what we can ascertain it would be a dereliction of truth to conceal. Much can be substantiated in favour of the domestic affections and habits of this pacific monarch; and those who are more intimately acquainted with the secret history of the times will perceive how erroneously the personal character of this sovereign is exhibited in our popular historians, and often even among the few who, with better information, have re-echoed their preconceived opinions.

Confining myself here to his domestic character, I shall not touch on the many admirable public projects of this monarch, which have extorted the praise, and even the admiration, of some who have not spared their pens in his disparagement. James the First has been taxed with pusillanimity and foolishness; this monarch cannot, however, be reproached with having engendered them! All his children, in whose education their father was so deeply concerned, sustained through life a dignified character and a high

spirit. The short life of Henry was passed in a school of prowess, and amidst an academy of literature. Of the king's paternal solicitude, even to the hand and the letter-writing of Prince Henry when young, I have preserved a proof in the article of "The History of Writing-masters." Charles the First, in his youth more particularly designed for a studious life, with a serious character, was, however, never deficient in active bravery and magnanimous fortitude. Of Elizabeth, the Queen of Bohemia, tried as she was by such vicissitudes of fortune, it is much to be regretted that the interesting story remains untold; her buoyant spirits rose always above the perpetual changes of a princely to a private state—a queen to an exile! The father of such children derives some distinction for capacity, in having reared such a noble offspring; and the king's marked attention to the formation of his children's minds was such as to have been pointed out by Ben Jonson, who, in his "Gipsies Metamorphosed," rightly said of James, using his native term—

> You are an honest, good man, and have care of YOUR BEARNS (bairns).

Among the flouts and gibes so freely bespattering the personal character of James the First, is one of his coldness and neglect of his queen. It would, however, be difficult to prove by any known fact that James was not as indulgent a husband as he was a father. Yet even a writer so well informed as Daines Barrington, who, as a lawyer, could not refrain from lauding the royal sage during his visit to Denmark, on his marriage, for having borrowed three statutes from the Danish code, found the king's name so provocative of sarcasm, that he could not forbear observing, that James "spent more time in those courts of judicature than in *attending upon his destined consort*."—"Men of all sorts have taken a pride to gird at me," might this monarch have exclaimed. But everything has two handles, saith the ancient adage. Had an austere puritan chosen to observe that James the

First, when abroad, had lived jovially; and had this historian then dropped silently the interesting circumstance of the king's "spending his time in the Danish courts of judicature," the fact would have borne him out in his reproof; and Francis Osborne, indeed, has censured James for giving marks of his *uxoriousness*! There was no deficient gallantry in the conduct of James the First to his queen; the very circumstance, that when the Princess of Denmark was driven by a storm back to Norway, the king resolved to hasten to her, and consummate his marriage in Denmark, was itself as romantic an expedition as afterwards was that of his son's into Spain, and betrays no mark of that tame pusillanimity with which he stands overcharged.

The character of the queen of James the First is somewhat obscure in our public history, for in it she makes no prominent figure; while in secret history she is more apparent. Anne of Denmark was a spirited and enterprising woman; and it appears from a passage in Sully, whose authority should weigh with us, although we ought to recollect that it is the French minister who writes, that she seems to have raised a court faction against James, and inclined to favour the Spanish and catholic interests; yet it may be alleged as a strong proof of James's political wisdom, that the queen was never suffered to head a formidable party, though she latterly might have engaged Prince Henry in that court opposition. The *bonhommie* of the king, on this subject, expressed with a simplicity of style which, though it may not be royal, is something better, appears in a letter to the queen, which has been preserved in the appendix to Sir David Dalrymple's collections. It is without date, but written when in Scotland, to quiet the queen's suspicions, that the Earl of Mar, who had the care of Prince Henry, and whom she wished to take out of his hands, had insinuated to the king that her majesty was strongly disposed to any "popish or Spanish course." This letter confirms the representation of Sully; but the extract is remarkable for the manly simplicity of style which the king used.

“I say over again, leave these froward womanly apprehensions, for I thank God I carry that love and respect unto you which, by the law of God and nature, I ought to do to my wife, and mother of my children; but not for that ye are a king’s daughter; for whether ye were a king’s daughter, or a cook’s daughter, ye must be all alike to me since my wife. For the respect of your honourable birth and descent I married you; but the love and respect I now bear you is because that ye are my married wife, and so partaker of my honour, as of my other fortunes. I beseech you excuse my plainness in this, for casting up of your birth is a needless impertinent (that is, not pertinent) argument to me. God is my witness, I ever preferred you to my bairns, much more than to a subject.”

In an ingenious historical dissertation, but one perfectly theoretical, respecting that mysterious transaction the Gowrie conspiracy, Pinkerton has attempted to show that Anne of Denmark was a lady somewhat inclined to intrigue, and that “the king had cause to be jealous.” He confesses that “he cannot discover any positive charge of adultery against Anne of Denmark, but merely of coquetry.”[229] To what these accusations amount it would be difficult to say. The progeny of James the First sufficiently bespeak their family resemblance. If it be true, that “the king had ever reason to be jealous,” and yet that no single criminal act of the queen’s has been recorded, it must be confessed that one or both of the parties were singularly discreet and decent; for the king never complained, and the queen was never accused, if we except this burthen of an old Scottish ballad,

O the bonny Earl of Murray,

He was the queen’s love.

Whatever may have happened in Scotland, in England the queen appears to have lived occupied chiefly by the amusements of the court, and not to have

interfered with the *arcana* of state. She appears to have indulged a passion for the elegancies and splendours of the age, as they were shown in those gorgeous court masques with which the taste of James harmonized, either from his gallantry for the queen, or his own poetic sympathy. But this taste for court masques could not escape the slur and scandal of the puritanic, and these "high-flying fancies" are thus recorded by honest Arthur Wilson, whom we summon into court as an indubitable witness of the mutual cordiality of this royal couple. In the spirit of his party, and like Milton, he censures the taste, but likes it. He says, "The court being a continued *maskarado*, where she (the queen) and her ladies, like so many sea-nymphs or Nereides, appeared often in various dresses, to the ravishment of the beholders; the king himself not being a little delighted with such fluent elegancies as made the night more glorious than the day."[230] This is a direct proof that James was by no means cold or negligent in his attentions to his queen; and the letter which has been given is the picture of his mind. That James the First was fondly indulgent to his queen, and could perform an act of chivalric gallantry with all the generosity of passion, and the ingenuity of an elegant mind, a pleasing anecdote which I have discovered in an unpublished letter of the day will show. I give it in the words of the writer.

"*August, 1613.*

"At their last being at Theobalds, about a fortnight ago, the queen, shooting at a deer, mistook her mark, and killed *Jewel*, the king's most principal and special hound; at which he stormed exceedingly awhile; but after he knew who did it, he was soon pacified, and with much kindness wished her not to be troubled with it, for he should love her never the worse: and the next day sent her a diamond worth two thousand pounds as *a legacy from his dead dog*. Love and kindness increased daily between them."

Such is the history of a contemporary living at court, very opposite to that representation of coldness and neglect with which the king's temper has been so freely aspersed; and such too is the true portrait of James the First in domestic life. His first sensations were thoughtless and impetuous; and he would ungracefully thunder out an oath, which a puritan would set down in his "tables," while he omitted to note that this king's forgiveness and forgetfulness of personal injuries were sure to follow the feeling they had excited.

229 The historical dissertation is appended to the first volume of Mr. Malcolm Laing's "History of Scotland," who thinks that "it has placed that obscure transaction in its genuine light."

230 See the article on *Court Masques* in the early pages of the present volume for notices of the elaborate splendour and costliness of these favourite displays.

THE MAN OF ONE BOOK.

Mr. Maurice, in his animated Memoirs, has recently acquainted us with a fact which may be deemed important in the life of a literary man. He tells us, "We have been just informed that Sir William Jones *invariably* read through every year the works of Cicero, whose life indeed was the great exemplar of his own." The same passion for the works of Cicero has been participated by others. When the best means of forming a good style were

inquired of the learned Arnauld, he advised the daily study of Cicero; but it was observed that the object was not to form a Latin, but a French style: “In that case,” replied Arnauld, “you must still read Cicero.”

A predilection for some great author, among the vast number which must transiently occupy our attention, seems to be the happiest preservative for our taste: accustomed to that excellent author whom we have chosen for our favourite, we may in this intimacy possibly resemble him. It is to be feared that, if we do not form such a permanent attachment, we may be acquiring knowledge, while our enervated taste becomes less and less lively. Taste embalms the knowledge which otherwise cannot preserve itself. He who has long been intimate with one great author will always be found to be a formidable antagonist; he has saturated his mind with the excellences of genius; he has shaped his faculties insensibly to himself by his model, and he is like a man who ever sleeps in armour, ready at a moment! The old Latin proverb reminds us of this fact, *Cave ab homine unius libri*: Be cautious of the man of one book!

Pliny and Seneca give very safe advice on reading: that we should read much, but not many books—but they had no “monthly list of new publications!” Since their days others have favoured us with “Methods of Study,” and “Catalogues of Books to be Read.” Vain attempts to circumscribe that invisible circle of human knowledge which is perpetually enlarging itself! The multiplicity of books is an evil for the many; for we now find an *helluo librorum* not only among the learned, but, with their pardon, among the unlearned; for those who, even to the prejudice of their health, persist only in reading the incessant book-novelties of our own time, will after many years acquire a sort of learned ignorance. We are now in want of an art to teach how books are to be read, rather than not to read them: such an art is practicable. But amidst this vast multitude still let us be “the man of one book,” and preserve an uninterrupted intercourse with that

great author with whose mode of thinking we sympathise, and whose charms of composition we can habitually retain.

It is remarkable that every great writer appears to have a predilection for some favourite author; and, with Alexander, had they possessed a golden casket, would have enshrined the works they so constantly turned over. Demosthenes felt such delight in the history of Thucydides, that, to obtain a familiar and perfect mastery of his style, he re-copied his history eight times; while Brutus not only was constantly perusing Polybius, even amidst the most busy periods of his life, but was abridging a copy of that author on the last awful night of his existence, when on the following day he was to try his fate against Antony and Octavius. Selim the Second had the Commentaries of Cæsar translated for his use; and it is recorded that his military ardour was heightened by the perusal. We are told that Scipio Africanus was made a hero by the writings of Xenophon. When Clarendon was employed in writing his history, he was in a constant study of Livy and Tacitus, to acquire the full and flowing style of the one, and the portrait-painting of the other: he records this circumstance in a letter. Voltaire had usually on his table the *Athalie* of Racine, and the *Petit Carême* of Massillon; the tragedies of the one were the finest model of French verse, the sermons of the other of French prose. “Were I obliged to sell my library,” exclaimed Diderot, “I would keep back Moses, Homer, and Richardson;” and, by the *éloge* which this enthusiastic writer composed on our English novelist, it is doubtful, had the Frenchman been obliged to have lost two of them, whether Richardson had not been the elected favourite. Monsieur Thomas, a French writer, who at times displays high eloquence and profound thinking, Herault de Sechelles tells us, studied chiefly one author, but that author was Cicero; and never went into the country unaccompanied by some of his works. Fénélon was constantly employed on his Homer; he left a translation of the greater part of the Odyssey, without any design of publication, but merely as an exercise for style. Montesquieu

was a constant student of Tacitus, of whom he must be considered a forcible imitator. He has, in the manner of Tacitus, characterised Tacitus: “That historian,” he says, “who abridged everything, because he saw everything.” The famous Bourdaloue re-perused every year Saint Paul, Saint Chrysostom, and Cicero. “These,” says a French critic, “were the sources of his masculine and solid eloquence.” Grotius had such a taste for Lucan, that he always carried a pocket edition about him, and has been seen to kiss his hand-book with the rapture of a true votary. If this anecdote be true, the elevated sentiments of the stern Roman were probably the attraction with the Batavian republican. The diversified reading of Leibnitz is well known; but he still attached himself to one or two favourites: Virgil was always in his hand when at leisure, and Leibnitz had read Virgil so often, that even in his old age he could repeat whole books by heart; Barclay’s Argenis was his model for prose; when he was found dead in his chair, the Argenis had fallen from his hands. Rabelais and Marot were the perpetual favourites of La Fontaine; from one he borrowed his humour, and from the other his style. Quevedo was so passionately fond of the Don Quixote of Cervantes, that often in reading that unrivalled work he felt an impulse to burn his own inferior compositions: to be a sincere admirer and a hopeless rival is a case of authorship the hardest imaginable. Few writers can venture to anticipate the award of posterity; yet perhaps Quevedo had not even been what he was without the perpetual excitement he received from his great master. Horace was the friend of his heart to Malherbe; he laid the Roman poet on his pillow, took him in the fields, and called his Horace his breviary. Plutarch, Montaigne, and Locke, were the three authors constantly in the hands of Rousseau, and he has drawn from them the groundwork of his ideas in his Emile. The favourite author of the great Earl of Chatham was Barrow; and on his style he had formed his eloquence, and had read his great master so constantly, as to be able to repeat his elaborate sermons from memory. The great Lord Burleigh always carried Tully’s Offices in his pocket; Charles V.

and Buonaparte had Machiavel frequently in their hands; and Davila was the perpetual study of Hampden: he seemed to have discovered in that historian of civil wars those which he anticipated in the land of his fathers.

These facts sufficiently illustrate the recorded circumstance of Sir William Jones's invariable habit of reading his Cicero through every year, and exemplify the happy result for him, who, amidst the multiplicity of his authors, still continues in this way to be "the man of one book."

A BIBLIOGNOSTE.

A STARTLING literary prophecy, recently sent forth from our oracular literature, threatens the annihilation of public libraries, which are one day to moulder away!

Listen to the vaticinator! "As conservatories of mental treasures, their value in times of darkness and barbarity was incalculable; and even in these happier days, when men are incited to explore new regions of thought, they command respect as depots of methodical and well-ordered references for the researches of the curious. But what in one state of society is invaluable, may at another be worthless; and the progress which the world has made within a very few centuries has considerably reduced the estimation which is due to such establishments. We will say more—"[231] but enough! This idea of striking into dust "the god of his idolatry," the Dagon of his

devotion, is sufficient to terrify the bibliographer, who views only a blind Samson pulling down the pillars of his temple!

This future universal inundation of books, this superfluity of knowledge, in billions and trillions, overwhelms the imaginnation! It is now about four hundred years since the art of multiplying books has been discovered; and an arithmetician has attempted to calculate the incalculable of these four ages of typography, which he discovers have actually produced 3,641,960 works! Taking each work at three volumes, and reckoning only each impression to consist of three hundred copies, which is too little, the actual amount from the presses of Europe will give to 1816, 3,277,764,000 volumes! each of which being an inch thick, if placed on a line, would cover 6069 leagues! Leibnitz facetiously maintained that such would be the increase of literature, that future generations would find whole cities insufficient to contain their libraries. We are, however, indebted to the patriotic endeavours of our grocers and trunkmakers, alchemists of literature! they annihilate the gross bodies without injuring the finer spirits. We are still more indebted to that neglected race, the bibliographers!

The science of books, for so bibliography is sometimes dignified, may deserve the gratitude of a public, who are yet insensible of the useful zeal of those book-practitioners, the nature of whose labours is yet so imperfectly comprehended. Who is this vaticinator of the uselessness of public libraries? Is he a *bibliognoste*, or a *bibliographe*, or a *bibliomane*, or a *bibliophile*, or a *bibliotaphe*? A *bibliothecaire*, or a *bibliopole*, the prophet cannot be; for the *bibliothecaire* is too delightfully busied among his shelves, and the *bibliopole* is too profitably concerned in furnishing perpetual additions to admit of this hyperbolical terror of annihilation![232]

Unawares, we have dropped into that professional jargon which was chiefly forged by one who, though seated in the “scorner’s chair,” was the Thaumaturgus of books and manuscripts. The Abbé Rive had acquired a

singular taste and curiosity, not without a fermenting dash of singular *charlatanerie*, in bibliography: the little volumes he occasionally put forth are things which but few hands have touched. He knew well, that for some books to be noised about, they should not be read: this was one of those recondite mysteries of his, which we may have occasion farther to reveal. This bibliographical hero was librarian to the most magnificent of book-collectors, the Duke de la Vallière. The Abbé Rive was a strong but ungovernable brute, rabid, surly, but *très-mordant*. His master, whom I have discovered to have been the partner of the cur's tricks, would often pat him; and when the *bibliognostes*, and the *bibliomanes* were in the heat of contest, let his "bull-dog" loose among them, as the duke affectionately called his librarian. The "bull-dog" of bibliography appears, too, to have had the taste and appetite of the tiger of politics, but he hardly lived to join the festival of the guillotine. I judge of this by an expression he used to one complaining of his parish priest, whom he advised to give "une messe dans son ventre!" He had tried to exhaust his genius in *La Chasse aux Bibliographes et aux Antiquaires mal avisés*, and acted Cain with his brothers! All Europe was to receive from him new ideas concerning books and manuscripts. Yet all his mighty promises fumed away in projects; and though he appeared for ever correcting the blunders of others, this French Ritson left enough of his own to afford them a choice of revenge. His style of criticism was perfectly *Ritsonian*. He describes one of his rivals as *l'insolent et très-insensé auteur de l'Almanach de Gotha*, on the simple subject of the origin of playing-cards!

The Abbé Rive was one of those men of letters, of whom there are not a few who pass all their lives in preparations. Dr. Dibdin, since the above was written, has witnessed the confusion of the mind and the gigantic industry of our *bibliognoste*, which consisted of many trunks full of *memoranda*. The description will show the reader to what hard hunting these book-hunters voluntarily doom themselves, with little hope of obtaining fame!

"In one trunk were about *six thousand* notices of MSS. of all ages. In another were wedged about *twelve thousand* descriptions of books in all languages, except those of French and Italian; sometimes with critical notes. In a third trunk was a bundle of papers relating to the *History of the Troubadours*. In a fourth was a collection of memoranda and literary sketches connected with the invention of arts and sciences, with pieces exclusively bibliographical. A fifth trunk contained between *two* and *three thousand* cards, written upon each side, respecting a collection of prints. In a sixth trunk were contained his papers respecting earthquakes, volcanoes, and geographical subjects."[233] This *Ajax flagellifer* of the bibliographical tribe, who was, as Dr. Dibdin observes, "the terror of his acquaintance, and the pride of his patron," is said to have been in private a very different man from his public character; all which may be true, without altering a shade of that public character. The French Revolution showed how men, mild and even kind in domestic life, were sanguinary and ferocious in their public.

The rabid Abbé Rive gloried in terrifying, without enlightening his rivals; he exulted that he was devoting to "the rods of criticism and the laughter of Europe the *bibliopoles*," or dealers in books, who would not get by heart his "Catechism" of a thousand and one questions and answers: it broke the slumbers of honest De Bure, who had found life was already too short for his own "Bibliographie Instructive."

The Abbé Rive had contrived to catch the shades of the appellatives necessary to discriminate book amateurs; and of the first term he is acknowledged to be the inventor.

A *bibliognoste*, from the Greek, is one knowing in title-pages and colophons, and in editions; the place and year when printed; the presses whence issued; and all the *minutiæ* of a book.

A *bibliographe* is a describer of books and other literary arrangements.

A *bibliomane* is an indiscriminate accumulator, who blunders faster than he buys, cock-brained, and purse-heavy!

A *bibliophile*, the lover of books, is the only one in the class who appears to read them for his own pleasure.

A *bibliotaphe* buries his books, by keeping them under lock, or framing them in glass cases.

I shall catch our *bibliognoste* in the hour of book-rapture! It will produce a collection of bibliographical writers, and show to the second-sighted Edinburgher what human contrivances have been raised by the art of more painful writers than himself—either to postpone the day of universal annihilation, or to preserve for our posterity, three centuries hence, the knowledge which now so busily occupies us, and transmit to them something more than what Bacon calls "Inventories" of our literary treasures.

"Histories, and literary *bibliothèques* (or bibliothecas), will always present to us," says La Rive, "an immense harvest of errors, till the authors of such catalogues shall be fully impressed by the importance of their art; and, as it were, reading in the most distant ages of the future the literary good and evil which they may produce, force a triumph from the pure devotion to truth, in spite of all the disgusts which their professional tasks involve; still patiently enduring the heavy chains which bind down those who give themselves up to this pursuit, with a passion which resembles heroism.

"The catalogues of *bibliothèques fixes* (or critical, historical, and classified accounts of writers) have engendered that enormous swarm of bibliographical errors, which have spread their roots, in greater or less quantities, in all our bibliographers." He has here furnished a long list, which I shall preserve in the note.[234]

The list, though curious, is by no means complete. Such are the men of whom the Abbé Rive speaks with more respect than his accustomed courtesy. “If such,” says he, “cannot escape from errors, who shall? I have only marked them out to prove the importance of bibliographical history. A writer of this sort must occupy himself with more regard for his reputation than his own profit, and yield himself up entirely to the study of books.”

The mere knowledge of books, which has been called an erudition of title-pages, may be sufficient to occupy the life of some; and while the wits and “the million” are ridiculing these hunters of editions, who force their passage through secluded spots, as well as course in the open fields, it will be found that this art of book-knowledge may turn out to be a very philosophical pursuit, and that men of great name have devoted themselves to labours more frequently contemned than comprehended. Apostolo Zeno, a poet, a critic, and a true man of letters, considered it as no small portion of his glory to have annotated Fontanini, who, himself an eminent prelate, had passed his life in forming his *Bibliotheca Italiana*. Zeno did not consider that to correct errors and to enrich by information this catalogue of Italian writers was a mean task. The enthusiasm of the Abbé Rive considered bibliography as a sublime pursuit, exclaiming on Zeno’s commentary on Fontanini—“He chained together the knowledge of whole generations for posterity, and he read in future ages.”

There are few things by which we can so well trace the history of the human mind as by a classed catalogue, with dates of the first publication of books; even the relative prices of books at different periods, their decline and then their rise, and again their fall, form a chapter in this history of the human mind; we become critics even by this literary chronology, and this appraisement of auctioneers. The favourite book of every age is a certain picture of the people. The gradual depreciation of a great author marks a change in knowledge or in taste.

But it is imagined that we are not interested in the history of indifferent writers, and scarcely in that of the secondary ones. If none but great originals should claim our attention, in the course of two thousand years we should not count twenty authors! Every book, whatever be its character, may be considered as a new experiment made by the human understanding; and as a book is a sort of individual representation, not a solitary volume exists but may be personified, and described as a human being. Hints start discoveries: they are usually found in very different authors who could go no further; and the historian of obscure books is often preserving for men of genius indications of knowledge, which without his intervention we should not possess! Many secrets we discover in bibliography. Great writers, unskilled in this science of books, have frequently used defective editions, as Hume did the castrated Whitelocke; or, like Robertson, they are ignorant of even the sources of the knowledge they would give the public; or they compose on a subject which too late they discover had been anticipated. Bibliography will show what has been done, and suggest to our invention what is wanted. Many have often protracted their journey in a road which had already been worn out by the wheels which had traversed it: bibliography unrolls the whole map of the country we purpose travelling over—the post-roads and the by-paths.

Every half-century, indeed, the obstructions multiply; and the Edinburgh prediction, should it approximate to the event it has foreseen, may more reasonably terrify a far distant posterity. Mazzuchelli declared, after his laborious researches in Italian literature, that one of his more recent predecessors, who had commenced a similar work, had collected notices of forty thousand writers—and yet, he adds, my work must increase that number to ten thousand more! Mazzuchelli said this in 1753; and the amount of nearly a century must now be added, for the presses of Italy have not been inactive.

But the literature of Germany, of France, and of England has exceeded the multiplicity of the productions of Italy, and an appalling population of authors swarm before the imagination.[235] Hail then the peaceful spirit of the literary historian, which sitting amidst the night of time, by the monuments of genius, trims the sepulchral lamps of the human mind! Hail to the literary Reaumur, who by the clearness of his glasses makes even the minute interesting, and reveals to us the world of insects! These are guardian spirits who, at the close of every century standing on its ascent, trace out the old roads we had pursued, and with a lighter line indicate the new ones which are opening, from the imperfect attempts, and even the errors of our predecessors!

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231 "Edinburgh Review," vol. xxxiv, 384.

232 Will this writer pardon me for ranking him, for a moment, among those "generalisers" of the age who excel in what a critical friend has happily discriminated as *ambitious writing*? that is, writing on any topic, and not least strikingly on that of which they know least; men otherwise of fine taste, and who excel in every charm of composition.

233 The late Wm. Upcott possessed, in a large degree, a similar taste for miscellaneous collections. He never threw an old hat away, but used it as a receptacle for certain "cuttings" from books and periodicals on some peculiar subjects. He had filled a room with hats and trunks thus crammed; but they were sacrificed at his death for want of necessary arrangement.

234 Gessner—Simler—Bellarmin—L'Abbé—Mabillon—Montfaucon—Moreri—Bayle—Baillet—Niceron—Dupin—Cave—Warton—Casimir Oudin—Le Long—Goujet—Wolfius—John Albert Fabricius—Argelati—Tiraboschi—Nicholas Antonio—Walchius—Struvius—Brucker—Scheuchzer—Linnæus—Seguier—Haller—Adamson—Manget—Kestner—Eloy—Douglas—Weidler—Hailbronner—Montucla—Lalande—Bailly—Quadrio—Morhoff—Stollius—Funccius—Schelhorn—Engles—Beyer—Gerdesius—Vogts—Freytag—David Clement—Chevillier—Maittaire—Orlandi—Prosper Marchand—Schoeplin—De Boze—Abbé Sallier—and de Saint Leger.

235 The British Museum Library now numbers more than 500,000 volumes. The catalogue alone forms a small library.

SECRET HISTORY OF AN ELECTIVE MONARCHY.

A POLITICAL SKETCH.

POLAND, once a potent and magnificent kingdom, when it sunk into an elective monarchy, became "venal thrice an age." That country must have exhibited many a diplomatic scene of intricate intrigue, which although they could not appear in its public, have no doubt been often consigned to its secret, history. With us the corruption of a rotten borough has sometimes exposed the guarded proffer of one party, and the dexterous chaffering of the other: but a masterpiece of diplomatic finesse and political invention, electioneering viewed on the most magnificent scale, with a kingdom to be canvassed, and a crown to be won and lost, or lost and won in the course of a single day, exhibits a political drama, which, for the honour and happiness of mankind, is of rare and strange occurrence. There was one scene in this drama which might appear somewhat too large for an ordinary theatre; the actors apparently were not less than fifty to a hundred thousand; twelve vast tents were raised on an extensive plain, a hundred thousand horses were in the environs—and palatines and castellans, the ecclesiastical orders, with the ambassadors of the royal competitors, all agitated by the ceaseless

motion of different factions during the six weeks of the election, and of many preceding months of preconcerted measures and vacillating opinions, now were all solemnly assembled at the diet.—Once the poet, amidst his gigantic conception of a scene, resolved to leave it out:

> So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain—
> Then build a new, or *act it in a plain*!

exclaimed "La Mancha's knight," kindling at a scene so novel and so vast!

Such an electioneering negotiation, the only one I am acquainted with, is opened in the "Discours" of Choisin, the secretary of Montluc, Bishop of Valence, the confidential agent of Catharine de' Medici, and who was sent to intrigue at the Polish diet, to obtain the crown of Poland for her son the Duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third. This bold enterprise at first seemed hopeless, and in its progress encountered growing obstructions; but Montluc was one of the most finished diplomatists that the genius of the Gallic cabinet ever sent forth. He was nicknamed in all the courts of Europe, from the circumstance of his limping, "le Boiteux;" our political bishop was in cabinet intrigues the Talleyrand of his age, and sixteen embassies to Italy, Germany, England, Scotland, and Turkey, had made this "connoisseur en hommes" an extraordinary politician!

Catharine de' Medici was infatuated with the dreams of judicial astrology; her pensioned oracles had declared that she should live to see each of her sons crowned, by which prediction probably they had only purposed to flatter her pride and her love of dominion. They, however, ended in terrifying the credulous queen; and she, dreading to witness a throne in France, disputed perhaps by fratricides, anxiously sought a separate crown for each of her three sons. She had been trifled with in her earnest negotiations with our Elizabeth; twice had she seen herself baffled

in her views in the Dukes of Alençon and of Anjou. Catharine then projected a new empire for Anjou, by incorporating into one kingdom Algiers, Corsica, and Sardinia; but the other despot, he of Constantinople, Selim the Second, dissipated the brilliant speculation of our female Machiavel. Charles the Ninth was sickly, jealous, and desirous of removing from the court the Duke of Anjou, whom two victories had made popular, though he afterwards sunk into a Sardanapalus. Montluc penetrated into the secret wishes of Catharine and Charles, and suggested to them the possibility of encircling the brows of Anjou with the diadem of Poland, the Polish monarch then being in a state of visible decline. The project was approved; and, like a profound politician, the bishop prepared for an event which might be remote, and always problematical, by sending into Poland a natural son of his, Balagny, as a disguised agent; his youth, his humble rank, and his love of pleasure, would not create any alarm among the neighbouring powers, who were alike on the watch to snatch the expected spoil; but as it was necessary to have a more dexterous politician behind the curtain, he recommended his secretary, Choisnin, as a travelling tutor to a youth who appeared to want one.

Balagny proceeded to Poland, where, under the veil of dissipation, and in the midst of splendid festivities, with his trusty adjutant, this hair-brained boy of revelry began to weave those intrigues which were afterwards to be knotted, or untied, by Montluc himself. He had contrived to be so little suspected, that the agent of the emperor had often disclosed important secrets to his young and amiable friend. On the death of Sigismond Augustus, Balagny, leaving Choisnin behind to trumpet forth the virtues of Anjou, hastened to Paris to give an account of all which he had seen or heard. But poor Choisnin found himself in a dilemma among those who had so long listened to his panegyrics on the humanity and meek character of the Duke of Anjou; for the news of St. Bartholomew’s massacre had travelled faster than the post; and Choisnin complains that he was now

treated as an impudent liar, and the French prince as a monster. In vain he assured them that the whole was an exaggerated account, a mere insurrection of the people, or the effects of a few private enmities, praying the indignant Poles to suspend their decision till the bishop came: “Attendez le Boiteux!” cried he, in agony.

Meanwhile, at Paris, the choice of a proper person for this embassy had been difficult to settle. It was a business of intrigue more than of form, and required an orator to make speeches and addresses in a sort of popular assembly; for though the people, indeed, had no concern in the diet, yet the greater and the lesser nobles and gentlemen, all electors, were reckoned at one hundred thousand. It was supposed that a lawyer who could negotiate in good Latin, and one, as the French proverb runs, who could *aller et parler*, would more effectually puzzle their heads, and satisfy their consciences to vote for his client. Catharine at last fixed on Montluc himself, from the superstitious prejudice, which, however, in this case accorded with philosophical experience, that “Montluc had ever been *lucky* in his negotiations.”

Montluc hastened his departure from Paris; and it appears that our political bishop had, by his skilful penetration into the French cabinet, foreseen the horrible catastrophe which occurred very shortly after he had left it; for he had warned the Count de Rochefoucault to absent himself; but this lord, like so many others, had no suspicions of the perfidious projects of Catharine and her cabinet. Montluc, however, had not long been on his journey ere the news reached him, and it occasioned innumerable obstacles in his progress, which even his sagacity had not calculated on. At Strasburgh he had appointed to meet some able coadjutors, among whom was the famous Joseph Scaliger; but they were so terrified by *Les Matinées Parisiennes*, that Scaliger flew to Geneva, and would not budge out of that safe corner: and the others ran home, not imagining that Montluc would

venture to pass through Germany, where the protestant indignation had made the roads too hot for a catholic bishop. But Montluc had set his cast on the die. He had already passed through several hair-breadth escapes from the stratagems of the Guise faction, who more than once attempted to hang or drown the bishop, who, they cried out, was a Calvinist; the fears and jealousies of the Guises had been roused by this political mission. Among all these troubles and delays, Montluc was most affected by the rumour that the election was on the point of being made, and that the plague was universal throughout Poland, so that he must have felt that he might be too late for the one, and too early for the other.

At last Montluc arrived, and found that the whole weight of this negotiation was to fall on his single shoulders; and further, that he was to sleep every night on a pillow of thorns. Our bishop had not only to allay the ferment of the popular spirit of the evangelicals, as the protestants were then called, but even of the more rational catholics of Poland. He had also to face those haughty and feudal lords, of whom each considered himself the equal of the sovereign whom he created, and whose avowed principle was, and many were incorrupt, that their choice of a sovereign should be regulated solely by the public interest; and it was hardly to be expected that the emperor, the czar, and the King of Sweden would prove unsuccessful rivals to the cruel, and voluptuous, and bigoted duke of Anjou, whose political interests were too remote and novel to have raised any faction among these independent Poles.

The crafty politician had the art of dressing himself up in all the winning charms of candour and loyalty; a sweet flow of honeyed words melted on his lips, while his heart, cold and immovable as a rock, stood unchanged amidst the most unforeseen difficulties.

The emperor had set to work the Abbé Cyre in a sort of ambiguous character, an envoy for the nonce, to be acknowledged or disavowed as was

convenient; and by his activity he obtained considerable influence among the Lithuanians, the Wallachians, and nearly all Prussia, in favour of the Archduke Ernest. Two Bohemians, who had the advantage of speaking the Polish language, had arrived with a state and magnificence becoming kings rather than ambassadors. The Muscovite had written letters full of golden promises to the nobility, and was supported by a palatine of high character; a perpetual peace between two such great neighbours was too inviting a project not to find advocates; and this party, Choisnin observes, appeared at first the most to be feared. The King of Sweden was a close neighbour, who had married the sister of their late sovereign, and his son urged his family claims as superior to those of foreigners. Among these parties was a patriotic one, who were desirous of a Pole for their monarch; a king of their fatherland, speaking their mother-tongue, one who would not strike at the independence of his country, but preserve its integrity from the stranger. This popular party was even agreeable to several of the foreign powers themselves, who did not like to see a rival power strengthening itself by so strict a union with Poland; but in this choice of a sovereign from among themselves, there were at least thirty lords who equally thought that they were the proper wood of which kings should be carved out. The Poles therefore could not agree on the Pole who deserved to be a *Piaste*; an endearing title for a native monarch, which originated in the name of the family of the *Piastis*, who had reigned happily over the Polish people for the space of five centuries! The remembrance of their virtues existed in the minds of the honest Poles in this affectionate title, and their party were called the *Piastis*.

Montluc had been deprived of the assistance he had depended on from many able persons, whom the massacre of St. Bartholomew had frightened away from every French political connexion. He found that he had himself only to depend on. We are told that he was not provided with the usual means which are considered most efficient in elections, nor possessed the

interest nor the splendour of his powerful competitors: he was to derive all his resources from diplomatic finesse. The various ambassadors had fixed and distant residences, that they might not hold too close an intercourse with the Polish nobles. Of all things, he was desirous to obtain an easy access to these chiefs, that he might observe, and that they might listen. He who would seduce by his own ingenuity must come in contact with the object he would corrupt. Yet Montluc persisted in not approaching them without being sought after, which answered his purpose in the end. One favourite argument which our Talleyrand had set afloat, was to show that all the benefits which the different competitors had promised to the Poles were accompanied by other circumstances which could not fail to be ruinous to the country: while the offer of his master, whose interests were remote, could not be adverse to those of the Polish nation: so that much good might be expected from him, without any fear of accompanying evil. Montluc procured a clever Frenchman to be the bearer of his first despatch, in Latin, to the diet; which had hardly assembled, ere suspicions and jealousies were already breaking out. The emperor's ambassadors had offended the pride of the Polish nobles by travelling about the country without leave, and resorting to the infanta; and besides, in some intercepted letters the Polish nation was designated as *gens barbara et gens inepta*. "I do not think that the said letter was really written by the said ambassadors, who were statesmen too politic to employ such unguarded language," very ingeniously writes the secretary of Montluc.

However, it was a blow levelled at the imperial ambassadors; while the letter of the French bishop, composed "in a humble and modest style," began to melt their proud spirits, and two thousand copies of the French bishop's letter were eagerly spread.

"But this good fortune did not last more than four-and twenty hours," mournfully writes our honest secretary; "for suddenly the news of the fatal

day of St. Bartholomew arrived, and every Frenchman was detested."

Montluc, in this distress, published an apology for *les Matinées Parisiennes*, which he reduced to some excesses of the people, the result of a conspiracy plotted by the protestants; and he adroitly introduced as a personage his master Anjou, declaring that "he scorned to oppress a party whom he had so often conquered with sword in hand." This pamphlet, which still exists, must have cost the good bishop some invention; but in elections the lie of the moment serves a purpose; and although Montluc was in due time bitterly recriminated on, still the apology served to divide public opinion.

Montluc was a whole cabinet to himself: he dispersed another tract in the character of a Polish gentleman, in which the French interests were urged by such arguments, that the leading chiefs never met without disputing; and Montluc now found that he had succeeded in creating a French party. The Austrian then employed a real Polish gentleman to write for his party; but this was too genuine a production, for the writer wrote too much in earnest; and in politics we must not be in a passion.

The mutual jealousies of each party assisted the views of our negotiator; they would side with him against each other. The archduke and the czar opposed the Turk; the Muscovite could not endure that Sweden should be aggrandised by this new crown; and Denmark was still more uneasy. Montluc had discovered how every party had its vulnerable point, by which it could be managed. The cards had now got fairly shuffled, and he depended on his usual good play.

Our bishop got hold of a palatine to write for the French cause in the vernacular tongue; and appears to have held a more mysterious intercourse with another palatine, Albert Lasky. Mutual accusations were made in the open diet: the Poles accused some Lithuanian lords of having contracted

certain engagements with the czar; these in return accused the Poles, and particularly this Lasky, with being corrupted by the gold of France. Another circumstance afterwards arose; the Spanish ambassador had forty thousand *thalers* sent to him, but which never passed the frontiers, as this fresh supply arrived too late for the election. “I believe,” writes our secretary with great simplicity, “that this money was only designed to distribute among the trumpeters and the tabourines.” The usual expedient in contested elections was now evidently introduced; our secretary acknowledging that Montluc daily acquired new supporters, because he did not attempt to gain them over *merely by promises*—resting his whole cause on this argument, that the interest of the nation was concerned in the French election.

Still would ill fortune cross our crafty politician when everything was proceeding smoothly. The massacre was refreshed with more damning particulars; some letters were forged, and others were but too true; all parties, with rival intrepidity, were carrying on a complete scene of deception. A rumour spread that the French king disavowed his accredited agent, and apologised to the emperor for having yielded to the importunities of a political speculator, whom he was now resolved to recall. This somewhat paralysed the exertions of those palatines who had involved themselves in the intrigues of Montluc, who was now forced patiently to wait for the arrival of a courier with renewed testimonials of his diplomatic character from the French court. A great odium was cast on the French in the course of this negotiation by a distribution of prints, which exposed the most inventive cruelties practised by the Catholics on the Reformed; such as women cleaved in half in the act of attempting to snatch their children from their butchers; while Charles the Ninth and the Duke of Anjou were hideously represented in their persons, and as spectators of such horrid tragedies, with words written in labels, complaining that the executioners were not zealous enough in this holy work. These prints, accompanied by libels and by horrid narratives, inflamed the popular indignation, and more

particularly the women, who were affected to tears, as if these horrid scenes had been passing before their eyes.

Montluc replied to the libels as fast as they appeared, while he skilfully introduced the most elaborate panegyrics on the Duke of Anjou; and in return for the caricatures, he distributed two portraits of the king and the duke, to show the ladies, if not the diet, that neither of these princes had such ferocious and inhuman faces. Such are the small means by which the politician condescends to work his great designs; and the very means by which his enemies thought they should ruin his cause, Montluc adroitly turned to his own advantage. Anything of instant occurrence serves electioneering purposes, and Montluc eagerly seized this favourable occasion to exhaust his imagination on an ideal sovereign, and to hazard, with address, anecdotes, whose authenticity he could never have proved, till he perplexed even unwilling minds to be uncertain whether that intolerant and inhuman duke was not the most heroic and most merciful of princes. It is probable that the Frenchman abused even the license of the French *éloge*, for a noble Pole told Montluc that he was always amplifying his duke with such ideal greatness, and attributing to him such immaculate purity of sentiment, that it was inferred there was no man in Poland who could possibly equal him; and that his declaration, that the duke was not desirous of reigning over Poland to possess the wealth and grandeur of the kingdom, and that he was solely ambitious of the honour to be the head of such a great and virtuous nobility, had offended many lords, who did not believe that the duke sought the Polish crown *merely* to be the sovereign of a virtuous people.

These Polish statesmen appear, indeed, to have been more enlightened than the subtle politician perhaps calculated on; for when Montluc was over anxious to exculpate the Duke of Anjou from having been an actor in the Parisian massacre, a noble Pole observed, “That he need not lose his time at

framing any apologies; for if he could prove that it was the interest of the country that the duke ought to be elected their king, it was all that was required. His cruelty, were it true, would be no reason to prevent his election, for we have nothing to dread from it: once in our kingdom, he will have more reason to fear us than we him, should he ever attempt our lives, our property, or our liberty."

Another Polish lord, whose scruples were as pious as his patriotism was suspicious, however observed that, in his conferences with the French bishop, the bishop had never once mentioned God, whom all parties ought to implore to touch the hearts of the electors in the choice of God's "anointed." Montluc might have felt himself unexpectedly embarrassed at the religious scruples of this lord, but the politician was never at a fault. "Speaking to a man of letters, as his lordship was," replied the French bishop, "it was not for him to remind his lordship what he so well knew; but since he had touched on the subject, he would, however, say, that were a sick man desirous of having a physician, the friend who undertook to procure one would not do his duty should he say it was necessary to call in one whom God had chosen to restore his health; but another who should say that the most learned and skilful is he whom God has chosen, would be doing the best for the patient, and evince most judgment. By a parity of reason we must believe that God will not send an angel to point out the man whom he would have his anointed; sufficient for us that God has given us a knowledge of the requisites of a good king; and if the Polish gentlemen choose such a sovereign, it will be him whom God has chosen." This shrewd argument delighted the Polish lord, who repeated the story in different companies, to the honour of the bishop. "And in this manner," adds the secretary with great *naïveté*, "did the *sieur*, strengthened by good arguments, divulge his opinions, which were received by many, and run from hand to hand."

Montluc had his inferior manœuvres. He had to equipoise the opposite interests of the Catholics and the Evangelists, or the Reformed: it was mingling fire and water without suffering them to hiss, or to extinguish one another. When the imperial ambassadors gave *fêtes* to the higher nobility only, they consequently offended the lesser. The Frenchman gave no banquets, but his house was open to all at all times, who were equally welcome. "You will see that the *fêtes* of the imperialists will do them more harm than good," observed Montluc to his secretary.

Having gained over by every possible contrivance a number of the Polish nobles, and showered his courtesies on those of the inferior orders, at length the critical moment approached, and the finishing hand was to be put to the work. Poland, with the appearance of a popular government, was a singular aristocracy of a hundred thousand electors, consisting of the higher and the lower nobility, and the gentry; the people had no concern with the government. Yet still it was to be treated by the politician as a popular government, where those who possessed the greatest influence over such large assemblies were orators, and he who delivered himself with the most fluency and the most pertinent arguments would infallibly bend every heart to the point he wished. The French bishop depended greatly on the effect which his oration was to produce when the ambassadors were respectively to be heard before the assembled diet; the great and concluding act of so many tedious and difficult negotiations—"which had cost my master," writes the ingenuous secretary, "six months' daily and nightly labours; he had never been assisted or comforted by any but his poor servants, and in the course of these six months had written ten reams of paper, a thing which for forty years he had not used himself to."

Every ambassador was now to deliver an oration before the assembled electors, and thirty-two copies were to be printed, to present one to each palatine, who in his turn was to communicate it to his lords. But a fresh

difficulty occurred to the French negotiator; as he trusted greatly to his address influencing the multitude, and creating a popular opinion in his favour, he regretted to find that the imperial ambassador would deliver his speech in the Bohemian language, so that he would be understood by the greater part of the assembly; a considerable advantage over Montluc, who could only address them in Latin. The inventive genius of the French bishop resolved on two things which had never before been practised: first, to have his Latin translated into the vernacular idiom; and, secondly, to print an edition of fifteen hundred copies in both languages, and thus to obtain a vast advantage over the other ambassadors, with their thirty-two manuscript copies, of which each copy was used to be read to 1200 persons. The great difficulty was to get it secretly translated and printed. This fell to the management of Choisnin, the secretary. He set off to the castle of the palatine, Solikotski, who was deep in the French interest; Solikotski despatched the version in six days. Hastening with the precious MS. to Cracow, Choisnin flew to a trusty printer, with whom he was connected; the sheets were deposited every night at Choisnin's lodgings, and at the end of a fortnight the diligent secretary conducted the 1500 copies in secret triumph to Warsaw.

Yet this glorious labour was not ended; Montluc was in no haste to deliver his wonder-working oration, on which the fate of a crown seemed to depend. When his turn came to be heard, he suddenly fell sick; the fact was, that he wished to speak last, which would give him the advantage of replying to any objection raised by his rivals, and admit also of an attack on their weak points.

He contrived to obtain copies of their harangues, and discovered five points which struck at the French interest. Our poor bishop had now to sit up through the night to re-write five leaves of his printed oration, and cancel five which had been printed; and worse! he had to get them by heart,

and to have them translated and inserted, by employing twenty scribes day and night. “It is scarcely credible what my master went through about this time,” saith the historian of his “gestes.”

The council or diet was held in a vast plain. Twelve pavilions were raised to receive the Polish nobility and the ambassadors. One of a circular form was supported by a single mast, and was large enough to contain 6000 persons, without any one approaching the mast nearer than by twenty steps, leaving this space void to preserve silence; the different orders were placed around; the archbishop and the bishops, the palatines, the castellans, each according to their rank. During the six weeks of the sittings of the diet, 100,000 horses were in the environs, yet forage and every sort of provisions abounded. There were no disturbances, not a single quarrel occurred, although there wanted not in that meeting for enmities of long standing. It was strange, and even awful, to view such a mighty assembly preserving the greatest order, and every one seriously intent on this solemn occasion.

At length the elaborate oration was delivered: it lasted three hours, and Choisnin assures us not a single auditor felt weary. “A cry of joy broke out from the tent, and was re-echoed through the plain, when Montluc ceased: it was a public acclamation; and had the election been fixed for that moment, when all hearts were warm, surely the duke had been chosen without a dissenting voice.” Thus writes, in rapture, the ingenuous secretary; and in the spirit of the times communicates a delightful augury attending this speech, by which evidently was foreseen its happy termination. “Those who disdain all things will take this to be a mere invention of mine,” says honest Choisnin: “but true it is, that while the said *sieur* delivered his harangue, a lark was seen all the while upon the mast of the pavilion, singing and warbling, which was remarked by a great number of lords, because the lark is accustomed only to rest itself on the earth: the most impartial confessed this to be a good augury.[236] Also it was observed, that when the other

ambassadors were speaking, a hare, and at another time a hog, ran through the tent; and when the Swedish ambassador spoke, the great tent fell half-way down. This lark singing all the while did no little good to our cause; for many of the nobles and gentry noticed this curious particularity, because when a thing which does not commonly happen occurs in a public affair, such appearances give rise to hopes either of good or of evil."

The singing of this lark in favour of the Duke of Anjou is not so evident as the cunning trick of the other French agent, the political Bishop of Valence, who now reaped the full advantage of his 1500 copies over the thirty-two of his rivals. Every one had the French one in hand, or read it to his friends; while the others, in manuscript, were confined to a very narrow circle.

The period from the 10th of April to the 6th of May, when they proceeded to the election, proved to be an interval of infinite perplexities, troubles, and activity; it is probable that the secret history of this period of the negotiations was never written. The other ambassadors were for protracting the election, perceiving the French interest prevalent: but delay would not serve the purpose of Montluc, he not being so well provided with friends and means on the spot as the others were. The public opinion which he had succeeded in creating, by some unforeseen circumstance might change.

During this interval, the bishop had to put several agents of the other parties *hors de combat*. He got rid of a formidable adversary in the Cardinal Commendon, an agent of the pope's, whom he proved ought not to be present at the election, and the cardinal was ordered to take his departure. A bullying colonel was set upon the French negotiator, and went about from tent to tent with a list of the debts of the Duke of Anjou, to show that the nation could expect nothing profitable from a ruined spendthrift. The page of a Polish count flew to Montluc for protection, entreating permission to

accompany the bishop on his return to Paris. The servants of the count pursued the page; but this young gentleman had so insinuated himself into the favour of the bishop, that he was suffered to remain. The next day the page desired Montluc would grant him the full liberty of his religion, being an evangelical, that he might communicate this to his friends, and thus fix them to the French party. Montluc was too penetrating for this young political agent, whom he discovered to be a spy, and the pursuit of his fellows to have been a farce; he sent the page back to his master, the evangelical count, observing that such tricks were too gross to be played on one who had managed affairs in all the courts of Europe before he came into Poland.

Another alarm was raised by a letter from the grand vizier of Selim the Second, addressed to the diet, in which he requested that they would either choose a king from among themselves, or elect the brother of the King of France. Some zealous Frenchman at the Sublime Porte had officiously procured this recommendation from the enemy of Christianity; but an alliance with Mahometanism did no service to Montluc, either with the catholics or the evangelicals. The bishop was in despair, and thought that his handiwork of six months' toil and trouble was to be shook into pieces in an hour. Montluc, being shown the letter, instantly insisted that it was a forgery, designed to injure his master the duke. The letter was attended by some suspicious circumstances; and the French bishop, quick at expedients, snatched at an advantage which the politician knows how to lay hold of in the chapter of accidents. "The letter was not sealed with the golden seal, nor enclosed in a silken purse or cloth of gold; and farther, if they examined the translation," he said, "they would find that it was not written on Turkish paper." This was a piece of the *sieur's* good fortune, for the letter was not forged; but owing to the circumstance that the Boyar of Wallachia had taken out the letter to send a translation with it, which the vizier had omitted, it arrived without its usual accompaniments; and the courier, when inquired

after, was kept out of the way: so that, in a few days, nothing more was heard of the great vizier's letter. "Such was our fortunate escape," says the secretary, "from the friendly but fatal interference of the sultan, than which the *sieur* dreaded nothing so much."

Many secret agents of the different powers were spinning their dark intrigues; and often, when discovered or disconcerted, the creatures were again at their "dirty work." These agents were conveniently disavowed or acknowledged by their employers. The Abbé Cyre was an active agent of the emperor's, and though not publicly accredited, was still hovering about. In Lithuania he had contrived matters so well as to have gained over that important province for the archduke; and was passing through Prussia to hasten to communicate with the emperor, but "some honest men," *quelques bons personnages*, says the French secretary, and no doubt some good friends of his master, "took him by surprise, and laid him up safely in the castle of Marienburgh, where truly he was a little uncivilly used by the soldiers, who rifled his portmanteau and sent us his papers, when we discovered all his foul practices." The emperor, it seems, was angry at the arrest of his secret agent; but as no one had the power of releasing the Abbé Cyre at that moment, what with receiving remonstrances and furnishing replies, the time passed away, and a very troublesome adversary was in safe custody during the election. The dissensions between the catholics and the evangelicals were always on the point of breaking out; but Montluc succeeded in quieting these inveterate parties by terrifying their imaginations with sanguinary civil wars, and invasions of the Turks and the Tartars. He satisfied the catholics with the hope that time would put an end to heresy, and the evangelicals were glad to obtain a truce from persecution. The day before the election Montluc found himself so confident, that he despatched a courier to the French court, and expressed himself in the true style of a speculative politician, that *des douze tables du Damier nous en avons les Neufs assurés*.

There were preludes to the election; and the first was probably in acquiescence with a saturnalian humour prevalent in some countries, where the lower orders are only allowed to indulge their taste for the mockery of the great at stated times and on fixed occasions. A droll scene of a mock election, as well as combat, took place between the numerous Polish pages, who, saith the grave secretary, are still more mischievous than our own: these elected among themselves four competitors, made a senate to burlesque the diet, and went to loggerheads. Those who represented the archduke were well beaten, the Swede was hunted down, and for the *Piastis*, they seized on a cart belonging to a gentleman, laden with provisions, broke it to pieces, and burnt the axle-tree, which in that country is called a *piasti*, and cried out *The Piasti is burnt!* nor could the senators at the diet that day command any order or silence. The French party wore white handkerchiefs in their hats, and they were so numerous as to defeat the others.

The next day, however, opened a different scene; “the nobles prepared to deliberate, and each palatine in his quarters was with his companions on their knees, and many with tears in their eyes, chanting a hymn to the Holy Ghost; it must be confessed that this looked like a work of God,” says our secretary, who probably understood the manœuvring of the mock combat, or the mock prayers, much better than we may. Everything tells at an election, burlesque or solemnity!

The election took place, and the Duke of Anjou was proclaimed King of Poland—but the troubles of Montluc did not terminate. When they presented certain articles for his signature, the bishop discovered that these had undergone material alterations from the proposals submitted to him before the proclamation; these alterations referred to a disavowal of the Parisian massacre; the punishment of its authors, and toleration in religion. Montluc refused to sign, and cross-examined his Polish friends about the

original proposals; one party agreed that some things had been changed, but that they were too trivial to lose a crown for; others declared that the alterations were necessary to allay the fears, or secure the safety, of the people. Our Gallic diplomatist was outwitted, and after all his intrigues and cunning, he found that the crown of Poland was only to be delivered on conditional terms.

In this dilemma, with a crown depending on a stroke of his pen,—remonstrating, entreating, arguing, and still delaying, like "Ancient Pistol" swallowing his leek, he witnessed with alarm some preparations for a new election, and his rivals on the watch with their protests. Montluc, in despair, signed the conditions—"assured, however," says the secretary, who groans over this *finale*, "that when the elected monarch should arrive, the states would easily be induced to correct them, and place things in *statu quo*, as before the proclamation. I was not a witness, being then despatched to Paris with the joyful news, but I heard that the *sieur evesque* it was thought would have died in this agony, of being reduced to the hard necessity either to sign, or to lose the fruits of his labours. The conditions were afterwards for a long while disputed in France." De Thou informs us, in lib. lvii. of his history, that Montluc after signing these conditions wrote to his master, that he was not bound by them, because they did not concern Poland in general, and that they had compelled him to sign, what at the same time he had informed them his instructions did not authorise. Such was the true Jesuitic conduct of a grey-haired politician, who at length found that honest plain sense could embarrass and finally entrap the creature of the cabinet, the artificial genius of diplomatic finesse.

The secretary, however, views nothing but his master's glory in the issue of this most difficult negotiation; and the triumph of Anjou over the youthful archduke, whom the Poles might have moulded to their will, and over the King of Sweden, who claimed the crown by his queen's side, and

had offered to unite his part of Livonia with that which the Poles possessed. He labours hard to prove that the palatines and the castellans were not *pratiqués*, i.e., had their votes bought up by Montluc, as was reported; from their number and their opposite interests, he confesses that the *sieur evesque* slept little, while in Poland, and that he only gained over the hearts of men by that natural gift of God which acquired him the title of the *happy ambassador*. He rather seems to regret that France was not prodigal of her purchase-money, than to affirm that all palatines were alike scrupulous of their honour.

One more fact may close this political sketch; a lesson of the nature of court gratitude! The French court affected to receive Choisnin with favour, but their suppressed discontent was reserved for "the happy ambassador!" Affairs had changed; Charles the Ninth was dying, and Catharine de' Medici in despair for a son to whom she had sacrificed all; while Anjou, already immersed in the wantonness of youth and pleasure, considered his elevation to the throne of Poland as an exile which separated him from his depraved enjoyments! Montluc was rewarded only by incurring disgrace; Catharine de' Medici and the Duke of Anjou now looked coldly on him, and expressed their dislike of his successful mission. "The mother of kings," as Choisnin designates Catharine de' Medici, to whom he addresses his memoirs, with the hope of awakening her recollections of the zeal, the genius, and the success of his old master, had no longer any use for her favourite; and Montluc found, as the commentator of Choisnin expresses in a few words, an important truth in political morality, that "at court the interest of the moment is the measure of its affections and its hatreds."[237]

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236 Our honest secretary reminds me of a passage in Geoffrey of Monmouth, who says, "At this place an *eagle spoke* while the wall of the town was building; and indeed I should not have failed *transmitting the speech to posterity* had I thought it *true* as the rest of the history."

237 I have drawn up this article, for the curiosity of its subject and its details, from the "Discours au vray de tout ce qui s'est fait et passé pour l'entière Négociation de l'Election du Roi de Pologne, divisés en trois livres, par Jehan Choisnin du Chatelleraud, naguères Secrétaire de M. l'Evesque de Valence," 1574.

BUILDINGS IN THE METROPOLIS, AND RESIDENCE IN THE COUNTRY.

RECENTLY more than one of our learned judges from the bench have perhaps astonished their auditors by impressing them with an old-fashioned notion of residing more on their estates than the fashionable modes of life and the *esprit de société*, now overpowering all other *esprit*, will ever admit. These opinions excited my attention to a curious circumstance in the history of our manners—the great anxiety of our government, from the days of Elizabeth till much later than those of Charles the Second, to preserve the kingdom from the evils of an overgrown metropolis. The people themselves indeed participated in the same alarm at the growth of the city; while, however, they themselves were perpetuating the grievance which they complained of.

It is amusing to observe, that although the government was frequently employing even their most forcible acts to restrict the limits of the metropolis, the suburbs were gradually incorporating with the city, and Westminster at length united itself to London. Since that happy marriage, their fertile progenies have so blended together, that little Londons are no

longer distinguishable from the ancient parent; we have succeeded in spreading the capital into a county, and have verified the prediction of James the First, “that England will shortly be London, and London England.”

“I think it a great object,” said Justice Best, in delivering his sentiments in favour of the Game Laws, “that gentlemen should have a temptation *to reside in the country, amongst their neighbours and tenantry, whose interests must be materially advanced by such a circumstance*. The links of society are thereby better preserved, and *the mutual advantages and dependence of the higher and lower classes* on one another are better maintained. The baneful effects of our present system we have lately seen in a neighbouring country, and an ingenious French writer has lately shown the ill consequences of it on the continent.”[238]

These sentiments of a living luminary of the law afford some reason of policy for the dread which our government long entertained on account of the perpetual growth of the metropolis; the nation, like a hypochondriac, was ludicrously terrified that their head was too monstrous for their body, and that it drew all the moisture of life from the middle and the extremities. Proclamations warned and exhorted; but the very interference of a royal prohibition seemed to render the crowded city more charming. In vain the statute against new buildings was passed by Elizabeth; in vain during the reigns of James the First and both the Charleses we find proclamations continually issuing to forbid new erections.

James was apt to throw out his opinions in these frequent addresses to the people, who never attended to them: his majesty notices “those swarms of gentry, who through the instigation of their wives, or to new-model and fashion their daughters (who if they were unmarried, marred their reputations, and if married, lost them), did neglect their country hospitality, and cumber the city, a general nuisance to the kingdom.”—He addressed

the Star Chamber to regulate “the exorbitancy of the new buildings about the city, which were but a shelter for those who, when they had spent their estates in coaches, lacqueys, and fine clothes like Frenchmen, lived miserably in their houses like Italians; but the honour of the English nobility and gentry is to be hospitable among their tenants.” Once conversing on this subject, the monarch threw out that happy illustration, which has been more than once noticed, that “Gentlemen resident on their estates were like ships in port; their value and magnitude were felt and acknowledged; but when at a distance, as their size seemed insignificant, so their worth and importance were not duly estimated.”[239]

A manuscript writer of the times complains of the breaking up of old family establishments, all crowding to “upstart London.” “Every one strives to be a Diogenes in his house, and an emperor in the streets; not caring if they sleep in a tub, so they may be hurried in a coach: giving that allowance to horses and mares that formerly maintained houses full of men; pinching many a belly to paint a few backs, and burying all the treasures of the kingdom into a few citizens’ coffers; their woods into wardrobes, their leases into laces, and their goods and chattels into guarded coats and gaudy toys.” Such is the representation of an eloquent contemporary; and however contracted might have been his knowledge of the principles of political economy, and of that prosperity which a wealthy nation is said to derive from its consumption of articles of luxury, the moral effects have not altered, nor has the scene in reality greatly changed.

The government not only frequently forbade new buildings within ten miles of London, but sometimes ordered them to be pulled down—after they had been erected for several years. Every six or seven years proclamations were issued. In Charles the First’s reign, offenders were sharply prosecuted by a combined operation, not only against *houses*, but against *persons*.[240] Many of the nobility and gentry, in 1632, were informed

against for having resided in the city, contrary to the late proclamation. And the Attorney-General was then fully occupied in filing bills of indictment against them, as well as ladies, for staying in town. The following curious "information" in the Star Chamber will serve our purpose.

The Attorney-General informs his majesty that both Elizabeth and James, by several proclamations, had commanded that "persons of livelihood and means should reside in their counties, and not abide or sojourn in the city of London, so that counties remain unserved." These proclamations were renewed by Charles the First, who had observed "a greater number of nobility and gentry, and abler sort of people, with their families, had resorted to the cities of London and Westminster, residing there, contrary to the ancient usage of the English nation"—"by their abiding in their several counties where their means arise, they would not only have served his majesty according to their ranks, but by their *housekeeping in those parts the meaner sort of people formerly were guided, directed and relieved*." He accuses them of wasting their estates in the metropolis, which would employ and relieve the common people in their several counties. The loose and disorderly people that follow them, living in and about the cities, are so numerous, that they are not easily governed by the ordinary magistrates: mendicants increase in great number—the prices of all commodities are highly raised, &c. The king had formerly proclaimed that all ranks who were not connected with public offices, at the close of forty days' notice, should resort to their several counties, and with their families continue their residence there. And his majesty further warned them "Not to put themselves to unnecessary charge in providing themselves to return in winter to the said cities, as it was the king's firm resolution to withstand such great and growing evil." The information concludes with a most copious list of offenders, among whom are a great number of nobility, and ladies and gentlemen, who were accused of having lived in London for several months after the given warning of forty days. It appears that most of

them, to elude the grasp of the law, had contrived to make a show of quitting the metropolis, and, after a short absence, had again returned; “and thus the service of *your majesty* and *your people* in the several counties have been neglected and undone.”

Such is the substance of this curious information, which enables us at least to collect the ostensible motives of this singular prohibition. Proclamations had hitherto been considered little more than the news of the morning, and three days afterwards were as much read as the last week’s newspapers. They were now, however, resolved to stretch forth the strong arm of law, and to terrify by an example. The constables were commanded to bring in a list of the names of strangers, and the time they proposed to fix their residence in their parishes. A remarkable victim on this occasion was a Mr. Palmer, a Sussex gentleman, who was brought *ore tenus* into the Star Chamber for disobeying the proclamation for living in the country. Palmer was a squire of 1000*l.* per annum, then a considerable income. He appears to have been some rich bachelor; for in his defence he alleged that he had never been married, never was a housekeeper, and had no house fitting for a man of his birth to reside in, as his mansion in the country had been burnt down within two years. These reasons appeared to his judges to aggravate rather than extenuate his offence; and after a long reprimand for having deserted his tenants and neighbours, they heavily fined him in one thousand pounds.241

The condemnation of this Sussex gentleman struck a terror through a wide circle of sojourners in the metropolis. I find accounts, pathetic enough, of their “packing away on all sides for fear of the worst;” and gentlemen “grumbling that they should be confined to their houses:” and this was sometimes backed too by a second proclamation, respecting “their wives and families, and also widows,” which was “*durus sermo* to the women. It is nothing pleasing to all,” says the letter-writer, “but least of all to the

women.” “To encourage gentlemen to live more willingly in the country,” says another letter-writer, “all game-fowl, as pheasants, partridges, ducks, as also hares, are this day by proclamation forbidden to be dressed or eaten in any inn.” Here we find realized the argument of Mr. Justice Best in favour of the game-laws.

It is evident that this severe restriction must have produced great inconvenience to certain persons who found a residence in London necessary for their pursuits. This appears from the manuscript diary of an honest antiquary, Sir Symonds D’Ewes; he has preserved an opinion which, no doubt, was spreading fast, that such prosecutions of the Attorney-General were a violation of the liberty of the subject. “Most men wondered at Mr. Noy, the Attorney-General, being accounted a great lawyer, that so strictly *took away men’s liberties at one blow, confining them to reside at their own houses*, and not permitting them freedom to live where they pleased within the king’s dominions. I was myself a little startled upon the first coming out of the proclamation; but having first spoken with the Lord Coventry, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, at Islington, when I visited him; and afterwards with Sir William Jones, one of the King’s Justices of the Bench, about my condition and residence at the said town of Islington, and they both agreeing that I was not within the letter of the proclamation, nor the intention of it neither, I rested satisfied, and thought myself secure, laying in all my provisions for housekeeping for the year ensuing, and never imagined myself to be in danger, till this unexpected censure of Mr. Palmer passed in the Star Chamber; so, having advised with my friends, I resolved for a remove, being much troubled not only with my separation from Recordes, but with my wife, being great with child, fearing a winter journey might be dangerous to her.”[242] He left Islington and the records in the Tower to return to his country-seat, to the great disturbance of his studies.

It is, perhaps, difficult to assign the cause of this marked anxiety of the government for the severe restriction of the limits of the metropolis, and the prosecution of the nobility and gentry to compel a residence on their estates. Whatever were the motives, they were not peculiar to the existing sovereign, but remained transmitted from cabinet to cabinet, and were even renewed under Charles the Second. At a time when the plague often broke out, a close and growing metropolis might have been considered to be a great evil; a terror expressed by the manuscript-writer before quoted, complaining of "this deluge of building, that we shall be all poisoned with breathing in one another's faces." The police of the metropolis was long imbecile, notwithstanding their "strong watches and guards" set at times; and bodies of the idle and the refractory often assumed some mysterious title, and were with difficulty governed. We may conceive the state of the police, when "London apprentices," growing in number and insolence, frequently made attempts on Bridewell, or pulled down houses. One day the citizens, in proving some ordnance, terrified the whole court of James the First with a panic that there was "a rising in the city." It is possible that the government might have been induced to pursue this singular conduct, for I do not know that it can be paralleled, of pulling down new-built houses by some principle of political economy which remains to be explained, or ridiculed, by our modern adepts. It would hardly be supposed that the present subject may be enlivened by a poem, the elegance and freedom of which may even now be admired. It is a great literary curiosity, and its length may be excused for several remarkable points.

AN ODE,

BY SIR RICHARD FANSHAW,

Upon Occasion of his Majesty's Proclamation in the Year 1630, commanding the Gentry to reside upon their Estates in the Country.

Now war is all the world about,
And everywhere Erinnys reigns;
Or of the torch so late put out
The stench remains.
Holland for many years hath been
Of Christian tragedies the stage,
Yet seldom hath she played a scene
Of bloodier rage:
And France, that was not long compos'd,
With civil drums again resounds,
And ere the old are fully clos'd,
Receives new wounds.
The great Gustavus in the west
Plucks the imperial eagle's wing,
Than whom the earth did ne'er invest
A fiercer king.
Only the island which we sow,
A world without the world so far,
From present wounds, it cannot show
An ancient scar.
White peace, the beautifull'st of things,
Seems here her everlasting rest
To fix and spread the downy wings
Over the nest.
As when great Jove, usurping reign,
From the plagued world did her exile,

And tied her with a golden chain
To one blest isle,
Which in a sea of plenty swam,
And turtles sang on every bough,
A safe retreat to all that came,
As ours is now;
Yet we, as if some foe were here,
Leave the despised fields to clowns,
And come to save ourselves, as ’twere
In walled towns.
Hither we bring wives, babes, rich clothes,
And gems—till now my soveraign
The growing evil doth oppose:
Counting in vain
His care preserves us from annoy
Of enemies his realms to invade,
Unless he force us to enjoy
The peace he made,
To roll themselves in envied leisure;
He therefore sends the landed heirs,
Whilst he proclaims not his own pleasure
So much was theirs.
The sap and blood of the land, which fled
Into the root, and choked the heart,
Are bid their quick’ning power to spread
Through every part.
O ’twas an act, not for my muse
To celebrate, nor the dull age,
Until the country air infuse
A purer rage.

And if the fields as thankful prove
For benefits received, as seed,
They will to ’quite so great a love
A Virgil breed.
Nor let the gentry grudge to go
Into those places whence they grew,
But think them blest they may do so.
Who would pursue
The smoky glory of the town,
That may go till his native earth,
And by the shining fire sit down
Of his own hearth,
Free from the griping scrivener’s bands,
And the more biting mercer’s books;
Free from the bait of oiled hands,
And painted looks?
The country too even chops for rain;
You that exhale it by your power,
Let the fat drops fall down again
In a full shower.
And you bright beauties of the time,
That waste yourselves here in a blaze,
Fix to your orb and proper clime
Your wandering rays.
Let no dark corner of the land
Be unembellish’d with one gem,
And those which here too thick do stand
Sprinkle on them.
Believe me, ladies, you will find
In that sweet light more solid joys,

More true contentment to the mind
Than all town-toys.
Nor Cupid there less blood doth spill,
But heads his shafts with chaster love,
Not feather'd with a sparrow's quill,
But of a dove.
There you shall hear the nightingale,
The harmless syren of the wood,
How prettily she tells a tale
Of rape and blood.
The lyric lark, with all beside
Of Nature's feather'd quire, and all
The commonwealth of flowers in 'ts pride
Behold you shall.
The lily queen, the royal rose,
The gilly-flower, prince of the blood!
The courtier tulip, gay in clothes,
The regal bud;
The violet purple senator,
How they do mock the pomp of state,
And all that at the surly door
Of great ones wait.
Plant trees you may, and see them shoot
Up with your children, to be served
To your clean boards, and the fairest fruit
To be preserved;
And learn to use their several gums;
'Tis innocence in the sweet blood
Of cherry, apricocks, and plums,
To be imbrued.

238 *Morning Chronicle*, January 23, 1820.

239 A proclamation was issued in the first year of King James, “commanding gentlemen to depart the court and city,” because it hinders hospitality and endangers the people near their own residences, “who had from such houses much comfort and ease toward their living.” The King graciously says:—“He tooke no small contentment in the resort of gentlemen, and other our subjects coming to visit us, holding their affectionate desire to see our person to be a certaine testimonie of their inward love;” but he says he must not “give way to so great a mischiefe as the continuall resort may breed,” and that therefore all that have no special cause of attendance must at once go back until the time of his coronation, when they may “returne until the solemnity be passed;” but only for that time, for if the proclamation be slighted he shall “make them an example of contempt if we shall finde any making stay here contrary to this direction.” Such proclamations were from time to time issued, and though sometimes evaded, were frequently enforced by fines, so that living in London was a risk and danger to country gentlemen of fortune.

240 Rushworth, vol. ii. p. 288.

241 From a manuscript letter from Sir George Gresley to Sir Thomas Puckering, Nov. 1632.

242 Harl. MSS. 6. fo. 152.

ROYAL PROCLAMATIONS.

THE satires and the comedies of the age have been consulted by the historian of our manners, and the features of the times have been traced from those amusing records of folly. Daines Barrinton enlarged this field of domestic history in his very entertaining "Observations on the Statutes." Another source, which to me seems not to have been explored, is the proclamations which have frequently issued from our sovereigns, and were produced by the exigencies of the times.

These proclamations or royal edicts in our country were never armed with the force of laws—only as they enforce the execution of laws already established; and the proclamation of a British monarch may become even an illegal act, if it be in opposition to the law of the land. Once, indeed, it was enacted under the arbitrary government of Henry the Eighth, by the sanction of a pusillanimous parliament, that the force of acts of parliament should be given to the king's proclamations; and at a much later period the chancellor, Lord Ellesmere, was willing to have advanced the king's proclamations into laws, on the sophistical maxim that "all precedents had a time when they began;" but this chancellor argued ill, as he was told with spirit by Lord Coke, in the presence of James the First,[243] who probably did not think so ill of the chancellor's logic. Blackstone, to whom on this occasion I could not fail to turn, observes, on the statute under Henry the Eighth, that it would have introduced the most despotic tyranny, and must have proved fatal to the liberties of this kingdom, had it not been luckily repealed in the minority of his successor, whom he elsewhere calls an amiable prince—all our young princes, we discover, were amiable! Blackstone has not recorded the subsequent attempt of the lord chancellor under James the First, which tended to raise proclamations to the nature of an ukase of the autocrat of both the Russias. It seems that our national freedom, notwithstanding our ancient constitution, has had several narrow escapes.

Royal proclamations, however, in their own nature are innocent enough; for since the manner, time, and circumstances of putting laws in execution must frequently be left to the discretion of the executive magistrate, a proclamation that is not adverse to existing laws need not create any alarm; the only danger they incur is that they seem never to have been attended to, and rather testified the wishes of the government than the compliance of the subjects. They were not laws, and were therefore considered as sermons or pamphlets, or anything forgotten in a week's time!

These proclamations are frequently alluded to by the letter-writers of the times among the news of the day, but usually their royal virtue hardly kept them alive beyond the week. Some on important subjects are indeed noticed in our history. Many indications of the situation of affairs, the feelings of the people, and the domestic history of our nation, may be drawn from these singular records. I have never found them to exist in any collected form, and they have been probably only accidentally preserved.[244]

The proclamations of every sovereign would characterize his reign, and open to us some of the interior operations of the cabinet. The despotic will, yet vacillating conduct of Henry the Eighth, towards the close of his reign, may be traced in a proclamation to abolish the translations of the scriptures, and even the reading of Bibles by the people; commanding all printers of English books and pamphlets to affix their names to them, and forbidding the sale of any English books printed abroad.[245] When the people were not suffered to publish their opinions at home, all the opposition flew to foreign presses, and their writings were then smuggled into the country in which they ought to have been printed. Hence, many volumes printed in a foreign type at this period are found in our collections. The king shrunk in dismay from that spirit of reformation which had only been a party business with him, and making himself a pope, decided that nothing should be learnt but what he himself deigned to teach!

The antipathies and jealousies which our populace too long indulged, by their incivilities to all foreigners, are characterised by a proclamation issued by Mary, commanding her subjects to behave themselves peaceably towards the strangers coming with King Philip; that noblemen and gentlemen should warn their servants to refrain from "strife and contention, either by outward deeds, taunting words, unseemly countenance, by mimicking them, &c." The punishment not only "her grace's displeasure, but to be committed to prison without bail or mainprise."

The proclamations of Edward the Sixth curiously exhibit the unsettled state of the reformation, where the rites and ceremonies of Catholicism were still practised by the new religionists, while an opposite party, resolutely bent on an eternal separation from Rome, were avowing doctrines which afterwards consolidated themselves into puritanism, and while others were hatching up that demoralising fanaticism which subsequently shocked the nation with those monstrous sects, the indelible, disgrace of our country! In one proclamation the king denounces to the people "those who despise the sacrament by calling it *idol*, or such other vile name." Another is against such "as innovate any ceremony," and who are described as "certain private preachers and other laiemen, who rashly attempt of *their own and singular wit and mind*, not only to persuade the people from the old and accustomed rites and ceremonies, but also themselves bring in *new and strange orders according to their phantasies*. The which, as it is an evident token of pride and arrogancy, so it tendeth both to confusion and disorder." Another proclamation, to press "a godly conformity throughout his realm," where we learn the following curious fact, of "divers unlearned and indiscreet priests of a devilish mind and intent, teaching that a man may forsake his wife and marry another, his first wife yet living; likewise that the wife may do the same to the husband. Others, that a man may have *two wives or more* at once, for that these things are not prohibited by God's law, but by the Bishop of Rome's law; so

that by such evil and fantastical opinions some have not been afraid indeed to marry and keep *two wives*." Here, as in the bud, we may unfold those subsequent scenes of our story which spread out in the following century; the branching out of the non-conformists into their various sects; and the indecent haste of our reformed priesthood, who, in their zeal to cast off the yoke of Rome, desperately submitted to the liberty of having "two wives or more!" There is a proclamation to abstain from flesh on Fridays and Saturdays; exhorted on the principle, not only that "men should abstain on those days, and forbear their pleasures and the meats wherein they have more delight, to the intent to subdue their bodies to the soul and spirit, but also for *worldly policy*. To use *fish*, for the benefit of the commonwealth, and profit of many who be *fishers* and men using that trade, unto the which this realm, in every part environed with the seas, and so plentiful of fresh waters, be increased the nourishment of the land by saving flesh." It did not seem to occur to the king in council that the butchers might have had cause to petition against this monopoly of two days in the week granted to the fishmongers; and much less, that it was better to let the people eat flesh or fish as suited their conveniency. In respect to the religious rite itself, it was evidently not considered as an essential point of faith, since the king enforces it on the principle, "for the profit and commodity of his realm." Burnet has made a just observation on religious fasts[246]

A proclamation against excess of apparel, in the reign of Elizabeth, and renewed many years after, shows the luxury of dress, which was indeed excessive.[247] There is a curious one against the *iconoclasts, or image-breakers and picture-destroyers*, for which the antiquary will hold her in high reverence. Her majesty informs us, that "several persons, ignorant, malicious, or covetous, of late years, have spoiled and broken ancient monuments, erected only *to show a memory to posterity*, and not to nourish any kind of *superstition*." The queen laments that what is broken and spoiled would be now hard to recover, but advises her good people to repair

them; and commands them in future to desist from committing such injuries. A more extraordinary circumstance than the proclamation itself was the manifestation of her majesty's zeal, in subscribing her name with her own hand to every proclamation dispersed throughout England. These image-breakers first appeared in Elizabeth's reign; it was afterwards that they flourished in all the perfection of their handicraft, and have contrived that these monuments of art shall carry down to posterity the *memory of their* SHAME *and of their age*. These image-breakers, so famous in our history, had already appeared under Henry the Eighth, and continued their practical zeal, in spite of proclamations and remonstrances, till they had accomplished their work. In 1641 an order was published by the Commons, that they should "take away all scandalous pictures out of churches:" but more was intended than was expressed; and we are told that the people did not at first carry their barbarous practice against all Art to the lengths which they afterwards did, till they were instructed by *private information!* Dowsing's Journal has been published, and shows what the *order* meant! He was their giant destroyer! Such are the Machiavelian secrets of revolutionary governments; they give a *public* order in moderate *words*, but the *secret* one, for the *deeds*, is that of extermination! It was this sort of men who discharged their prisoners by giving a secret sign to lead them to their execution!

The proclamations of James the First, by their number, are said to have sunk their value with the people.[248] He was fond of giving them gentle advice; and it is said by Wilson that there was an intention to have this king's printed proclamations bound up in a volume, that better notice might be taken of the matters contained in them. There is more than one to warn the people against "speaking too freely of matters above their reach," prohibiting all "undutiful speeches." I suspect that many of these proclamations are the composition of the king's own hand; he was often his own secretary. There is an admirable one against private duels and

challenges. The curious one respecting Cowell's "Interpreter" is a sort of royal review of some of the arcana of state: I refer to the quotation.[249]

I will preserve a passage of a proclamation "against excess of lavish and licentious speech." James was a king of words!

"Although the commixture of nations, confluence of ambassadors, and the relation which the affairs of our kingdoms have had towards the business and interests of foreign states have caused, during our regiment (government) a greater openness and liberty of discourse, even concerning MATTERS OF STATE (which are *no themes or subjects fit for vulgar persons or common meetings*), than hath been in former times used or permitted; and although in our own nature and judgment we do well allow of *convenient freedom of speech*, esteeming any over-curious or restrained hands carried in that kind rather as a weakness, or else over-much severity of government than otherwise; yet for as much as it is come to our ears, by common report, that there is at this time a more licentious passage of *lavish discourse and bold censure in matters of state* than is fit to be suffered: We give this warning, &c., to take heed *how they intermeddle by pen or speech with causes of state and secrets of empire*, either at home or abroad, but contain themselves within that modest and reverent regard of matters above their reach and calling; nor to give any manner of applause to such discourse, without acquainting one of our privy council within the space of twenty-four hours."

It seems that "the bold speakers," as certain persons were then denominated, practised an old artifice of lauding his majesty, while they severely arraigned the counsels of the cabinet; on this James observes, "Neither let any man mistake us so much as to think that by giving fair and specious attributes to our person, they cover the scandals which they otherwise lay upon our government, but conceive that we make no other construction of them but as fine and artificial glosses, the better to give passage to the rest of their imputations and scandals."

This was a proclamation in the eighteenth year of his reign; he repeated it in the nineteenth, and he might have proceeded to "the crack of doom" with the same effect!

Rushworth, in his second volume of Historical Collections, has preserved a considerable number of the proclamations of Charles the First, of which many are remarkable; but latterly they mark the feverish state of his reign. One regulates access for cure of the king's evil—by which his majesty, it appears, "hath had good success therein;" but though ready and willing as any king or queen of this realm ever was to relieve the distresses of his good subjects, "his majesty commands to change the seasons for his 'sacred touch' from Easter and Whitsuntide to Easter and Michaelmas, as times more convenient for the temperature of the season," &c. Another against "departure out of the realm without license." One to erect an office "for the suppression of cursing and swearing," to receive the forfeitures; against "libellous and seditious pamphlets and discourses from Scotland," framed by factious spirits, and republished in London—this was in 1640; and Charles, at the crisis of that great insurrection in which he was to be at once the actor and the spectator, fondly imagined that the possessors of these "scandalous" pamphlets would bring them, as he proclaimed "to one of his majesty's justices of peace, to be by him sent to one of his principal secretaries of state!"

On the Restoration, Charles the Second had to court his people by his domestic regulations. He early issued a remarkable proclamation, which one would think reflected on his favourite companions, and which strongly marks the moral disorders of those depraved and wretched times. It is against "vicious, debauched, and profane persons!" who are thus described: —

"A sort of men of whom we have heard much, and are sufficiently ashamed; who spend their time in taverns, tippling-houses and debauches; giving no *other evidence of their affection to us but in drinking our health*, and inveighing against all others who are not of their own dissolute temper; and who, in truth, have *more discredited our cause*, by the license of their manners and lives, than they could ever advance it by their affection or courage. We hope all persons of honour, or in place and authority, will so far assist us in discountenancing such men, that their discretion and shame will

persuade them to reform what their conscience would not; and that the displeasure of good men towards them may supply what the laws have not, and, it may be, cannot well provide against; there being by the license and corruption of the times, and the depraved nature of man, many enormities, scandals, and impieties in practice and manners, which *laws cannot well describe, and consequently not enough provide against*, which may, by the example and severity of virtuous men, be easily discountenanced, and by degrees suppressed."

Surely the gravity and moral severity of Clarendon dictated this proclamation! which must have afforded some mirth to the gay, debauched circle, the loose cronies of royalty!

It is curious that, in 1660, Charles the Second issued a long proclamation for the strict observance of Lent, and alleges for it the same reason as we found in Edward the Sixth's proclamation, "for the good it produces in the employment of *fishermen*" No ordinaries, taverns, &c., to make any supper *on Friday nights, either in Lent or out of Lent*.

Charles the Second issued proclamations "to repress the excess of gilding of coaches and chariots," to restrain the waste of gold, which, as they supposed, by the excessive use of gilding, had grown scarce. Against "the exportation and the buying and selling of gold and silver at higher rates than in our mint," alluding to a statute made in the ninth year of Edward the Third, called the Statute of Money. Against building in and about London and Westminster, in 1661: "The inconveniences daily growing by increase of new buildings are, that the people increasing in such great numbers, are not well to be governed by the wonted officers: the prices of victuals are enhanced; the health of the subject inhabiting the cities much endangered, and many good towns and boroughs unpeopled, and in their trades much decayed—frequent fires occasioned by timber-buildings." It orders to build with brick and stone, "which would beautify, and make an uniformity in the buildings; and which are not only more durable and safe against fire, but by experience are found to be of *little more if not less charge than the building*

with timber." We must infer that, by the general use of timber, it had considerably risen in price, while brick and stone not then being generally used, became as cheap as wood![250]

The most remarkable proclamations of Charles the Second are those which concern the regulations of coffee-houses, and one for putting them down;[251] to restrain the spreading of false news, and licentious talking of state and government, the speakers and the hearers were made alike punishable. This was highly resented as an illegal act by the friends of civil freedom; who, however, succeeded in obtaining the freedom of the coffee-houses, under the promise of not sanctioning treasonable speeches. It was urged by the court lawyers, as the high Tory, Roger North, tells us, that the retailing coffee might be an innocent trade, when not used in the nature of a common assembly to discourse of matters of state news and great persons, as a means "to discontent the people." On the other side, Kennet asserted that the discontents existed before they met at the coffee-houses, and that the proclamation was only intended to suppress an evil which was not to be prevented. At this day we know which of those two historians exercised the truest judgment. It was not the coffee-houses which produced political feeling, but the reverse. Whenever government ascribes effects to a cause quite inadequate to produce them, they are only seeking means to hide the evil which they are too weak to suppress.

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243 The whole story is in 12 Co. 746. I owe this curious fact to the author of Eunomus, ii. 116.

244 A quarto volume was published by Barker, the king's printer, and is entitled "A Booke of Proclamations Published since the beginning of his Majestie's most happy Reign over England, until this present month of Feb. 1609." It contains 110 in all. The Society of Antiquaries of London possesses at the present time the largest and most perfect collection of royal

proclamations in existence, brought together since the above was written. They are on separate broadsheets, as issued.

245 In 1529 the king had issued a proclamation for resisting and withstanding of most dampnable heresyes sowen within the realme by the discyples of Luther and other "heretykes, perverters of Christes relygyon." In June, 1530, this was followed by the proclamation "for dampning (or condemning) of erronious bokes and heresies, and prohibitinge the havinge of holy scripture translated into the vulgar tonges of englishe, frenche, or dutche," he notes many bookes "printed beyonde the see" which he will not allow, "that is to say, the boke called the wicked Mammona, the boke named the Obedience of a Christen Man, the Supplication of Beggars, and the boke called the Revelation of Antichrist, the Summary of Scripture, and divers other bokes made in the Englishe tongue," in fact all books in the vernacular not issued by native printers. "And that having respect to the malignity of this present tyme, with the inclination of people to erronious opinions, the translation of the newe testament and the old into the vulgar tonge of englysshe, shulde rather be the occasion of contynuance or increase of errours amonge the said people, than any benefit or commodite toward the weale of their soules," and he determines therefore that the scriptures shall only be expounded to the people as heretofore, and that these books "be clerely extermynate and exiled out of this realme of Englande for ever."

246 History of the Reformation, vol. ii. p. 96, folio.

247 In June, 1574, the queen issued from her "Manour of Greenwich" this proclamation against "excesse of apparel, and the superfluitie of unnecessarye foreign wares thereto belonginge," which is declared to have "growen by sufferance to such an extremetie, that the manifest decay, not only of a great part of the wealth of the whole realme generally, is like to follow by bringing into the realme such superfluities of silkes, clothes of gold, sylver, and other most vaine devices, of so greate coste for the quantitie thereof; as of necessitie the moneyes and treasure of the realme is, and must be, yeerely conveyed out of the same." This is followed by three folio leaves minutely describing what may be worn on the dresses of every grade of persons; descending to such minutiæ as to note what classes are not to be allowed to put lace, or fringes, or borders of velvet upon their gowns and petticoats, under pain of fine or punishment,

because improper for their station, and above their means. The order appears to have been evaded, for it was followed by another in February, 1580, which recapitulates these prohibitions, and renders them more stringent.

248 The list of a very few of those issued at the early part of his reign may illustrate this. In 1604 was published a "Proclamation for the true winding or folding of wools," as well as one "For the due regulation of prices of victuals within the verge of Kent." In 1605, "Against certain calumnious surmises concerning the church government of Scotland." In 1608, "A proclamation against making starch." In 1612, "That none buy or sell any bullion of gold and silver at higher prices than is appointed to be paid for the same." Another against dying silk with *slip* or any corrupt stuff. In 1613, for "Prohibiting the untimely bringing in of wines," as well as for "Prohibiting the publishing of any reports or writings of duels," and also "The importation of felt hats or caps." In 1615, "Prohibiting the making of glass with timber or wood," because "of late yeeres the waste of wood and timber hath been exceeding great and intolerable, by the glassehouses and glasseworkes of late in divers parts erected," and which his majesty fears may have the effect of depriving England of timber to construct her navy!

249 I have noticed it in Calamities of Authors.

250 Lilly, the astrologer, in his memoirs, notes that Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (the famous collector of the Arundelian marbles now at Oxford), "brought over the new way of building with brick in the city, greatly to the safety of the city, and preservation of the wood of this nation."

251 This proclamation "for the suppression of coffee-houses" bears date December 20, 1675, and is stated to have been issued because "the multitude of coffee-houses, lately set up and kept within this kingdom, and the great resort of idle and dissipated persons to them, have produced very evil and dangerous effects," particularly in spreading of rumours, and inducing tradesmen to neglect their calling, tending to the danger of the commonweal, by the idle waste of time and money. It therefore orders all coffee-house keepers "that they, or any of them, do not presume from and after the tenth day of January next ensuing, to keep any publick coffee-house, or utter, or sell by retail, in his, her, or their house, or houses (to be spent or consumed within the same), any coffee, chocolate, sherbett, or tea; as they will answer it at their utmost peril."

TRUE SOURCES OF SECRET HISTORY.

THIS is a subject which has been hitherto but imperfectly comprehended even by some historians themselves; and has too often incurred the satire, and even the contempt, of those volatile spirits who play about the superficies of truth, wanting the industry to view it on more than one side, and those superficial readers who imagine that every tale is told when it is written.

Secret history is the supplement of history itself, and is its great corrector; and the combination of secret with public history has in itself a perfection, which each taken separately has not. The popular historian composes a plausible rather than an accurate tale; researches too fully detailed would injure the just proportions, or crowd the bold design, of the elegant narrative; and facts, presented as they occurred, would not adapt themselves to those theoretical writers of history who arrange events not in a natural, but in a systematic order. But in secret history we are more busied in observing what passes than in being told of it. We are transformed into the contemporaries of the writers, while we are standing on the “vantage ground” of their posterity; and thus what to them appeared ambiguous, to us has become unquestionable; what was secret to them has been confided to us. They mark the beginnings, and we the ends. From the fulness of their accounts we recover much which had been lost to us in the general views of history, and it is by this more intimate acquaintance with persons and

circumstances that we are enabled to correct the less distinct, and sometimes the fallacious appearances in the page of the popular historian. He who *only* views things in masses will have no distinct notion of any one particular; he may be a fanciful or a passionate historian, but he is not the historian who will enlighten while he charms.

But as secret history appears to deal in minute things, its connexion with great results is not usually suspected. The circumstantiality of its story, the changeable shadows of its characters, the redundance of its conversations, and the many careless superfluities which egotism or vanity may throw out, seem usually confounded with that small-talk familiarly termed *gossiping*. But the *gossiping* of a profound politician or a vivacious observer, in one of their letters, or in their memoirs, often, by a spontaneous stroke, reveals the individual, or by a simple incident unriddles a mysterious event. We may discover the value of these pictures of human nature, with which secret history abounds, by an observation which occurred between two statesmen in office. Lord Raby, our ambassador, apologised to Lord Bolingbroke, then secretary of state, for troubling him with the minuter circumstances which occurred in his conferences; in reply, the minister requests the ambassador to continue the same manner of writing, and alleges an excellent reason: "Those *minute circumstances* give very great light to the general scope and design of the *persons* negotiated with. And I own that nothing pleases me more in that valuable collection of the Cardinal D'Ossat's letters, than the *naïve* descriptions which he gives of the looks, gestures, and even tones of voice, of the persons he conferred with." I regret to have to record the opinions of another noble author, who recently has thrown out some degrading notions of secret history, and particularly of the historians. I would have silently passed by a vulgar writer, superficial, prejudiced, and uninformed, but as so many are yet deficient in correct notions of *secret history*, it is but justice that their representative should be heard before they are condemned.

His lordship says, that “Of late the appetite for *Remains* of all kinds has surprisingly increased. A story repeated by the Duchess of Portsmouth’s waiting-woman to Lord Rochester’s valet forms the subject of investigation for a philosophical historian; and you may hear of an assembly of scholars and authors discussing the validity of a piece of scandal invented by a maid of honour more than two centuries ago, and repeated to an obscure writer by Queen Elizabeth’s housekeeper. It is a matter of the greatest interest to see the *letters* of every busy trifler. Yet who does not laugh at such men?” This is the attack! but as if some half truths, like light through the cranny in a dark room, had just darted in a stream of atoms over this scoffer at secret history, he suddenly views his object with a very different appearance—for his lordship justly concludes that “It must be confessed, however, that knowledge of this kind is very entertaining; and here and there among the rubbish we find hints that may give the philosopher a clue to important facts, and afford to the moralist a better analysis of the human mind than a whole library of metaphysics!” The philosopher may well abhor all intercourse with wits! because the faculty of judgment is usually quiescent with them; and in their orgasm they furiously decry what in their sober senses they as eagerly laud! Let me inform his lordship, that “the waiting-woman and the valet” of eminent persons are sometimes no unimportant personages in history. By the *Mémoires de Mons. de la Porte, premier valet-de-chambre de Louis XIV.*, we learn what before “the valet” wrote had not been known—the shameful arts which Mazarin allowed to be practised, to give a bad education to the prince, and to manage him by depraving his tastes. *Madame de Motteville*, in her Memoirs, “the waiting lady” of our Henrietta, has preserved for our own English history some facts which have been found so essential to the narrative, that they are referred to by our historians. In *Gui Joly*, the humble dependant of Cardinal de Retz, we discover an unconscious but a useful commentator on the memoirs of his master; and the most affecting personal anecdotes of Charles the First have

been preserved by *Thomas Herbert*, his gentleman in waiting; *Cléry*, the valet of Louis the Sixteenth, with pathetic faithfulness, has shown us the man in the monarch whom he served!

Of SECRET HISTORY there are obviously two species; it is positive, or it is relative. It is *positive*, when the facts are first given to the world; a sort of knowledge which can only be drawn from our own personal experience, or from contemporary documents preserved in their manuscript state in public or in private collections; or it is *relative*, in proportion to the knowledge of those to whom it is communicated, and will be more or less valued according to the acquisitions of the reader; and this inferior species of secret history is drawn from rare and obscure books and other published authorities, often as scarce as manuscripts.

Some experience I have had in those literary researches, where cusiosity, ever wakeful and vigilant, discovers among contemporary manuscripts new facts; illustrations of old ones; and sometimes detects, not merely by conjecture, the concealed causes of many events; often opens a scene in which some well-known personage is exhibited in a new character; and thus penetrates beyond those generalising representations which satisfy the superficial, and often cover the page of history with delusion and fiction.

It is only since the latter institution of national libraries that these immense collections of manuscripts have been formed; with us they are an undescribable variety, usually classed under the vague title of “state-papers.”[252] The instructions of ambassadors, but more particularly their own dispatches; charters and chronicles brown with antiquity, which preserve a world which had been else lost for us, like the one before the deluge; series upon series of private correspondence, among which we discover the most confidential communications, designed by the writers to have been destroyed by the hand which received them; memoirs of individuals by themselves or by their friends, such as are now published by

the pomp of vanity, or the faithlessness of their possessors; and the miscellaneous collections formed by all kinds of persons, characteristic of all countries and of all eras, materials for the history of man!—records of the force or of the feebleness of the human understanding, and still the monuments of their passions.

The original collectors of these dispersed manuscripts were a race of ingenious men, silent benefactors of mankind, to whom justice has not yet been fully awarded; but in their fervour of accumulation, everything in a manuscript state bore its spell; acquisition was the sole point aimed at by our early collectors, and to this these searching spirits sacrificed their fortunes, their ease, and their days; but life would have been too short to have decided on the intrinsic value of the manuscripts flowing in a stream to the collectors; and suppression, even of the disjointed reveries of madmen, or the sensible madness of projectors, might have been indulging a capricious taste, or what has proved more injurious to historical pursuits, that party-feeling which has frequently annihilated the memorials of their adversaries.[253]

These manuscript collections now assume a formidable appearance. A toilsome march over these "Alps rising over Alps!" a voyage in "a sea without a shore!" has turned away most historians from their severer duties; those who have grasped at early celebrity have been satisfied to have given a new form to, rather than contributed to the new matter of history. The very sight of these masses of history has terrified some modern historians. When Père Daniel undertook a history of France, the learned Boivin, the king's librarian, opened for his inspection an immense treasure of charters, and another of royal autograph letters, and another of private correspondence; treasures reposing in fourteen hundred folios! The modern historian passed two hours impatiently looking over them, but frightened at another plunge into the gulf, this Curtius of history would not immolate himself for his

country! He wrote a civil letter to the librarian for his “supernumerary kindness,” but insinuated that he could write a very readable history without any further aid of such *paperasses* or “paper-rubbish.” Père Daniel, therefore, “quietly sat down to his history,” copying others—a compliment which was never returned by any one: but there was this striking novelty in his “readable history,” that according to the accurate computation of Count Boulainvilliers, Père Daniel’s history of France contains ten thousand blunders! The same circumstance has been told me by a living historian of the late Gilbert Stuart; who, on some manuscript volumes of letters being pointed out to him when composing his history of Scotland, confessed that “what was already printed was more than he was able to read!” and thus much for his theoretical history, written to run counter to another theoretical history, being Stuart versus Robertson! They equally depend on the simplicity of their readers, and the charms of style! Another historian, Anquetil, the author of *L’Esprit de la Ligue*, has described his embarrassment at an inspection of the contemporary manuscripts of that period. After thirteen years of researches to glean whatever secret history printed books afforded, the author, residing in the country, resolved to visit the royal library at Paris. Monsieur Melot receiving him with that kindness which is one of the official duties of the public librarian towards the studious, opened the cabinets in which were deposited the treasures of French history.—“This is what you require! come here at all times, and you shall be attended!” said the librarian to the young historian, who stood by with a sort of shudder, while he opened cabinet after cabinet. The intrepid investigator repeated his visits, looking over the mass as chance directed, attacking one side, and then flying to another. The historian, who had felt no weariness during thirteen years among printed books, discovered that he was now engaged in a task apparently always beginning, and never ending! The “Esprit de la Ligue” was however enriched by labours which at the moment appeared so barren.

The study of these *paperasses* is not perhaps so disgusting as the impatient Père Daniel imagined; there is a literary fascination in looking over the same papers which the great characters of history once held and wrote on; catching from themselves their secret sentiments; and often detecting so many of their unrecorded actions! By habit the toil becomes light; and with a keen inquisitive spirit even delightful! For what is more delightful to the curious than to make fresh discoveries every day? Addison has a true and pleasing observation on such pursuits. “Our employments are converted into amusements, so that even in those objects which were indifferent, or even displeasing to us, the mind not only gradually loses its aversion, but conceives a certain fondness and affection for them.” Addison illustrates this case by one of the greatest geniuses of the age, who by habit took incredible pleasure in searching into rolls and records, till he preferred them to Virgil and Cicero! The faculty of curiosity is as fervid, and even as refined in its search after truth, as that of taste in the objects of imagination; and the more it is indulged, the more exquisitely it is enjoyed!

The popular historians of England and of France have, in truth, made little use of manuscript researches. Life is very short for long histories; and those who rage with an avidity of fame or profit will gladly taste the fruit which they cannot mature. Researches too remotely sought after, or too slowly acquired, or too fully detailed, would be so many obstructions in the smooth texture of a narrative. Our theoretical historians write from some particular and preconceived result; unlike Livy, and De Thou, and Machiavel, who describe events in their natural order, these cluster them together by the fanciful threads of some political or moral theory, by which facts are distorted, displaced, and sometimes altogether omitted! One single original document has sometimes shaken into dust their Palladian edifice of history. At the moment Hume was sending some sheets of his history to press, Murdin’s State Papers appeared. And we are highly amused and instructed by a letter of our historian to his rival, Robertson, who probably

found himself often in the same forlorn situation. Our historian discovered in that collection what compelled him to retract his preconceived system—he hurries to stop the press, and paints his confusion and his anxiety with all the ingenuous simplicity of his nature. “We are all in the wrong!” he exclaims. Of Hume I have heard that certain manuscripts at the State Paper Office had been prepared for his inspection during a fortnight, but he never could muster courage to pay his promised visit. Satisfied with the common accounts, and the most obvious sources of history, when librarian at the Advocates’ Library, where yet may be examined the books he used, marked by his hand, he spread the volumes about the sofa, from which he rarely rose to pursue obscure inquiries, or delay by fresh difficulties the page which every day was growing under his charming pen. A striking proof of his careless happiness I discovered in his never referring to the perfect edition of “Whitelocke’s Memorials” of 1732, but to the old truncated and faithless one of 1682.

Dr. Birch was a writer with no genius for composition, but one to whom British history stands more indebted than to any superior author; his incredible love of labour, in transcribing with his own hand a large library of manuscripts from originals dispersed in public and in private repositories, has enriched the British Museum by thousands of the most authentic documents of genuine secret history. He once projected a collection of original historical letters, for which he had prepared a preface, where I find the following passage:—“It is a more important service to the public to contribute *something not before known* to the general fund of history, than to give new form and colour to what we are already possessed of, by superadding refinement and ornament, which too often tend *to disguise the real state of the facts*; a fault not to be atoned for by the pomp of *style*, or even the fine *eloquence* of the historian.” This was an oblique stroke aimed at Robertson, to whom Birch had generously opened the stores of history, for the Scotch historian had needed all his charity; but

Robertson's attractive inventions and highly-finished composition seduce the public taste; and we may forgive the latent spark of envy in the honest feelings of the man, who was profoundly skilled in delving in the native beds of ore, but not in fashioning it; and whose own neglected historical works, constructed on the true principles of secret history, we may often turn over to correct the erroneous, the prejudiced, and the artful accounts of those who have covered their faults by "the pomp of style, and the eloquence of the historian."

The large manuscript collections of original documents, from whence may be drawn what I have called *positive secret history*, are, as I observed, comparatively of modern existence. Formerly they were widely dispersed in private hands; and the nature of such sources of historic discovery but rarely occurred to our writers. Even had they sought them, their access must have been partial and accidental. Lord Hardwicke has observed, that there are still many untouched manuscript collections within these kingdoms, which, through the ignorance or inattention of their owners, are condemned to dust and obscurity; but how valuable and essential they may be to the interests of authentic history and of sacred truth, cannot be more strikingly demonstrated than in the recent publications of the Marlborough and the Shrewsbury Papers by Archdeacon Coxe.[254] The editor was fully authorised to observe, "It is singular that those transactions should either have been passed over in silence, or imperfectly represented by most of our national historians." Our modern history would have been a mere political romance, without the astonishing picture of William and his ministers, exhibited in those unquestionable documents. Burnet was among the first of our modern historians who showed the world the preciousness of such materials, in his "History of the Reformation," which he largely drew from the Cottonian collection. Our early historians only repeated a tale ten times told. Milton, who wanted not for literary diligence, had no fresh stores to open for his "History of England;" while Hume despatches, comparatively in a few

pages, a subject which has afforded to the fervent diligence of my learned friend Sharon Turner volumes precious to the antiquary, the lawyer, and the philosopher.

To illustrate my idea of the usefulness and of the absolute necessity of SECRET HISTORY, I fix first on *a public event*, and secondly on *a public character*; both remarkable in our own modern history, and both serving to expose the fallacious appearances of popular history by authorities indisputably genuine. The *event* is the Restoration of Charles the Second; and the *character* is that of Mary, the queen of William the Third.

In history the Restoration of Charles appears in all its splendour—the king is joyfully received at Dover, and the shore is covered by his subjects on their knees—crowds of the great hurry to Canterbury—the army is drawn up, in number and with a splendour that had never been equalled—his enthusiastic reception is on his birthday, for that was the lucky day fixed on for his entrance into the metropolis—in a word, all that is told in history describes a monarch the most powerful and the most happy. One of the tracts of the day, entitled "England's Triumph," in the mean quaintness of the style of the times, tells us that "The soldiery, who had hitherto made *clubs* trump, resolve now to enthrone the *king of hearts*." Turn to the faithful memorialist, who so well knew the secrets of the king's heart, and who was himself an actor behind the curtain; turn to Clarendon, in his own Life, and we shall find that the power of the king was then as dubious as when he was an exile; and his feelings were so much racked, that he had nearly resolved on a last flight.

Clarendon, in noticing the temper and spirit of that time, observes, "Whoever reflects upon all this composition of contradictory wishes and expectations, must confess that the king was not yet the master of the kingdom, nor his *authority* and *security* such as *the general noise and acclamation, the bells and the bonfires, proclaimed it to be*."—"The first

mortification the king met with as soon as he arrived at Canterbury, within three hours after he landed at Dover." Clarendon then relates how many the king found there, who, while they waited with joy to kiss his hand, also came with importunate solicitations for themselves; forced him to give them present audience, in which they reckoned up the insupportable losses undergone by themselves or their fathers; demanding some grant, or promise of such or such offices; some even for more! "pressing for two or three with such confidence and importunity, and with such tedious discourses, that the king was extremely nauseated with their suits, though his modesty knew not how to break from them; that he no sooner got into his chamber, which for some hours he was not able to do, than *he lamented the condition to which he found he must be subject*; and did, in truth, from that minute, contract such a prejudice against some of those persons." But a greater mortification was to follow, and one which had nearly thrown the king into despair.

General Monk had from the beginning to this instant acted very mysteriously, never corresponding with nor answering a letter of the king's, so that his majesty was frequently doubtful whether the general designed to act for himself or for the king: an ambiguous conduct which I attribute to the power his wife had over him, who was in the opposite interest. The general, in his rough way, presented him a large paper, with about seventy names for his privy council, of which not more than two were acceptable. "The king," says Clarendon, "was *in more than ordinary confusion*, for he knew not well what to think of the general, in whose absolute power he was —so that at this moment his majesty was almost alarmed at the demand and appearance of things." The general afterwards undid this unfavourable appearance, by acknowledging that the list was drawn up by his wife, who had made him promise to present it; but he permitted his majesty to act as he thought proper. At that moment General Monk was more king than Charles.

We have not yet concluded. When Charles met the army at Blackheath, 50,000 strong, “he knew well the ill constitution of the army, the distemper and murmuring that was in it, and how many diseases and convulsions their infant loyalty was subject to; that *how united soever their inclinations and acclamations seemed to be at Blackheath*, their *affections* were not the *same* —and *the very countenances* there of many *officers*, as well as *soldiers*, did sufficiently manifest that they were drawn thither to a service they were not delighted in. The *old soldiers* had little regard for their *new officers*; and it quickly appeared, by the select and affected mixtures of sullen and melancholic parties of officers and soldiers.”—And then the chancellor of human nature adds, “And in this *melancholic and perplexed condition* the king and all his hopes stood, *when he appeared most gay and exalted, and wore a pleasantness in his face* that became him, and looked like as full an assurance of his security as was possible to put on.” It is imagined that Louis the Eighteenth would be the ablest commentator on this piece of secret history, and add another *twin* to Pierre de Saint Julien’s “Gemelles ou Pareiles,” an old French treatise of histories which resemble one another: a volume so scarce, that I have never met with it.

Burnet informs us, that when Queen Mary held the administration of government during the absence of William, it was imagined by some, that as “every woman of sense loved to be meddling, they concluded that she had but a small portion of it, because she lived so abstracted from all affairs.” He praises her exemplary behaviour; “regular in her devotions, much in her closet, read a great deal, was often busy at work, and seemed to employ her time and thoughts in anything rather than matters of state. Her conversation was lively and obliging; everything in her was easy and natural. The king told the Earl of Shrewsbury, that though he could not hit on the right way of pleasing England, he was confident she would, and that we should all be very happy under her.” Such is the miniature of the queen which Burnet offers; we see nothing but her tranquillity, her simplicity, and

her carelessness, amidst the important transactions passing under her eye; but I lift the curtain from a larger picture. The distracted state amidst which the queen lived, the vexations, the secret sorrows, the agonies and the despair of Mary in the absence of William, nowhere appear in history! and as we see, escaped the ken of the Scotch bishop! They were reserved for the curiosity and instruction of posterity; and were found by Dalrymple, in the letters of Mary to her husband, in King William's cabinet. It will be well to place under the eye of the reader the suppressed cries of this afflicted queen at the time when "everything in her was so easy and natural, employing her time and thoughts in anything rather than matters of state—often busy at work!"

I shall not dwell on the pangs of the queen for the fate of William—or her deadly suspicions that many were unfaithful about her; a battle lost might have been fatal; a conspiracy might have undone what even a victory had obtained; the continual terrors she endured were such, that we might be at a loss to determine who suffered most, those who had been expelled from, or those who had ascended the throne.

So far was the queen from not "employing her thoughts" on "matters of state," that every letter, usually written towards evening, chronicles the conflicts of the day; she records not only events, but even dialogues and personal characteristics; hints her suspicions, and multiplies her fears; her attention was incessant—"I never write but what I think others do not;" and her terrors were as ceaseless,—"I pray God send you back quickly, for I see all breaking out into flames." The queen's difficulties were not eased by a single confidential intercourse. On one occasion she observes, "As I do not know what I ought to speak, and when not, I am as silent as can be." "I ever fear not doing well, and trust to what nobody says but you. It seems to me that every one is afraid of themselves.—I am very uneasy in one thing, which is want of somebody to speak my mind freely to, for it's a great

constraint to think and be silent; and there is so much matter, that I am one of Solomon's fools, who am ready to burst. I must tell you again how Lord Monmouth endeavours to frighten me, and indeed things have but a melancholy prospect." She had indeed reasons to fear Lord Monmouth, who, it appears, divulged all the secrets of the royal councils to Major Wildman, who was one of our old republicans; and, to spread alarm in the privy council, conveyed in lemon-juice all their secrets to France, often on the very day they had passed in council! They discovered the fact, and every one suspected the other as the traitor! Lord Lincoln even once assured her, that "the Lord President and all in general, who are in trust, were rogues." Her council was composed of factions, and the queen's suspicions were rather general than particular: for she observes on them, "Till now I thought you had given me wrong characters of men; but now I see they answer my expectation of being as little of a mind as of a body."—For a final extract, take this full picture of royal misery—"I must see company on my set days; I must play twice a week; nay, I must laugh and talk, though never so much against my will: I believe I dissemble very ill to those who know me; at least, it is a great constraint to myself, yet I must endure it. All my motions are so watched, and all I do so observed, that if I eat less, or speak less, or look more grave, all is lost in the opinion of the world; so that I have this misery added to that of your absence, that I must grin when my heart is ready to break, and talk when my heart is so oppressed that I can scarce breathe. I go to Kensington as often as I can for air; but then I never can be quite alone, neither can I complain—that would be some ease; but I have nobody whose humour and circumstances agree with mine enough to speak my mind freely to. Besides, I must hear of business, which being a thing I am so new in, and so unfit for, does but break my brains the more, and not ease my heart."

Thus different from the representation of Burnet was the actual state of Queen Mary: and I suspect that our warm and vehement bishop had but

little personal knowledge of her majesty, notwithstanding the elaborate character of the queen which he has given in her funeral eulogium. He must have known that she did not always sympathise with his party-feelings: for the queen writes, “The Bishop of Salisbury has made a long thundering sermon this morning, which he has been with me to desire to print; which I could not refuse, though I should not have ordered it, for reasons which I told him.” Burnet (whom I am very far from calling what an inveterate Tory, Edward Earl of Oxford, does in one of his manuscript notes, “that lying Scot”) unquestionably has told many truths in his garrulous page; but the cause in which he stood so deeply engaged, coupled to his warm sanguine temper, may have sometimes dimmed his sagacity, so as to have caused him to have mistaken, as in the present case, a mask for a face, particularly at a time when almost every individual appears to have worn one!

Both these cases of Charles the Second and Queen Mary show the absolute necessity of researches into secret history, to correct the appearances and the fallacies which so often deceive us in public history.

“The appetite for Remains,” as the noble author whom I have already alluded to calls it, may then be a very wholesome one, if it provide the only materials by which our popular histories can be corrected, and since it often infuses a freshness into a story which, after having been copied from book to book, inspires another to tell it for the tenth time! Thus are the *sources of* secret history unsuspected by the idler and the superficial, among those masses of untouched manuscripts—that subterraneous history!—which indeed may terrify the indolent, bewilder the inexperienced, and confound the injudicious, if they have not acquired the knowledge which not only decides on facts and opinions, but on the authorities which have furnished them. Popular historians have written to their readers; each with different views, but all alike form the open documents of history; like feed

advocates, they declaim, or like special pleaders, they keep only on one side of their case: they are seldom zealous to push on their cross-examination; for they come to gain their cause, and not to hazard it!

Time will make the present age as obsolete as the last, for our sons will cast a new light over the ambiguous scenes which distract their fathers; they will know how some things happened for which we cannot account; they will bear witness to how many characters we have mistaken; they will be told many of those secrets which our contemporaries hide from us; they will pause at the ends of our beginnings; they will read the perfect story of man, which can never be told while it is proceeding. All this is the possession of posterity, because they will judge without our passions; and all this we ourselves have been enabled to possess by the secret history *of the last two ages*![255]

252 The large mass of important documents in the National State-paper Office has recently been made available to the use of the historic student, with the best results, and cannot fail to have important influence on the future historic literature of the country.

253 See what I have said of "Suppressors and Dilapidators of Manuscripts," vol. ii. p. 443.

254 The "Conway Papers" remain unpublished. From what I have already been favoured with the sight of, I may venture to predict that our history may receive from them some important accession. The reader may find a lively summary of the contents of these Papers in Horace Walpole's account of his visit to Ragley, in his letter to George Montague, 20th August, 1758. The Right Hon. John Wilson Croker, with whom the Marquis of Hertford had placed the disposal of the Conway Papers, is also in possession of the Throckmorton Papers, of which the reader may likewise observe a particular notice in Sir Henry Wotton's will, in Izaak Walton's Lives. Unsunned treasures lie in the State-paper office.

255 Since this article has been sent to press I rise from reading one in the *Edinburgh Review* on Lord Orford's and Lord Waldegrave's Memoirs. This is one of the very rare articles which could only come from the hand of a master long exercised in the studies he criticises. The critic, or rather the historian, observes, that "of a period remarkable for the establishment of our present system of government, no authentic materials had yet appeared. Events of public notoriety are to be found, though often inaccurately told, in our common histories; but the secret springs of action, the private views and motives of individuals, &c., are as little known to us as if the events to which they relate had taken place in China or Japan." The clear, connected, dispassionate, and circumstantial narrative, with which he has enriched the stores of English history, is drawn from *the sources of* SECRET HISTORY; from *published memoirs* and *contemporary correspondence*.

LITERARY RESIDENCES.

MEN of genius have usually been condemned to compose their finest works, which are usually their earliest ones, under the roof of a garret; and few literary characters have lived, like Pliny and Voltaire, in a villa or *château* of their own. It has not therefore often happened that a man of genius could raise local emotions by his own intellectual suggestions. Ariosto, who built a palace in his verse, lodged himself in a small house, and found that stanzas and stones were not put together at the same rate: old Montaigne has left a description of his library; "over the entrance of my house, where I view my court-yards, and garden, and at once survey all the operations of my family!"

There is, however, a feeling among literary men of building up their own elegant fancies, and giving a permanency to their own tastes; we dwell on their favourite scenes as a sort of portraits, and we eagerly collect those few prints, which are their only vestiges. A collection might be formed of such literary residences chosen for their amenity and their retirement, and adorned by the objects of their studies; from that of the younger Pliny, who called his villa of literary leisure by the endearing term of *villula*, to that of Cassiodorus, the prime minister of Theodoric, who has left so magnificent a description of his literary retreat, where all the elegancies of life were at hand; where the gardeners and the agriculturists laboured on scientific principles; and where, amidst gardens and parks, stood his extensive library, with scribes to multiply his manuscripts:—from Tycho Brahe's, who built a magnificent astronomical house on an island, which he named after the sole objects of his musings Uranienburgh, or the Castle of the Heavens;—to that of Evelyn, who first began to adorn Wotton, by building "a little study," till

many years after he dedicated the ancient house to contemplation, among the "delicious streams and venerable woods, the gardens, the fountains, and the groves, most tempting for a great person and a wanton purse; and indeed gave one of the first examples to that elegancy since so much in vogue."—From Pope, whose little garden seemed to multiply its scenes by a glorious union of nobility and literary men conversing in groups;—down to lonely Shenstone, whose "rural elegance," as he entitles one of his odes, compelled him to mourn over his hard fate, when

> ————EXPENSE
> Had lavish'd thousand ornaments, and taught
> CONVENIENCE to perplex him, ART to pall,
> POMP to deject, and BEAUTY to displease.

We have all by heart the true and delightful reflection of Johnson on local associations, when the scene we tread suggests to us the men or the deeds, which have left their celebrity to the spot. We are in the presence of their fame, and feel its influence!

A literary friend, whom a hint of mine had induced to visit the old tower in the garden of Buffon, where the sage retired every morning to compose, passed so long a time in that lonely apartment as to have raised some solicitude among the honest folks of Montbard, who having seen the "Englishman" enter, but not return, during a heavy thunder-storm which had occurred in the interval, informed the good mayor, who came in due form, to notify the ambiguous state of the stranger. My friend is, as is well known, a genius of that cast who could pass two hours in the *Tower of Buffon*, without being aware that he had been all that time occupied by suggestions of ideas and reveries, which in some minds such a locality may excite. He was also busied with his pencil; for he has favoured me with two drawings of the interior and the exterior of this *old tower in the garden*: the

nakedness within can only be compared to the solitude without. Such was the studying-room of Buffon, where his eye, resting on no object, never interrupted the unity of his meditations on nature.

In return for my friend's kindness, it has cost me, I think, two hours in attempting to translate the beautiful picture of this literary retreat, which Vicq d'Azyr has finished with all the warmth of a votary. "At Montbard, in the midst of an ornamented garden, is seen an antique tower; it was there that Buffon wrote the History of Nature, and from that spot his fame spread through the universe. There he came at sunrise, and no one, however importunate, was suffered to trouble him. The calm of the morning hour, the first warbling of the birds, the varied aspect of the country, all at that moment which touched the senses, recalled him to his model. Free, independent, he wandered in his walks; there was he seen with quickened or with slow steps, or standing wrapped in thought, sometimes with his eyes fixed on the heavens in the moment of inspiration, as if satisfied with the thought that so profoundly occupied his soul; sometimes, collected within himself, he sought what would not always be found; or at the moments of producing, he wrote, he effaced, and rewrote, to efface once more; thus he harmonised, in silence, all the parts of his composition, which he frequently repeated to himself, till, satisfied with his corrections, he seemed to repay himself for the pains of his beautiful prose, by the pleasure he found in declaiming it aloud. Thus he engraved it in his memory, and would recite it to his friends, or induce some to read it to him. At those moments he was himself a severe judge, and would again re-compose it, desirous of attaining to that perfection which is denied to the impatient writer."

A curious circumstance, connected with local associations, occurred to that extraordinary oriental student, Fourmont. Originally he belonged to a religious community, and never failed in performing his offices: but he was expelled by the superior for an irregularity of conduct not likely to have

become contagious through the brotherhood—he frequently prolonged his studies far into the night, and it was possible that the house might be burnt by such superfluity of learning. Fourmont retreated to the college of Montaign, where he occupied the very chambers which had formerly been those of Erasmus; a circumstance which contributed to excite his emulation, and to hasten his studies. He who smiles at the force of such emotions, only proves that he has not experienced what are real and substantial as the scene itself—for those who are concerned in them. Pope, who had far more enthusiasm in his poetical disposition than is generally understood, was extremely susceptible of the literary associations with localities: one of the volumes of his Homer was begun and finished in an old tower over the chapel of Stanton Harcourt;256 and he has perpetuated the event, if not consecrated the place, by scratching with a diamond on a pane of stained glass this inscription:—

> In the year 1718,
>
> ALEXANDER POPE
>
> Finished here the f....
>
> fifth volume of HOMER.257

It was the same feeling which induced him one day, when taking his usual walk with Harte in the Haymarket, to desire Harte to enter a little shop, where going up three pair of stairs into a small room, Pope said, “In this garret Addison wrote his *Campaign*!” Nothing less than a strong feeling impelled the poet to ascend this garret—it was a consecrated spot to his eye; and certainly a curious instance of the power of genius contrasted with its miserable locality! Addison, whose mind had fought through “a campaign!” in a garret, could he have called about him “the pleasures of imagination,” had probably planned a house of literary repose, where all parts would have been in harmony with his mind.

Such residences of men of genius have been enjoyed by some; and the vivid descriptions which they have left us convey something of the delightfulness which charmed their studious repose.

The Italian, Paul Jovius, has composed more than three hundred concise eulogies of statesmen, warriors, and literary men, of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries; but the occasion which induced him to compose them is perhaps more interesting than the compositions.

Jovius had a villa, situated on a peninsula, bordered by the Lake of Como. It was built on the ruins of the villa of Pliny, and in his time the foundations were still visible. When the surrounding lake was calm, the sculptured marbles, the trunks of columns, and the fragments of those pyramids which had once adorned the residence of the friend of Trajan, were still viewed in its lucid bosom. Jovius was the enthusiast of literature, and the leisure which it loves. He was an historian, with the imagination of a poet, and though a Christian prelate, almost a worshipper of the sweet fictions of pagan mythology; and when his pen was kept pure from satire or adulation, to which it was too much accustomed, it became a pencil. He paints with rapture his gardens bathed by the waters of the lake; the shade and freshness of his woods; his green slopes; his sparkling fountains, the deep silence and calm of his solitude! A statue was raised in his gardens to Nature! In his hall stood a fine statue of Apollo, and the Muses around, with their attributes. His library was guarded by a Mercury, and there was an apartment adorned with Doric columns, and with pictures of the most pleasing subjects dedicated to the Graces! Such was the interior! Without, the transparent lake here spread its broad mirror, and there was seen luminously winding by banks covered with olives and laurels; in the distance, towns, promontories, hills rising in an amphitheatre, blushing with vines, and the first elevation of the Alps, covered with woods and pasture, and sprinkled with herds and flocks.

It was in a central spot of this enchanting habitation that a cabinet or gallery was erected, where Jovius had collected with prodigal cost the portraits of celebrated men; and it was to explain and to describe the characteristics of these illustrious names that he had composed his eulogies. This collection became so remarkable, that the great men his contemporaries presented our literary collector with their own portraits, among whom the renowned Fernandez Cortes sent Jovius his before he died, and probably others who were less entitled to enlarge the collection; but it is equally probable that our caustic Jovius would throw them aside. Our historian had often to describe men more famous than virtuous; sovereigns, politicians, poets, and philosophers, men of all ranks, countries, and ages, formed a crowded scene of men of genius or of celebrity; sometimes a few lines compress their character, and sometimes a few pages excite his fondness. If he sometimes adulates the living, we may pardon the illusions of a contemporary; but he has the honour of satirising some by the honest freedom of a pen which occasionally broke out into premature truths.

Such was the inspiration of literature and leisure which had embellished the abode of Jovius, and had raised in the midst of the Lake of Como a cabinet of portraits; a noble tribute to those who are “the salt of the earth.”

We possess prints of Rubens’s house at Antwerp. That princely artist perhaps first contrived for his *studio* the circular apartment with a dome, like the rotunda of the Pantheon, where the light descending from an aperture or window at the top, sent down a single equal light,—that perfection of light which distributes its magical effects on the objects beneath.[258] Bellori describes it *una stanza rotonda con un solo occhio in cima*; the *solo occhio* is what the French term *œil de bœuf*; we ourselves want this *single eye* in our technical language of art. This was his precious museum, where he had collected a vast number of books, which were

intermixed with his marbles, statues, cameos, intaglios, and all that variety of the riches of art which he had drawn from Rome:259 but the walls did not yield in value; for they were covered by pictures of his own composition, or copies by his own hand, made at Venice and Madrid, of Titian and Paul Veronese. No foreigners, men of letters, or lovers of the arts, or even princes, would pass through Antwerp without visiting the house of Rubens, to witness the animated residence of genius, and the great man who had conceived the idea. Yet, great as was his mind, and splendid as were the habits of his life, he could not resist the entreaties of the hundred thousand florins of our Duke of Buckingham, to dispose of this *studio*. The great artist could not, however, abandon for ever the delightful contemplations he was depriving himself of; and as substitutes for the miracles of art he had lost, he solicited and obtained leave to replace them by casts which were scrupulously deposited in the places where the originals had stood.

Of this feeling of the local residences of genius, the Italians appear to have been not perhaps more susceptible than other people, but more energetic in their enthusiasm. Florence exhibits many monuments of this sort. In the neighbourhood of *Santa Maria Novella*, Zimmerman has noticed a house of the celebrated Viviani, which is a singular monument of gratitude to his illustrious master, Galileo. The front is adorned with the bust of this father of science, and between the windows are engraven accounts of the discoveries of Galileo; it is the most beautiful biography of genius! Yet another still more eloquently excites our emotions—the house of Michael Angelo: his pupils, in perpetual testimony of their admiration and gratitude, have ornamented it with all the leading features of his life; the very soul of this vast genius put in action: this is more than biography! —it is living as with a contemporary!

256 The room is a small wainscoted apartment in the second floor, commanding a pleasant view.

257 The above inscription is a fac-simile of that upon the glass. The word *fifth* in the third line has been erased by Pope for want of room to complete it properly. It is scratched on a small pane of red glass, and has been removed to Nuneham Courtney, the seat of the Harcourt family, on the banks of the Thames, a few miles from Oxford.

258 Harrewyns published, in 1684, a series of interesting views of the house, and some of the apartments, including this domed one. The series are upon one folio sheet, now very rare.

259 Rubens was an ardent collector, and lost no chance of increasing his stores; in the appendix to Carpenter's "Pictorial Notices of Vandyke" is printed the correspondence between himself and Sir D. Carleton, offering to exchange some of his own pictures for antiques in possession of the latter, who was ambassador from England to Holland, and who collected also for the Earl of Arundel.

WHETHER ALLOWABLE TO RUIN ONESELF?

THE political economist replies that it is!

One of our old dramatic writers, who witnessed the singular extravagance of dress among the modellers of fashion, our nobility, condemns their "superfluous bravery," echoing the popular cry—

"There are a sort of men, whose coining heads
Are mints of all new fashions, that have done
More hurt to the kingdom, by superfluous bravery,

Which the foolish gentry imitate, than a war
Or a long famine. *All the treasure by*
This foul excess is got into the merchants',
Embroiderers', silkmen's, jewellers', tailors' hands,
And the third part of the land too! the nobility
Engrossing *titles only*."

Our poet might have been startled at the reply of our political economist. If the nobility, in follies such as these, only preserved their "titles," while their "lands" were dispersed among the industrious classes, the people were not sufferers. The silly victims ruining themselves by their excessive luxury, or their costly dress, as it appears some did, was an evil which, left to its own course, must check itself; if the rich did not spend, the poor would starve. Luxury is the cure of that unavoidable evil in society—great inequality of fortune! Political economists therefore tell us that any regulations would be ridiculous which, as Lord Bacon expresses it, should serve for "the repressing of waste and excess by *sumptuary laws*." Adam Smith is not only indignant at "sumptuary laws," but asserts, with a democratic insolence of style, that "it is the highest impertinence and presumption in kings and ministers to pretend to watch over the economy of private people, and to restrain their expense by sumptuary laws. They are themselves always the greatest spendthrifts in the society; let them look well after their own expense, and they may safely trust private people with theirs. If their own extravagance does not ruin the state, that of their subjects never will." We must therefore infer that governments by extravagance may ruin a state, but that individuals enjoy the remarkable privilege of ruining themselves without injuring society! Adam Smith afterwards distinguishes two sorts of luxury: the one exhausting itself in "durable commodities, as in buildings, furniture, books, statues, pictures," will increase "the opulence of a nation;" but of the other, wasting itself in

dress and equipages, in frivolous ornaments, jewels, baubles, trinkets, &c., he acknowledges “no trace or vestige would remain; and the effects of ten or twenty years’ profusion would be as completely annihilated as if they had never existed.” There is, therefore, a greater and a lesser evil in this important subject of the opulent, unrestricted by any law, ruining his whole generation.

Where “the wealth of nations” is made the solitary standard of their prosperity, it becomes a fertile source of errors in the science of morals; and the happiness of the individual is then too frequently sacrificed to what is called the prosperity of the state. If an individual, in the pride of luxury and selfism, annihilates the fortunes of his whole generation, untouched by the laws as a criminal, he leaves behind him a race of the discontented and the seditious, who, having sunk in the scale of society, have to reascend from their degradation by industry and by humiliation; but for the work of industry their habits have made them inexpert; and to humiliation their very rank presents a perpetual obstacle.

Sumptuary laws, so often enacted and so often repealed, and always eluded, were the perpetual, but ineffectual, attempts of all governments to restrain what, perhaps, cannot be restrained—criminal folly! And to punish a man for having ruined himself would usually be to punish a most contrite penitent.

It is not surprising that before “private vices were considered as public benefits,” the governors of nations instituted sumptuary laws—for the passion for pageantry and an incredible prodigality in dress were continually impoverishing great families—more equality of wealth has now rather subdued the form of private ruin than laid this evil domestic spirit. The incalculable expenditure and the blaze of splendour of our ancestors may startle the incredulity of our *élégantes*. We find men of rank exhausting their wealth and pawning their castles, and then desperately issuing from

them, heroes for a crusade, or brigands for their neighbourhood!—and this frequently from the simple circumstance of having for a short time maintained some gorgeous chivalric festival on their own estates, or from having melted thousands of acres into cloth of gold; their sons were left to beg their bread on the estates which they were to have inherited.

It was when chivalry still charmed the world by the remains of its seductive splendours, towards the close of the fifteenth century, that I find an instance of this kind occurring in the *Pas de Sandricourt*, which was held in the neighbourhood of the sieur of that name. It is a memorable affair, not only for us curious inquirers after manners and morals, but for the whole family of the Sandricourts; for though the said sieur is now receiving the immortality we bestow on him, and *la dame* who presided in that magnificent piece of chivalry was infinitely gratified, yet for ever after was the lord of Sandricourt ruined—and all for a short, romantic three months!

This story of the chivalric period may amuse. A *pas d'armes*, though consisting of military exercises and deeds of gallantry, was a sort of festival distinct from a tournament. It signified a *pas* or passage to be contested by one or more knights against all comers. It was necessary that the road should be such that it could not be passed without encountering some guardian knight. The *chevaliers* who disputed the *pas* hung their blazoned shields on trees, pales, or posts raised for this purpose. The aspirants after chivalric honours would strike with their lance one of these shields, and when it rung, it instantly summoned the owner to the challenge. A bridge or a road would sometimes serve for this military sport, for such it was intended to be, whenever the heat of the rivals proved not too earnest. The sieur of Sandricourt was a fine dreamer of feats of chivalry, and in the neighbourhood of his castle he fancied that he saw a very spot adapted for every game; there was one admirably fitted for the barrier of a tilting-match; another embellished by a solitary pine-tree; another which was

called the meadow of the Thorn; there was a *carrefour*, where, in four roads, four knights might meet; and, above all, there was a forest called *devoyable*, having no path, so favourable for errant knights who might there enter for strange adventures, and, as chance directed, encounter others as bewildered as themselves. Our chivalric Sandricourt found nine young *seigneurs* of the court of Charles the Eighth of France, who answered all his wishes. To sanction this glorious feat it was necessary to obtain leave from the king, and a herald of the Duke of Orleans to distribute the *cartel* or challenge all over France, announcing that from such a day ten young lords would stand ready to combat, in those different places, in the neighbourhood of Sandricourt's *château*. The names of this flower of chivalry have been faithfully registered, and they were such as instantly to throw a spark into the heart of every lover of arms! The world of fashion, that is, the chivalric world, were set in motion. Four bodies of assailants soon collected, each consisting of ten combatants. The herald of Orleans having examined the arms of these gentlemen, and satisfied himself of their ancient lineage and their military renown, admitted their claims to the proffered honour. Sandricourt now saw with rapture the numerous shields of the assailants placed on the sides of his portals, and corresponding with those of the challengers which hung above them. Ancient lords were elected judges of the feats of the knights, accompanied by the ladies, for whose honour only the combatants declared they engaged.

The herald of Orleans tells the history in no very intelligible verse; but the burthen of his stanza is still

Du pas d'armes du chasteau Sandricourt.

He sings, or says,

Oncques, depuis le tempts du roi Artus,

Ne furent tant les armes exaulcées—
Maint chevaliers et preux entreprenans—
Princes plusieurs ont terres déplacées
Pour y venir donner coups et poussées
Qui out été lá tenus si de court
Que par force n'ont prises et passées
Les barriers, entrées, et passées
Du pas des armes du chasteau Sandricourt.

Doubtless there many a Roland met with his Oliver, and could not pass the barriers. Cased as they were in steel, *de pied en cap*, we presume that they could not materially injure themselves; yet, when on foot, the ancient judges discovered such symptoms of peril, that on the following day they advised our knights to satisfy themselves by fighting on horseback. Against this prudential counsel for some time they protested, as an inferior sort of glory. However, on the next day, the horse combat was appointed in the *carrefour*, by the pine-tree. On the following day they tried their lances in the meadow of the Thorn; but, though on horseback, the judges deemed their attacks were so fierce that this assault was likewise not without peril; for some horses were killed, and some knights were thrown, and lay bruised by their own mail; but the barbed horses, wearing only *des chamfreins*, head-pieces magnificently caparisoned, found no protection in their ornaments. The last days were passed in combats of two to two, or in a single encounter, a-foot, in the *forêt devoyable*. These jousts passed without any accident, and the prizes were awarded in a manner equally gratifying to the claimants. The last day of the festival was concluded with a most sumptuous banquet. Two noble knights had undertaken the humble office of *maîtres-d'hôtel*; and while the knights were parading in the *forêt devoyable* seeking adventures, a hundred servants were seen at all points, carrying white and red hypocras, and juleps, and *sirop de violars*, sweetmeats, and

other spiceries, to comfort these wanderers, who, on returning to the *chasteau*, found a grand and plenteous banquet. The tables were crowded in the court apartment, where some held one hundred and twelve gentlemen, not including the *dames* and the *demoiselles*. In the halls, and outside of the *chasteau*, were other tables. At that festival more than two thousand persons were magnificently entertained free of every expense; their attendants, their armourers, their *plumassiers*, and others, were also present. *La Dame de Sandricourt*, "fût moult aise d'avoir donné dans son chasteau si belle, si magnifique, et gorgiasse fête." Historians are apt to describe their personages as they appear, not as they are: if the lady of the Sieur Sandricourt really was "moult aise" during these gorgeous days, one cannot but sympathise with the lady, when her loyal knight and spouse confessed to her, after the departure of the mob of two thousand visitors, neighbours, soldiers, and courtiers,—the knights challengers, and the knights assailants, and the fine scenes at the pine-tree; the barrier in the meadow of the Thorn; and the horse-combat at the *carrefour*; and the jousts in the *forêt devoyable*; the carousals in the castle halls; the jollity of the banquet tables; the morescoes danced till they were reminded "how the waning night grew old!"—in a word, when the costly dream had vanished,—that he was a ruined man for ever, by immortalising his name in one grand chivalric festival! The Sieur de Sandricourt, like a great torch, had consumed himself in his own brightness; and the very land on which the famous *Pas de Sandricourt* was held—had passed away with it! Thus one man sinks generations by that wastefulness, which a political economist would assure us was committing no injury to society! The moral evil goes for nothing in financial statements.

Similar instances of ruinous luxury we may find in the prodigal costliness of dress through the reigns of Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First. Not only in their massy grandeur they outweighed us, but the accumulation and variety of their wardrobe displayed such a gaiety of fancy

in their colours and their ornaments, that the drawing-room in those days must have blazed at their presence, and changed colours as the crowd moved. But if we may trust to royal proclamations, the ruin was general among some classes. Elizabeth issued more than one proclamation against “the excess of apparel!” and among other evils which the government imagined this passion for dress occasioned, it notices “the wasting and undoing of a great number of young gentlemen, otherwise serviceable; and that others, seeking by show of apparel to be esteemed as gentlemen, and allured by the vain show of these things, not only consume their goods and lands, but also run into such debts and shifts, as they cannot live out of danger of laws without attempting of unlawful acts.” The queen bids her own household “to look unto it for good example to the realm; and all noblemen, archbishops and bishops, all mayors, justices of peace, &c., should see them executed in their private households.” The greatest difficulty which occurred to regulate the wear of apparel was ascertaining the incomes of persons, or in the words of the proclamation, “finding that it is very hard for any man’s state of living and value to be truly understood by other persons.” They were to be regulated as they appear “sessed in the subsidy books.” But if persons chose to be more magnificent in their dress, they were allowed to justify their means: in that case, if allowed, her majesty would not be the loser; for they were to be rated in the subsidy books according to such values as they themselves offered as a qualification for the splendour of their dress!

In my researches among manuscript letters of the times, I have had frequent occasion to discover how persons of considerable rank appear to have carried their acres on their backs, and with their ruinous and fantastical luxuries sadly pinched their hospitality. It was this which so frequently cast them into the nets of the “goldsmiths,” and other trading usurers. At the coronation of James the First, I find a simple knight whose cloak cost him five hundred pounds; but this was not uncommon.[260] At the marriage of

Elizabeth, the daughter of James the First, “Lady Wotton had a gown of which the embroidery cost fifty pounds a yard. The Lady Arabella made four gowns, one of which cost 1500*l.* The Lord Montacute (Montague) bestowed 1500*l.* in apparel for his two daughters. One lady, under the rank of baroness, was furnished with jewels exceeding one hundred thousand pounds; “and the Lady Arabella goes beyond her,” says the letter-writer. “All this extreme costs and riches makes us all poor,” as he imagined![261] I have been amused in observing grave writers of state-dispatches jocular on any mischance or mortification to which persons are liable whose happiness entirely depends on their dress. Sir Dudley Carleton, our minister at Venice, communicates, as an article worth transmitting, the great disappointment incurred by Sir Thomas Glover, “who was just come hither, and had appeared one day like a comet, all in crimson velvet and beaten gold, but had all his expectations marred on a sudden by the news of Prince Henry’s death.” A similar mischance, from a different cause, was the lot of Lord Hay, who made great preparations for his embassy to France, which, however, were chiefly confined to his dress. He was to remain there twenty days; and the letter-writer maliciously observes, that “He goes with twenty special suits of apparel for so many days’ abode, besides his travelling robes; but news is very lately come that the French have lately altered their fashion, whereby he must needs be out of countenance, if he be not set out after the last edition!” To find himself out of fashion, with twenty suits for twenty days, was a mischance his lordship had no right to count on!

“The glass of fashion” was unquestionably held up by two very eminent characters, Rawleigh and Buckingham; and the authentic facts recorded of their dress will sufficiently account for the frequent “Proclamations” to control that servile herd of imitators—the smaller gentry!

There is a remarkable picture of Sir Walter, which will at least serve to convey an idea of the gaiety and splendour of his dress. It is a white satin

pinked vest, close sleeved to the wrist; over the body a brown doublet, finely flowered and embroidered with pearl. In the feather of his hat a large ruby and pearl drop at the bottom of the sprig, in place of a button; his trunk or breeches, with his stockings and riband garters, fringed at the end, all white, and buff shoes with white riband. Oldys, who saw this picture, has thus described the dress of Rawleigh. But I have some important additions; for I find that Rawleigh's shoes on great court days were so gorgeously covered with precious stones, as to have exceeded the value of six thousand six hundred pounds: and that he had a suit of armour of solid silver, with sword and belt blazing with diamonds, rubies, and pearls, whose value was not so easily calculated. Rawleigh had no patrimonial inheritance; at this moment he had on his back a good portion of a Spanish galleon, and the profits of a monopoly of trade he was carrying on with the newly discovered Virginia. Probably he placed all his hopes in his dress! The virgin queen, when she issued proclamations against "the excess of apparel," pardoned, by her looks, that promise of a mine which blazed in Rawleigh's; and, parsimonious as she was, forgot the three thousand changes of dresses which she herself left in the royal wardrobe.

Buckingham could afford to have his diamonds tacked so loosely on, that when he chose to shake a few off on the ground, he obtained all the fame he desired from the pickers-up, who were generally *les dames de la cour*; for our duke never condescended to accept what he himself had dropped. His cloaks were trimmed with great diamond buttons, and diamond hatbands, cockades, and ear-rings yoked with great ropes and knots of pearls. This was, however, but for ordinary dances. "He had twenty-seven suits of clothes made, the richest that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, silver, gold, and gems could contribute; one of which was a white uncut velvet, set all over, both suit and cloak, with diamonds valued at fourscore thousand pounds, besides a great feather stuck all over with diamonds, as were also his sword, girdle, hat, and spurs."[262] In the masques and banquets with which

Buckingham entertained the court, he usually expended, for the evening, from one to five thousand pounds. To others I leave to calculate the value of money: the sums of this gorgeous wastefulness, it must be recollected, occurred before this million age of ours.

If, to provide the means for such enormous expenditure, Buckingham multiplied the grievances of monopolies; if he pillaged the treasury for his eighty thousand pounds' coat; if Rawleigh was at length driven to his last desperate enterprise to relieve himself of his creditors for a pair of six thousand pounds' shoes—in both these cases, as in that of the chivalric Sandricourt, the political economist may perhaps acknowledge that *there is a sort of luxury highly criminal*. All the arguments he may urge, all the statistical accounts he may calculate, and the healthful state of his circulating medium among "the merchants, embroiderers, silkmen, and jewellers"—will not alter such a moral evil, which leaves an eternal taint on "the wealth of nations!" It is the principle that "private vices are public benefits," and that men may be allowed to ruin their generations without committing any injury to society.

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260 The famous Puritanic writer, Philip Stubbes, who published his "Anatomie of Abuses" in 1593, declares that he "has heard of shirtes that have cost some ten shillings, some twentie, some fortie, some five pound, some twentie nobles, and (which is horrible to heare) some tenne pounde a peece." His book is filled with similar denunciations of abuses; in which he is followed by other satirists. They appear to have produced little effect in the way of reformation; for in the days of James I, John Taylor, the Water poet, similarly laments the wastefulness of those who—

> Wear a farm in shoe-strings edged with gold,
> And spangled garters worth a copyhold;
> A hose and doublet which a lordship cost;
> A gaudy cloak, three manors' price almost;

A beaver band and feather for the head

Priced at the church's tythe, the poor man's bread.

261 It is not unusual to find in inventories of this era, the household effects rated at much less than the wearing apparel, of the person whose property is thus valued.

262 The Jesuit Drexelius, in one of his Religious Dialogues, notices the fact; but I am referring to an Harleian manuscript, which confirms the information of the Jesuit.

DISCOVERIES OF SECLUDED MEN.

THOSE who are unaccustomed to the labours of the closet are unacquainted with the secret and silent triumphs obtained in the pursuits of studious men. That aptitude, which in poetry is sometimes called *inspiration*, in knowledge we may call *sagacity*; and it is probable that the vehemence of the one does not excite more pleasure than the still tranquillity of the other: they are both, according to the strict signification of the Latin term from whence we have borrowed ours of *invention*, a finding out, the result of a combination which no other has formed but ourselves.

I will produce several remarkable instances of the felicity of this aptitude of the learned in making discoveries which could only have been effectuated by an uninterrupted intercourse with the objects of their studies, making things remote and dispersed familiar and present.263

One of ancient date is better known to the reader than those I am preparing for him. When the magistrates of Syracuse were showing to Cicero the curiosities of the place, he desired to visit the tomb of Archimedes; but, to his surprise, they acknowledged that they knew nothing of any such tomb, and denied that it ever existed. The learned Cicero, convinced by the authorities of ancient writers, by the verses of the inscription which he remembered, and the circumstance of a sphere with a cylinder being engraven on it, requested them to assist him in the search. They conducted the illustrious but obstinate stranger to their most ancient burying-ground: amidst the number of sepulchres, they observed a small column overhung with brambles—Cicero, looking on while they were clearing away the rubbish, suddenly exclaimed, “Here is the thing we are looking for!” His eye had caught the geometrical figures on the tomb, and the inscription soon confirmed his conjecture. Cicero long after exulted in the triumph of this discovery. “Thus!” he says, “one of the noblest cities of Greece, and once the most learned, had known nothing of the monument of its most deserving and ingenious citizen, had it not been discovered to them by a native of Arpinum!”

The great French antiquary, Peiresc, exhibited a singular combination of learning, patient thought, and luminous sagacity, which could restore an “airy nothing” to “a local habitation and a name.” There was found on an amethyst, and the same afterwards occurred on the front of an ancient temple, a number of *marks*, or indents, which had long perplexed inquirers, more particularly as similar marks or indents were frequently observed in ancient monuments. It was agreed on, as no one could understand them, and all would be satisfied, that they were secret hieroglyphics. It occurred to Peiresc that these marks were nothing more than holes for small nails, which had formerly fastened little *laminæ*, which represented so many Greek letters. This hint of his own suggested to him to draw lines from one hole to another; and he beheld the amethyst reveal the name of the sculptor,

and the frieze of the temple the name of the god! This curious discovery has been since frequently applied; but it appears to have originated with this great antiquary, who by his learning and sagacity explained a supposed hieroglyphic, which had been locked up in the silence of seventeen centuries.[264]

Learned men, confined to their study, have often rectified the errors of travellers; they have done more, they have found out paths for them to explore, or opened seas for them to navigate. The situation of the vale of Tempe had been mistaken by modern travellers; and it is singular, observes the Quarterly Reviewer, yet not so singular as it appears to that elegant critic, that the only good directions for finding it had been given by a person who was never in Greece. Arthur Browne, a man of letters of Trinity College, Dublin—it is gratifying to quote an Irish philosopher and man of letters, from the extreme rarity of the character—was the first to detect the inconsistencies of Pococke and Busching, and to send future travellers to look for Tempe in its real situation, the defiles between Ossa and Olympus; a discovery subsequently realised. When Dr. Clarke discovered an inscription purporting that the pass of Tempe had been fortified by Cassius Longinus, Mr. Walpole, with equal felicity, detected, in Cæsar's "History of the Civil War," the name and the mission of this very person.

A living geographer, to whom the world stands deeply indebted, does not read Herodotus in the original; yet, by the exercise of his extraordinary aptitude, it is well known that he has often corrected the Greek historian, explained obscurities in a text which he never read, by his own happy conjectures, and confirmed his own discoveries by the subsequent knowledge which modern travellers have afforded.

Gray's perseverance in studying the geography of India and of Persia, at a time when our country had no immediate interests with those ancient empires, would have been placed by a cynical observer among the curious

idleness of a mere man of letters. These studies were indeed prosecuted, as Mr. Mathias observes, “on the disinterested principles of liberal investigation, not on those of policy, nor of the regulation of trade, nor of the extension of empire, nor of permanent establishments, but simply and solely on the grand view of what is, and of what is past. They were the researches of a solitary scholar in academical retirement.” Since the time of Gray, these very pursuits have been carried on by two consummate geographers, Major Rennel and Dr. Vincent, who have opened to the classical and the political reader all he wished to learn, at a time when India and Persia had become objects interesting and important to us. The fruits of Gray’s learning, long after their author was no more, became valuable!

The studies of the “solitary scholar” are always useful to the world, although they may not always be timed to its present wants; with him, indeed, they are not merely designed for this purpose. Gray discovered India for himself; but the solitary pursuits of a great student, shaped to a particular end, will never fail being useful to the world; though it may happen that a century may elapse between the periods of the discovery and its practical utility.

Halley’s version of an Arabic MS. on a mathematical subject offers an instance of the extraordinary sagacity I am alluding to; it may also serve as a demonstration of the peculiar and supereminent advantages possessed by mathematicians, observes Mr. Dugald Stewart, in their fixed relations, which form the objects of their science, and the correspondent precision in their language and reasoning:—as matter of literary history it is highly curious. Dr. Bernard accidentally discovered in the Bodleian Library an Arabic version of Apollonius *de Sectione Rationis*, which he determined to translate in Latin, but only finished about a tenth part. Halley, extremely interested by the subject, but with an entire ignorance of the Arabic language, resolved to complete the imperfect version! Assisted only by the

manuscript which Bernard had left, it served him as a key for investigating the sense of the original; he first made *a list of those words* wherever they occurred, with the *train of reasoning* in which they were involved, to decipher, by these very slow degrees, the import of the context; till at last Halley succeeded in mastering the whole work, and in bringing the translation, without the aid of any one, to the form in which he gave it to the public; so that we have here a difficult work translated from the Arabic, by one who was in no manner conversant with the language, merely by the exertion of his sagacity!

I give the memorable account, as Boyle has delivered it, of the circumstances which led Harvey to the discovery of the circulation of the blood.

"I remember that when I asked our famous Harvey, in the only discourse I had with him, which was but a little while before he died, what were the things which induced him to think of a circulation of the blood, he answered me, that when he took notice that the valves in the veins of so many parts of the body were so placed that they gave free passage to the blood towards the heart, but opposed the passage of the venal blood the contrary way, he was invited to think that so provident a cause as nature had not placed so many valves without design; and no design seemed more probable than that, since the blood could not well, because of the interposing valves, be sent by the veins to the limbs, it should be sent through the arteries and return through the veins, whose valves did not oppose its course that way."

The reason here ascribed to Harvey seems now so very natural and obvious, that some have been disposed to question his claim to the high rank commonly assigned to him among the improvers of science! Dr. William Hunter has said that after the discovery of the valves in the veins, which Harvey learned while in Italy from his master, Fabricius ab

Aquapendente, the remaining step might easily have been made by any person of common abilities. “This discovery,” he observes, “set Harvey to work upon the *use* of the heart and vascular system in animals; and in the *course of some years*, he was so happy as to discover, and to prove beyond all possibility of doubt, the circulation of the blood.” He afterwards expresses his astonishment that this discovery should have been left for Harvey, though he acknowledges it occupied “a course of years;” adding that “Providence meant to reserve it for *him*, and would not let men *see what was before them, nor understand what they read*.” It is remarkable that when great discoveries are effected, their simplicity always seems to detract from their originality: on these occasions we are reminded of the egg of Columbus!

It is said that a recent discovery, which ascertains that the Niger empties itself into the Atlantic Ocean, was really anticipated by the geographical acumen of a student at Glasgow, who arrived at the same conclusion by a most persevering investigation of the works of travellers and geographers, ancient and modern, and by an examination of African captives; and had actually constructed, for the inspection of government, a map of Africa, on which he had traced the entire course of the Niger from the interior.

Franklin *conjectured* the identity of lightning and of electricity, before he had *realised* it by decisive experiment. The kite being raised, a considerable time elapsed before there was any appearance of its being electrified. One very promising cloud had passed over it without any effect. Just as he was beginning to despair of his contrivance, he observed some loose threads of the hempen string to stand erect, and to avoid one another, just as if they had been suspended on a common conductor. Struck with this promising appearance, he immediately presented his knuckle to the key! And let the reader judge of the exquisite pleasure he must have felt at that moment when *the discovery was complete*! We owe to Priestley this admirable

narrative; the strong sensation of delight which Franklin experienced as his knuckle touched the key, and at the moment when he felt that a new world was opening, might have been equalled, but it was probably not surpassed, when the same hand signed the long-disputed independence of his country!

When Leibnitz was occupied in his philosophical reasonings on his *Law of Continuity*, his singular sagacity enabled him to predict a discovery which afterwards was realised—he *imagined* the necessary existence of the polypus!

It has been remarked of Newton, that several of his slight hints, some in the modest form of queries, have been ascertained to be predictions, and among others that of the inflammability of the diamond; and many have been eagerly seized upon as indisputable axioms. A hint at the close of his Optics, that "If natural philosophy should be continued to be improved in its various branches, the bounds of moral philosophy would be enlarged also," is perhaps among the most important of human discoveries—it gave rise to Hartley's *Physiological Theory of the Mind*. The queries, the hints, the conjectures of Newton, display the most creative sagacity; and demonstrate in what manner the discoveries of retired men, while they bequeath their legacies to the world, afford to themselves a frequent source of secret and silent triumphs.

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263 The remarkable clue to the reading of the hieroglyphic language of ancient Egypt perfected in our own times is a striking instance of this; as well as the investigations now proceeding in Babylonian inscriptions, which promise to enable us to comprehend a language that was once considered as hopelessly lost.

264 The curious reader may view the marks, and the manner in which the Greek characters were made out, in the preface to Hearne's "Curious Discourses." The amethyst proved more difficult than the frieze, from the circumstance, that in engraving on the stone the letters must be reversed.

SENTIMENTAL BIOGRAPHY.

A PERIODICAL critic, probably one of the juniors, has thrown out a startling observation. “There is,” says this literary senator, “something melancholy in the study of biography, because it is—a history of the dead!” A truism and a falsity mixed up together is the temptation with some modern critics to commit that darling sin of theirs—novelty and originality! But we really cannot condole with the readers of Plutarch for their deep melancholy; we who feel our spirits refreshed, amidst the mediocrity of society, when we are recalled back to the men and the women who WERE! illustrious in every glory! Biography with us is a re-union with human existence in its most excellent state! and we find nothing dead in the past, while we retain the sympathies which only require to be awakened.

It would have been more reasonable had the critic discovered that our country has not yet had her Plutarch, and that our biography remains still little more than a mass of compilation.

In this study of biography there is a species which has not yet been distinguished—biographies composed by some domestic friend, or by some enthusiast who works with love. A term is unquestionably wanted for this distinct class. The Germans seem to have invented a Platonic one, drawn from the Greek, *psyche*, or the soul; for they call this the *psychological life*. Another attempt has been made, by giving it the scientific term of

idiosyncrasy, to denote a peculiarity of disposition. I would call it *sentimental biography*!

It is distinct from a *chronological* biography, for it searches for the individual's feelings amidst the ascertained facts of his life; so that facts, which occurred remotely from each other, are here brought at once together. The detail of events which completes the chronological biography, contains many which are not connected with the peculiarity of the character itself. The *sentimental* is also distinct from the *autobiography*, however it may seem a part of it. Whether a man be entitled to lavish his panegyric on himself, I will not decide; but it is certain that he risks everything by appealing to a solitary and suspected witness.

We have two Lives of Dante, one by Boccaccio and the other by Leonardo Aretino, both interesting: but Boccaccio's is the *sentimental life*!

Aretino, indeed, finds fault, but with all the tenderness possible, with Boccaccio's affectionate sketch, *Origine, Vita, Studi e Costumi del clarissimo Dante*, &c. "Origin, Life, Studies and Manners, of the illustrious Dante," &c. "It seems to me," he says, "that our Boccaccio, *dolcissimo e suavissimo uomo*, sweet and delightful man! has written the life and manners of this sublime poet as if he had been composing the *Filocolo*, the *Filostrato*, or the *Fiametta*," the romances of Boccaccio—"for all breathes of love and sighs, and is covered with warm tears, as if a man were born in this world only to live among the enamoured ladies and the gallant youths of the ten amorous days of his hundred novels."

Aretino, who wanted not all the feeling requisite for the delightful "costumi e studi" of Boccaccio's Dante, modestly requires that his own life of Dante should be considered as a supplement to, not as a substitute for, Boccaccio's. Pathetic with all the sorrows, and eloquent with all the remonstrances of a fellow-citizen, Boccaccio, while he wept, hung with

anger over his country's shame in its apathy for the honour of its long-injured exile. Catching inspiration from the breathing pages of Boccaccio, it inclines one to wish that we possessed two biographies of an illustrious favourite character; the one strictly and fully historical, the other fraught with those very feelings of the departed, which we may have to seek in vain for in the circumstantial and chronological biographer. Boccaccio, indeed, was overcome by his feelings. He either knew not, or he omits the substantial incidents of Dante's life; while his imagination throws a romantic tinge on occurrences raised on slight, perhaps on no foundation. Boccaccio narrates a dream of the mother of Dante so fancifully poetical, that probably Boccaccio forgot that none but a dreamer could have told it. Seated under a high laurel-tree, by the side of a vast fountain, the mother dreamt that she gave birth to her son; she saw him nourished by its fruit, and refreshed by the clear waters; she soon beheld him a shepherd; approaching to pluck the boughs, she saw him fall! When he rose he had ceased to be a man, and was transformed into a peacock! Disturbed by her admiration, she suddenly awoke; but when the father found that he really had a son, in allusion to the dream he called him Dante—or *given! e meritamente*; *perocché ottimamente, siccome si vedra procedendo, segui al nome l'effetto*: "and deservedly! for greatly, as we shall see, the effect followed the name!" At nine years of age, on a May-day, whose joyous festival Boccaccio beautifully describes, when the softness of the heavens, re-adorning the earth with its mingled flowers, waved the green boughs, and made all things smile, Dante mixed with the boys and girls in the house of the good citizen who on that day gave the feast, beheld little Bricè, as she was familiarly called, but named Beatrice. The little Dante might have seen her before, but he loved her then, and from that day never ceased to love; and thus Dante *nella pargoletta età fatto d'amore ferventissimo servidore*; so fervent a servant to love in an age of childhood! Boccaccio appeals to Dante's own account of his long passion, and his constant sighs, in the *Vita*

Nuova. No look, no word, no sign, sullied the purity of his passion; but in her twenty-fourth year died "la bellissima Beatrice." Dante is then described as more than inconsolable; his eyes were long two abundant fountains of tears; careless of life, he let his beard grow wildly, and to others appeared a savage meagre man, whose aspect was so changed, that while this weeping life lasted, he was hardly recognised by his friends; all looked on a man so entirely transformed with deep compassion. Dante, won over by those who could console the inconsolable, was at length solicited by his relations to marry a lady of his own condition in life; and it was suggested that as the departed lady had occasioned him such heavy griefs, the new one might open a source of delight. The relations and friends of Dante gave him a wife that his tears for Beatrice might cease.

It is supposed that this marriage proved unhappy. Boccaccio, like a pathetic lover rather than biographer, exclaims, *Oh menti cicche! Oh tenebrosi intelletti! Oh argomenti vani di molti mortali, quante sono le ruiscite in assai cose contrarie a' nostri avvisi!* &c. "Oh blind men! Oh dark minds! Oh vain arguments of most mortals, how often are the results contrary to our advice! Frequently it is like leading one who breathes the soft air of Italy to refresh himself in the eternal shades of the Rhodopean mountains. What physician would expel a burning fever with fire, or put in the shivering marrow of the bones snow and ice? So certainly shall it fare with him who, with a new love, thinks to mitigate the old. Those who believe this know not the nature of love, nor how much a second passion adds to the first. In vain would we assist or advise this forceful passion, if it has struck its root near the heart of him who long has loved."

Boccaccio has beguiled my pen for half-an-hour with all the loves and fancies which sprung out of his own affectionate and romantic heart. What airy stuff has he woven into the "Vita" of Dante! this *sentimental biography*! Whether he knew but little of the personal history of the great

man whom he idolised, or whether the dream of the mother—the May-day interview with the little Bricè, and the rest of the children—and the effusion on Dante's marriage, were grounded on tradition, one would not harshly reject such tender incidents.[265] But let it not be imagined that the heart of Boccaccio was only susceptible to amorous impressions—bursts of enthusiasm and eloquence, which only a man of genius is worthy of receiving, and only a man of genius is capable of bestowing—kindle the masculine patriotism of his bold, indignant spirit!

Half a century had elapsed since the death of Dante, and still the Florentines showed no sign of repentance for their ancient hatred of their persecuted patriot, nor any sense of the memory of the creator of their language, whose immortality had become a portion of their own glory. Boccaccio, impassioned by all his generous nature, though he regrets he could not raise a statue to Dante, has sent down to posterity more than marble, in the "Life." I venture to give the lofty and bold apostrophe to his fellow-citizens; but I feel that even the genius of our language is tame by the side of the harmonised eloquence of the great votary of Dante!

"Ungrateful country! what madness urged thee, when thy dearest citizen, thy chief benefactor, thy only poet, with unaccustomed cruelty was driven to flight! If this had happened in the general terror of that time, coming from evil counsels, thou mightest stand excused; but when the passion ceased, didst thou repent? didst thou recall him? Bear with me, nor deem it irksome from me, who am thy son, that thus I collect what just indignation prompts me to speak, as a man more desirous of witnessing your amendment, than of beholding you punished! Seems it to you glorious, proud of so many titles and of such men, that the one whose like no neighbouring city can show, you have chosen to chase from among you? With what triumphs, with what valorous citizens, are you splendid? Your wealth is a removable and uncertain thing; your fragile beauty will grow

old; your delicacy is shameful and feminine; but these make you noticed by the false judgments of the populace! Do you glory in your merchants and your artists? I speak imprudently; but the one are tenaciously avaricious in their servile trade; and Art, which once was so noble, and became a second nature, struck by the same avarice, is now as corrupted, and nothing worth! Do you glory in the baseness and the listlessness of those idlers, who, because their ancestors are remembered, attempt to raise up among you a nobility to govern you, ever by robbery, by treachery, by falsehood! Ah! miserable mother! open thine eyes; cast them with some remorse on what thou hast done, and blush, at least, reputed wise as thou art, to have had in your errors so fatal a choice! Why not rather imitate the acts of those cities who so keenly disputed merely for the honour of the birth-place of the divine Homer? Mantua, our neighbour, counts as the greatest fame which remains for her, that Virgil was a Mantuan! and holds his very name in such reverence, that not only in public places, but in the most private, we see his sculptured image! You only, while you were made famous by illustrious men, you only have shown no care for your great poet. Your Dante Alighieri died in exile, to which you unjustly, envious of his greatness, destined him! A crime not to be remembered, that the mother should bear an envious malignity to the virtues of a son! Now cease to be unjust! He cannot do you that, now dead, which living he never did do to you! He lies under another sky than yours, and you never can see him again, but on that day, when all your citizens shall view him, and the great Remunerator shall examine, and shall punish! If anger, hatred, and enmity are buried with a man, as it is believed, begin then to return to yourself; begin to be ashamed to have acted against your ancient humanity; begin, then, to wish to appear a mother, and not a cold negligent step-dame. Yield your tears to your son; yield your maternal piety to him whom once you repulsed, and, living, cast away from you! At least think of possessing him dead, and restore your citizenship, your award, and your grace, to his memory. He was a son who

held you in reverence, and though long an exile, he always called himself, and would be called a Florentine! He held you ever above all others; ever he loved you! What will you then do? Will you remain obstinate in iniquity? Will you practise less humanity than the barbarians? You wish that the world should believe that you are the sister of famous Troy, and the daughter of Rome; assuredly the children should resemble their fathers and their ancestors. Priam, in his misery, bought the corpse of Hector with gold; and Rome would possess the bones of the first Scipio, and removed them from Linternum, those bones, which, dying, so justly he had denied her. Seek then to be the true guardian of your Dante, claim him! show this humane feeling, claim him! you may securely do this: I am certain he will not be returned to you; but thus at once you may betray some mark of compassion, and, not having him again, still enjoy your ancient cruelty! Alas! what comfort am I bringing you! I almost believe, that if the dead could feel, the body of Dante would not rise to return to you, for he is lying in Ravenna, whose hallowed soil is everywhere covered with the ashes of saints. Would Dante quit this blessed company to mingle with the remains of those hatreds and iniquities which gave him no rest in life? The relics of Dante, even among the bodies of emperors and of martyrs, and of their illustrious ancestors, is prized as a treasure, for there his works are looked on with admiration; those works of which you have not yet known to make yourselves worthy. His birthplace, his origin remains for you, spite of your ingratitude! and this Ravenna envies you, while she glories in your honours which she has snatched from you through ages yet to come!”

Such was the deep emotion which opened Boccaccio’s heart in this sentimental biography, and which awoke even shame and confusion in the minds of the Florentines; they blushed for their old hatreds, and, with awakened sympathies, they hastened to honour the memory of their great bard. By order of the city, the *Divina Commedia* was publicly read and explained to the people. Boccaccio, then sinking under the infirmities of

age, roused his departing genius: still was there marrow in the bones of the aged lion, and he engaged in the task of composing his celebrated Commentaries on the *Divina Commedia*.

In this class of *sentimental biography* I would place a species which the historian Carte noticed in his literary travels on the Continent, in pursuit of his historical design. He found, preserved among several ancient families of France, their domestic annals. “With a warm, patriotic spirit, worthy of imitation, they have often carefully preserved in their families the acts of their ancestors.” This delight and pride of the modern Gauls in the great and good deeds of their ancestors, preserved in domestic archives, will be ascribed to their folly or their vanity; yet in that folly there may be so much wisdom, and in that vanity there may be so much greatness, that the one will amply redeem the other.

This custom has been rarely adopted among ourselves; we have, however, a few separate histories of some ancient families, as those of Mordaunt, and of Warren. One of the most remarkable is “A Genealogical History of the House of Yvery, in its different branches of Yvery, Luvel, Perceval, and Gournay.” Two large volumes, closely printed,[266] expatiating on the characters and events of a single family with the grave pomp of a herald, but more particularly the idolatry of the writer for ancient nobility, and his contempt for that growing rank in society whom he designates as “New Men,” provoked the ridicule at least of the aspersed.[267] This extraordinary work, notwithstanding its absurdities in its general result, has left behind a deep impression. Drawn from the authentic family records, it is not without interest that we toil through its copious pages; we trace with a romantic sympathy the fortunes of the descendants of the House of Yvery, from that not-forgotten hero *le vaillant Perceval chevalier de la Table Ronde*, to the Norman Baron Asselin, surnamed the Wolf, for his bravery or his ferocity; thence to the Cavalier of Charles the First, Sir Philip Perceval,

who, having gloriously defended his castle, was at length deprived of his lordly possessions, but never of his loyalty, and died obscurely in the metropolis of a broken heart, till we reach the polished nobleman, the Lord Egmont of the Georges.

The nation has lost many a noble example of men and women acting a great part on great occasions, and then retreating to the shade of privacy; and we may be confident that many a name has not been inscribed on the roll of national glory only from wanting a few drops of ink! Such domestic annals may yet be viewed in the family records at Appleby Castle! Anne, Countess of Pembroke, was a glorious woman, the descendant of two potent northern families, the Veteriponts and the Cliffords.—She lived in a state of regal magnificence and independence, inhabiting five or seven castles; yet though her magnificent spirit poured itself out in her extended charities, and though her independence mated that of monarchs, yet she herself, in her domestic habits, lived as a hermit in her own castles; and though only acquainted with her native language, she had cultivated her mind in many parts of learning; and as Donne, in his way, observes, "she knew how to converse of everything, from predestination to slea-silk." Her favourite design was to have materials collected for the history of those two potent northern families to whom she was allied; and at a considerable expense she employed learned persons to make collections for this purpose from the records in the Tower, the Rolls, and other depositories of manuscripts: Gilpin had seen three large volumes fairly transcribed. Anecdotes of a great variety of characters, who had exerted themselves on very important occasions, compose these family records—and induce one to wish that the public were in possession of such annals of the domestic life of heroes and of sages, who have only failed in obtaining an historian![268]

A biographical monument of this nature, which has passed through the press, will sufficiently prove the utility of this class of *sentimental*

biography. It is the Life of Robert Price, a Welsh lawyer, and an ancestor of the gentleman whose ingenuity, in our days, has refined the principles of the Picturesque in Art. This Life is announced as "printed by the appointment of the family;" but it must not be considered merely as a tribute of private affection; and how we are at this day interested in the actions of a Welsh lawyer in the reign of William the Third, whose name has probably never been consigned to the page of history, remains to be told.

Robert Price, after having served Charles the Second, lived latterly in the eventful times of William the Third—he was probably of Tory principles, for on the arrival of the Dutch prince he was removed from the attorney-generalship of Glamorgan. The new monarch has been accused of favouritism, and of an eagerness in showering exorbitant grants on some of his foreigners, which soon raised a formidable opposition in the jealous spirit of Englishmen. The grand favourite, William Bentinck, after being raised to the Earldom of Portland, had a grant bestowed on him of three lordships in the county of Denbigh. The patriot of his native country—a title which the Welsh had already conferred on Robert Price—then rose to assert the rights of his fatherland, and his speeches are as admirable for their knowledge as their spirit. "The submitting of 1500 freeholders to the will of a Dutch lord was," as he sarcastically declared, "putting them in a worse posture than their former estate, when under William the Conqueror and his Norman lords. England must not be tributary to strangers—we must, like patriots, stand by our country—otherwise, when God shall send us a Prince of Wales, he may have such a present of a crown made him as a Pope did to King John, who was surnamed *Sans-terre*, and was by his father made Lord of Ireland, which grant was confirmed by the Pope, who sent him a crown of peacocks' feathers, in derogation of his power, and the poverty of his country." Robert Price asserted that the king could not, by the Bill of Rights, alien or give away the inheritance of a Prince of Wales without the consent of parliament. He concluded a copious and patriotic

speech, by proposing that an address be presented to the king, to put an immediate stop to the grant now passing to the Earl of Portland for the lordships, &c.

This speech produced such an effect, that the address was carried unanimously; and the king, though he highly resented the speech of Robert Price, sent a civil message to the commons, declaring that he should not have given Lord Portland those lands, had he imagined the House of Commons could have been concerned; “I will therefore recall the grant!” On receiving the royal message, Robert Price drew up a resolution to which the house assented, that “to procure or pass exorbitant grants by any member of the privy council, &c. was a high crime and misdemeanour.” The speech of Robert Price contained truths too numerous and too bold to suffer the light during that reign; but this speech against foreigners was printed the year after King William’s death, with this title, “*Gloria Cambriæ*, or the speech of a bold Briton in parliament, against a Dutch Prince of Wales,” with this motto, *Opposuit et Vicit*. Such was the great character of Robert Price, that he was made a Welsh judge by the very sovereign whose favourite plans he had so patriotically thwarted.

Another marked event in the life of this English patriot was a second noble stand he made against the royal authority, when in opposition to the public good. The secret history of a quarrel between George the First and the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Second, on the birth of a son, appears in this life; and when the prince in disgrace left the palace, his royal highness proposed taking his children and the princess with him; but the king detained the children, claiming the care of the royal offspring as a royal prerogative. It now became a legal point to ascertain “whether the education of his majesty’s grandchildren, and the care of their marriages, &c., belonged of right to his majesty as king of this realm, or not?” Ten of the judges obsequiously allowed of the prerogative to the full. Robert Price

and another judge decided that the education, &c., was the right of the father, although the marriages was that of his majesty as king of this realm, yet not exclusive of the prince, their father. He assured the king, that the ten obsequious judges had no authority to support their precipitate opinion; all the books and precedents cannot form a prerogative for the king of this realm to have the care and education of his grandchildren during the life and without the consent of their father—a prerogative unknown to the laws of England! He pleads for the rights of a father, with the spirit of one who feels them, as well as with legal science and historical knowledge.

Such were the two great incidents in the life of this Welsh judge! Yet, had the family not found one to commemorate these memorable events in the life of their ancestor, we had lost the noble picture of a constitutional interpreter of the laws, an independent country gentleman, and an Englishman jealous of the excessive predominance of ministerial or royal influence.

Cicero, and others, have informed us that the ancient history of Rome itself was composed out of such accounts of private families, to which, indeed, we must add those annals or registers of public events which unquestionably were preserved in the archives of the temples by the priests. But the history of the individual may involve public interest, whenever the skill of the writer combines with the importance of the event. Messala, the orator, gloried in having composed many volumes of the genealogies of the nobility of Rome; and Atticus wrote the genealogy of Brutus, to prove him descended from Junius Brutus, the expulser of the Tarquins, and founder of the Republic, near five hundred years before.

Another class of this *sentimental biography* was projected by the late Elizabeth Hamilton. This was to have consisted of a series of what she called *comparative biography*, and an ancient character was to have been paralleled by a modern one. Occupied by her historical romance with the

character of *Agrippina*, she sought in modern history for a partner of her own sex, and "one who, like her, had experienced vicissitudes of fortune;" and she found no one better qualified than the princess palatine, *Elizabeth, the daughter of James the First*. Her next life was to have been that of *Seneca*, with "the scenes and persons of which her Life of Agrippina had familiarised her;" and the contrast or the parallel was to have been *Locke*; which, well managed, she thought would have been sufficiently striking. It seems to me that it would rather have afforded an evidence of her invention! Such a biographical project reminds one of Plutarch's Parallels, and might incur the danger of displaying more ingenuity than truth. The sage of Cheronea must often have racked his invention to help out his parallels, bending together, to make them similar, the most unconnected events and the most distinct feelings; and, to keep his parallels in two straight lines, he probably made a free use of augmentatives and diminutives to help out his pair, who might have been equal, and yet not alike!

Our fatherland is prodigal of immortal names, or names which might be made immortal; Gibbon once contemplated with complacency, the very ideal of SENTIMENTAL BIOGRAPHY, and we may regret that he has only left the project! "I have long revolved in my mind a volume of biographical writing; the lives or rather the characters of the most eminent persons in arts and arms, in church and state, who have flourished in Britain from the reign of Henry the Eighth to the present age. The subject would afford a rich display of human nature and domestic history, and powerfully address itself to the feelings of every Englishman."

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265 "A Comment on the Divine Comedy of Dante," in English, printed in Italy, has just reached me. I am delighted to find that this biography of Love, however romantic, is true! In his *ninth year*, Dante was a lover and a poet! The tender sonnet, free from all obscurity, which he composed on Beatrice, is preserved in the above singular volume. There can be no longer any

doubt of the story of Beatrice; but the sonnet and the passion must be “classed among curious natural phenomena,” or how far apocryphal, remains for future inquiry.

266 This work was published in 1742, and the scarcity of these volumes was felt in Granger’s day, for they obtained then the considerable price of four guineas; some time ago a fine copy was sold for thirty at a sale, and a cheap copy was offered to me at twelve guineas. These volumes should contain seventeen portraits. The first was written by Mr. Anderson, who, dying before the second appeared, Lord Egmont, from the materials Anderson had left, concluded his family history—*con amore*.

267 Mr. Anderson, the writer of the first volume, was a feudal enthusiast; he has thrown out an odd notion that the commercial, or the wealthy class, had intruded on the dignity of the ancient nobility; but as wealth has raised such high prices for labour, commodities, &c., it had reached its *ne plus ultra*, and commerce could be carried on no longer! He has ventured on this amusing prediction, “As it is therefore evident that NEW MEN *will never rise again in any age with such advantages of wealth*, at least in considerable numbers, their *party* will gradually decrease.”

268 Much curious matter about the old Countess of Westmoreland and her seven castles may be found in Whitaker’s History of Craven, and in Pennant.

LITERARY PARALLELS.

AN opinion on this subject in the preceding article has led me to a further investigation. It may be right to acknowledge that so attractive is this

critical and moral amusement of comparing great characters with one another, that, among others, Bishop Hurd once proposed to write *a book of Parallels*, and has furnished a specimen in that of Petrarch and Rousseau, and intended for another that of Erasmus with Cicero. It is amusing to observe how a lively and subtle mind can strike out resemblances, and make contraries accord, and at the same time it may show the pinching difficulties through which a parallel is pushed, till it ends in a paradox.

Hurd says of Petrarch and Rousseau—"Both were impelled by an equal enthusiasm, though directed towards different objects: Petrarch's towards the glory of the Roman name, Rousseau's towards his idol of a state of nature; the one religious, the other *un esprit fort*; but may not Petrarch's spite to Babylon be considered, in his time, as a species of free-thinking"—and concludes, that "both were mad, but of a different nature." Unquestionably there were features much alike, and almost peculiar to these two literary characters; but I doubt if Hurd has comprehended them in the parallel.

I now give a specimen of those parallels which have done so much mischief in the literary world, when drawn by a hand which covertly leans on one side. An elaborate one of this sort was composed by Longolius or Longuel, between Budæus and Erasmus.269 This man, though of Dutch origin, affected to pass for a Frenchman, and, to pay his court to his chosen people, gives the preference obliquely to the French Budæus; though, to make a show of impartiality, he acknowledges that Francis the First had awarded it to Erasmus; but probably he did not infer that kings were the most able reviewers! This parallel was sent forth during the lifetime of both these great scholars, who had long been correspondents, but the publication of the parallel interrupted their friendly intercourse. Erasmus returned his compliments and thanks to Longolius, but at the same time insinuates a gentle hint that he was not overpleased. "What pleases me most," Erasmus

writes, “is the just preference you have given Budæus over me; I confess you are even too economical in your praise of him, as you are too prodigal in mine. I thank you for informing me what it is the learned desire to find in me; my self-love suggests many little excuses, with which, you observe, I am apt *to favour my defects*. If I am careless, it arises partly from my ignorance, and more from my indolence; I am so constituted, that I cannot conquer my nature; I precipitate rather than compose, and it is far more irksome for me to revise than to write.”

This parallel between Erasmus and Budæus, though the parallel itself was not of a malignant nature, yet disturbed the quiet, and interrupted the friendship of both. When Longolius discovered that the Parisian surpassed the Hollander in Greek literature and the knowledge of the civil law, and worked more learnedly and laboriously, how did this detract from the finer genius and the varied erudition of the more delightful writer? The parallelist compares Erasmus to “a river swelling its waters, and often overflowing its banks; Budæus rolled on like a majestic stream, ever restraining its waves within its bed. The Frenchman has more nerve, and blood, and life, and the Hollander more fulness, freshness, and colour.”

The taste for *biographical parallels* must have reached us from Plutarch; and there is something malicious in our nature which inclines us to form *comparative estimates*, usually with a view to elevate one great man at the cost of another, whom we would secretly depreciate. Our political parties at home have often indulged in these fallacious parallels, and Pitt and Fox once balanced the scales, not by the standard weights and measures which ought to have been used, but by the adroitness of the hand that pressed down the scale. In literature, these comparative estimates have proved most prejudicial. A finer model exists not than the *parallel of Dryden and Pope*, by Johnson; for, without designing any undue preference, his vigorous judgment has analysed them by his contrasts, and has rather shown their

distinctness than their similarity. But literary *parallels* usually end in producing *parties*; and, as I have elsewhere observed, often originate in undervaluing one man of genius, for his deficiency in some eminent quality possessed by the other man of genius; they not unfrequently proceed from adverse tastes, and are formed with the concealed design of establishing some favourite one. The world of literature has been deeply infected with this folly. Virgil probably was often vexed in his days by a parallel with Homer, and the *Homerians* combated with the *Virgilians*. Modern Italy was long divided into such literary sects: a perpetual skirmishing is carried on between the *Ariostoists* and the *Tassoists*; and feuds as dire as those between two Highland clans were raised concerning the *Petrarchists*, and the *Chiabrerists*. Old *Corneille* lived to bow his venerable genius before a parallel with *Racine*; and no one has suffered more unjustly by such arbitrary criticisms than *Pope*, for a strange unnatural civil war has often been renewed between the *Drydenists* and the *Popeists*. Two men of great genius should never be depreciated by the misapplied ingenuity of a parallel; on such occasions we ought to conclude *magis pares quam similes*.

269 It is noticed by Jortin in his Life of Erasmus, vol. i. p. 160.

THE PEARL BIBLES AND SIX THOUSAND ERRATA.

As a literary curiosity, I notice a subject which might rather enter into the history of religion. It relates to the extraordinary state of our English Bibles, which were for some time suffered to be so corrupted that no books ever yet swarmed with such innumerable errata!

These errata unquestionably were in great part voluntary commissions, passages interpolated, and meanings forged for certain purposes; sometimes to sanction the new creed of a half-hatched sect, and sometimes with an intention to destroy all scriptural authority by a confusion, or an omission of texts—the whole was left open to the option or the malignity of the editors, who, probably, like certain ingenious wine-merchants, contrived to accommodate "the waters of life" to their customers' peculiar taste. They had also a project of printing Bibles as cheaply and in a form as contracted as they possibly could for the common people; and they proceeded till it nearly ended with having no Bible at all: and, as Fuller, in his "Mixt Contemplations on Better Times," alluding to this circumstance, with not one of his lucky quibbles, observes, "The *small price* of the Bible has caused the *small prizing* of the Bible."

This extraordinary attempt on the English Bible began even before Charles the First's dethronement, and probably arose from an unusual demand for Bibles, as the sectarian fanaticism was increasing. Printing of English Bibles was an article of open trade; every one printed at the lowest price, and as fast as their presses would allow. Even those who were dignified as "his Majesty's Printers" were among these manufacturers; for we have an account of a scandalous omission by them of the important negative in the seventh commandment! The printers were summoned before the Court of High Commission, and this *not* served to bind them in a fine of three thousand pounds! A prior circumstance, indeed, had occurred, which induced the government to be more vigilant on the Biblical Press. The learned Usher, one day hastening to preach at Paul's Cross, entered the shop

of one of the stationers, as booksellers were then called, and inquiring for a Bible of the London edition, when he came to look for his text, to his astonishment and horror he discovered that the verse was omitted in the Bible! This gave the first occasion of complaint to the king of the insufferable negligence and incapacity of the London press: and, says the manuscript writer of this anecdote, first bred that great contest which followed, between the University of Cambridge and the London stationers, about the right of printing Bibles.[270]

The secret bibliographical history of these times would show the extraordinary state of the press in this new trade of Bibles. The writer of a curious pamphlet exposes the combination of those called the king's printers, with their contrivances to keep up the prices of Bibles; their correspondence with the booksellers of Scotland and Dublin, by which means they retained the privilege in their own hands: the king's *London* printers got Bibles printed cheaper at Edinburgh. In 1629, when folio Bibles were wanted, the Cambridge printers sold them at ten shillings in quires; on this the Londoners set six printing-houses at work, and, to annihilate the Cambridgians, printed a similar *folio* Bible, but sold with it five hundred *quarto* Roman Bibles, and five hundred *quarto* English, at five shillings a book; which proved the ruin of the folio Bibles, by keeping them down under the cost price. Another competition arose among those who printed English Bibles in Holland, in *duodecimo*, with an English colophon, for half the price even of the lowest in London. Twelve thousand of these *duodecimo* Bibles, with notes, fabricated in Holland, usually by our fugitive sectarians, were seized by the king's printers, as contrary to the statute.[271] Such was this shameful war of Bibles—folios, quartos, and duodecimos, even in the days of Charles the First. The public spirit of the rising sects was the real occasion of these increased demands for Bibles.

During the civil wars they carried on the same open trade and competition, besides the private ventures of the smuggled Bibles. A large impression of these Dutch English Bibles were burnt by order of the Assembly of Divines, for these *three errors*:—

Gen. xxxvi. 24.—This is that *ass* that found rulers in the wilderness—for *mule*.

Ruth iv. 13.—The Lord gave her *corruption*—for *conception*.

Luke xxi. 28.—Look up, and lift up your hands, for your *condemnation* draweth nigh—for *redemption*.

These errata were none of the printer's; but, as a writer of the times expresses it, "egregious blasphemies, and damnable errata" of some sectarian, or some Bellamy editor of that day!

The printing of Bibles at length was a privilege conceded to one William Bentley; but he was opposed by Hills and Field; and a paper war arose, in which they mutually recriminated on each other, with equal truth.

Field printed, in 1653, what was called the Pearl Bible; alluding, I suppose, to that diminutive type in printing, for it could not derive its name from its worth. It is in twenty-fours;[272] but to contract the mighty book into this dwarfishness, all the original Hebrew text prefixed to the Psalms, explaining the occasion and the subject of their composition, is wholly expunged. This Pearl Bible, which may be inspected among the great collection of our English Bibles at the British Museum, is set off by many notable *errata*, of which these are noticed:—

Romans vi. 13.—Neither yield ye your members as instruments of *righteousness* unto sin—for *unrighteousness*.

First Corinthians vi. 9.—Know ye not that the unrighteous *shall inherit* the kingdom of God?—for *shall not inherit*.

This *erratum* served as the foundation of a dangerous doctrine; for many libertines urged the text from this corrupt Bible against the reproofs of a divine.

This Field was a great forger; and it is said that he received a present of 1500*l.* from the *Independents* to corrupt a text in Acts vi. 3, to sanction the right of the people to appoint their own pastors.[273] The corruption was the easiest possible; it was only to put a *ye* instead of a *we*; so that the right in Field's Bible emanated from the people, not from the apostles. The only account I recollect of this extraordinary state of our Bibles is a happy allusion in a line of Butler:—

> Religion spawn'd a various rout,
> Of petulant, capricious sects,
> THE MAGGOTS OF CORRUPTED TEXTS.

In other Bibles by Hills and Field we may find such abundant errata, reducing the text to nonsense or to blasphemy, making the Scriptures contemptible to the multitude, who came to pray, and not to scoff.

It is affirmed, in the manuscript account already referred to, that one Bible swarmed with *six thousand faults*! Indeed, from another source we discover that "Sterne, a solid scholar, was the first who summed up the *three thousand and six hundred* faults that were in our printed Bibles of London."[274] If one book can be made to contain near four thousand errors, little ingenuity was required to reach to six thousand; but perhaps this is the first time so remarkable an incident in the history of literature has ever been chronicled. And that famous edition of the Vulgate, by Pope Sixtus the Fifth, a memorable book of blunders, which commands such high prices,

ought now to fall in value, before the pearl Bible, in twenty-fours, of Messrs. Hills and Field!

Mr. Field and his worthy coadjutor seem to have carried the favour of the reigning powers over their opponents; for I find a piece of their secret history. They engaged to pay 500*l.* per annum to some, "whose names I forbear to mention," warily observes the manuscript writer; and above 100*l.* per annum to Mr. *Marchmont Needham and his wife*, out of the profits of the sales of their Bibles; deriding, insulting, and triumphing over others, out of their confidence in their great friends and purse, as if they were lawless and free, both from offence and punishment.[275] This Marchmont Needham is sufficiently notorious, and his secret history is probably true; for in a Mercurius Politicus of this unprincipled Cobbett of his day, I found an elaborate puff of an edition published by the annuity-granter to this worthy and his wife!

Not only had the Bible to suffer these indignities of size and price, but the Prayer-book was once printed in an illegible and worn-out type; on which the printer being complained of, he stoutly replied, that "it was as good as the price afforded; and being a book which all persons ought to have by heart, it was no matter whether it was read or not, so that it was worn out in their hands." The puritans seem not to have been so nice about the source of purity itself.

These hand-bibles of the sectarists, with their six thousand errata, like the false Duessa, covered their crafty deformity with a fair raiment; for when the great Selden, in the assembly of divines, delighted to confute them in their own learning, he would say, as Whitelock reports, when they had cited a text to prove their assertion, "Perhaps in your little pocket-bible with gilt leaves," which they would often pull out and read, "the translation may be so, but the Greek or the Hebrew signifies this."

While these transactions were occurring, it appears that the authentic translation of the Bible, such as we now have it, by the learned translators in James the First's time, was suffered to lie neglected. The copies of the original manuscript were in the possession of two of the king's printers, who, from cowardice, consent, and connivance, suppressed the publication; considering that the Bible full of errata, and often, probably, accommodated to the notions of certain sectarists, was more valuable than one authenticated by the hierarchy! Such was the state of the English Bible till 1660![276]

The proverbial expression of *chapter and verse* seems peculiar to ourselves, and, I suspect, originated in the puritanic period, probably just before the civil wars under Charles the First, from the frequent use of appealing to the Bible on the most frivolous occasions, practised by those whom South calls "those mighty men at *chapter and verse*." With a sort of religious coquetry, they were vain of perpetually opening their gilt pocket Bibles; they perked them up with such self-sufficiency and perfect ignorance of the original, that the learned Selden found considerable amusement in going to their "assembly of divines," and puzzling or confuting them, as we have noticed. A ludicrous anecdote on one of these occasions is given by a contemporary, which shows how admirably that learned man amused himself with this "assembly of divines!" They were discussing the distance between Jerusalem and Jericho, with a perfect ignorance of sacred or of ancient geography; one said it was twenty miles, another ten, and at last it was concluded to be only seven, for this strange reason, that fish was brought from Jericho to Jerusalem market! Selden observed, that "possibly the fish in question was salted," and silenced these acute disputants.

It would probably have greatly discomposed these "chapter and verse" men to have informed them that the Scriptures had neither chapter nor

verse! It is by no means clear how the holy writings were anciently divided, and still less how quoted or referred to. The honour of the invention of the present arrangement of the Scriptures is ascribed to Robert Stephens, by his son, in the preface to his Concordance, a task which he performed during a journey on horseback from Paris to London, in 1551; and whether it was done as Yorick would in his Shandean manner lounging on his mule, or at his intermediate baits, he has received all possible thanks for this employment of his time. Two years afterwards he concluded with the Bible. But that the honour of every invention may be disputed, Sanctus Pagninus's Bible, printed at Lyons in 1527, seems to have led the way to these convenient divisions; Stephens, however, improved on Pagninus's mode of paragraphical marks and marginal verses; and our present "chapter and verse," more numerous and more commodiously numbered, were the project of this learned printer, to *recommend his edition of the Bible*; trade and learning were once combined! Whether in this arrangement any disturbance of the continuity of the text has followed, is a subject not fitted for my inquiry.

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270 Harl. MS. 6395.

271 "Scintilla, or a light broken into darke Warehouses; of some Printers, sleeping Stationers, and combining Booksellers; in which is only a touch of their forestalling and ingrossing of Books in Pattents, and raysing them to excessive prises. Left to the consideration of the high and honourable House of Parliament, now assembled. London: Nowhere to be sold, but somewhere to be given." 1641.

272 A technical printing-term for a sheet containing twenty-four pages.

273 The passage is as follows, and is addressed by the apostles to "the multitude of the disciples," who desired an improved clerical rule:—"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom *we* may appoint over this business."

274 G. Garrard's Letter to the Earl of Strafford, vol. i. p. 208.

275 Harl. MS. 7580.

276 See the London Printers' Lamentation on the Press Oppressed. Harl. Coll. iii. 280.

VIEW OF A PARTICULAR PERIOD OF THE STATE OF RELIGION IN OUR CIVIL WARS.

LOOKING over the manuscript diary of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, I was struck by a picture of the domestic religious life which at that period was prevalent among families. Sir Symonds was a sober antiquary, heated with no fanaticism, yet I discovered in his diary that he was a visionary in his constitution, macerating his body by private fasts, and spiritualising in search of *secret signs*. These ascetic penances were afterwards succeeded in the nation by an era of hypocritical sanctity; and we may trace this last stage of insanity and of immorality closing with impiety. This would be a dreadful picture of religion, if for a moment we supposed that it were *religion*; that consolatory power which has its source in our feelings, and according to the derivation of its expressive term, *binds men together*. With us it was sectarism, whose origin and causes we shall not now touch on, which broke out into so many monstrous shapes, when every pretended reformer was guided by his own peculiar fancies: we have lived to prove that folly and wickedness are rarely obsolete.

The age of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, who lived through the times of Charles the First, was religious; for the character of this monarch had all the seriousness and piety not found in the *bonhomie* and careless indecorums of his father, whose manners of the Scottish court were moulded on the gaieties of the French, from the ancient intercourse of the French and Scottish governments. But this religious age of Charles the First presents a strange contrast with the licentiousness which subsequently prevailed among the people: there seems to be a secret connexion between a religious and an irreligious period: the levity of popular feeling is driven to and fro by its reaction; when man has been once taught to contemn his mere humanity, his abstract fancies open a secret bye-path to his presumed salvation; he wanders till he is lost—he trembles till he dotes in melancholy —he raves till truth itself is no longer immutable. The transition to a very opposite state is equally rapid and vehement. Such is the history of man when his religion is founded on misdirected feelings; and such, too, is the reaction so constantly operating in all human affairs.

The writer of this diary did not belong to those nonconformists who arranged themselves in hostility to the established religion and political government of our country. A private gentleman and a phlegmatic antiquary, Sir Symonds withal was a zealous Church of England protestant. Yet amidst the mystical allusions of an age of religious controversies, we see these close in the scenes we are about to open, and find this quiet gentleman tormenting himself and his lady by watching for "certain *evident marks* and *signs of an assurance* for a better life," with I know not how many distinct sorts of "Graces."

I give an extract from the manuscript diary:—

"I spent this day chiefly in *private fasting*, prayer, and other religious exercises. This was the first time that I ever practised this duty, having always before declined it, by reason of the papists' superstitious abuses of it. I had partaken formerly of *public fasts*, but never knew the use and benefit

of the same duty performed alone in secret, or with others of mine own family in private. In these particulars, I had my knowledge much enlarged by the religious converse I enjoyed at Albury Lodge, for there also I shortly after entered upon *framing an evidence of marks and signs for my assurance of a better life*.

"I found much benefit of my *secret fasting*, from a learned discourse on fasting by Mr. Henry Mason, and observed his rule, that Christians ought to sit sometimes apart for their ordinary humiliation and fasting, and so intend to continue the same course as long as my health will permit me. Yet did I vary the times and duration of my fasting. At first, before I had finished *the marks and signs of my assurance of a better life, which scrutiny and search cost me some three-score days of fasting*, I performed it sometimes twice in the space of five weeks, then once each month, or a little sooner or later, and then also I sometimes ended the duties of the day, and took some little food about three of the clock in the afternoon. But for divers years last past, I constantly abstained from all food the whole day. I fasted till supper-time, about six in the evening, and spent ordinarily about eight or nine hours in the performance of religious duties; one part of which was *prayer and confession of sins*, to which end I wrote down *a catalogue of all my known sins*, orderly. These were all sins of *infirmity*; for, through God's grace, I was so far from allowing myself in the practice and commission of any *actual* sin, as I durst not take upon me any *controversial sins*, as usury, carding, dicing, mixt dancing, and the like, because I was in mine own judgment persuaded they were unlawful. Till I had finished my *assurance* first in English and afterwards in Latin, with a large and an elaborate preface in Latin also to it; I spent a great part of the day at that work, &c.

"Saturday, December 1, 1627, I devoted to my usual course of *secret fasting*, and drew divers *signs of my assurance of a better life* from the *grace* of repentance, having before gone through the *graces* of knowledge, faith, hope, love, zeal, patience, humility, and joy; and drawing several marks from them on like days of humiliation for the greater part. My dear wife beginning also to draw *most certain signs* of her own future happiness after death from *several graces*.

"January 19, 1628.—Saturday I spent in secret humiliation and fastings, and finished *my whole assurance to a better life*, consisting of THREE SCORE and FOUR SIGNS, or marks drawn from *several graces*. I made some small alterations in the signs afterwards; and when I turned them into the Latin tongue, I enriched the margent with further *proofs and authorities*. I found much comfort and reposedness of spirit from them, which shows the devilish sophisms of the papists, anabaptists, and pseudo-Lutherans, and profane atheistical men, who say that *assurance* brings forth presumption, and a careless wicked life. True, when men pretend to the end, and not use the means.

"My wife joined with me in a private day of *fasting*, and drew *several signs and marks by* MY *help and assistance, for her assurance to a better life*."

This was an era of religious diaries, particularly among the nonconformists; but they were, as we see, used by others. Of the Countess

of Warwick, who died in 1678, we are told that "she kept a diary, and took counsel with two persons, whom she called her *soul's friends*." She called prayers *heart's ease*, for such she found them. "Her own lord, knowing her *hours of prayers*, once conveyed a godly minister into *a secret place* within hearing, who, being a man very able to judge, much admired her humble fervency; for in praying she prayed aloud; but when she did not with an audible voice, her sighs and groans might be heard at a good distance from the closet." We are not surprised to discover this practice of religious diaries among the more puritanic sort: what they were we may gather from this description of one. Mr. John Janeway "kept a diary, in which he wrote down *every evening* what the *frame of his spirit* had been *all that day*; he took notice what *incomes* he had, what *profit* he received in his spiritual traffic: what *returns* came from that far country; what *answers* of prayer, what deadness and flatness of spirit," &c. And so we find of Mr. John Carter, that "He kept a *day-book* and *cast up his accounts* with God every day."[277] To such worldly notions had they humiliated the spirit of religion; and this style, and this mode of religion, has long been continued among us even among men of superior acquisitions: as witness the "Spiritual Diary and Soliloquies" of a learned physician within our own times, Dr. Rutty, which is a great curiosity of the kind.

Such was the domestic state of many well-meaning families: they were rejecting with the utmost abhorrence every resemblance to what they called the idolatry of Rome, while, in fact, the gloom of the monastic cell was settling over the houses of these melancholy puritans. Private fasts were more than ever practised; and a lady, said to be eminent for her genius and learning, who outlived this era, declared that she had nearly lost her life through a prevalent notion that *no fat person could get to heaven*; and thus spoiled and wasted her body through excessive fastings. A quaker, to prove the text that "Man shall not live *by bread alone*, but by the word of God," persisted in refusing his meals. The literal text proved for him a dead letter,

and this practical commentator died by a metaphor. This quaker, however, was not the only victim to the letter of the text; for the famous Origen, by interpreting in too literal a way the 12th verse of the 19th of St. Matthew, which alludes to those persons who become eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven, with his own hands armed himself against himself, as is sufficiently known. "*Retournons à nos moutons!*" The parliament afterwards had both periodical and occasional fasts; and Charles the First opposed "the hypocritical fast of every Wednesday in the month, by appointing one for the second Friday;" the two unhappy parties, who were hungering and thirsting for each other's blood, were fasting in spite one against the other!

Without inquiring into the causes, even if we thought that we could ascertain them, of that frightful dissolution of religion which so long prevailed in our country, and of which the very corruption it has left behind still breeds in monstrous shapes, it will be sufficient to observe that the destruction of the monarchy and the ecclesiastical order was a moral earthquake, overturning all minds, and opening all changes. A theological logomachy was substituted by the sullen and proud ascetics who ascended into power. These, without wearying themselves, wearied all others, and triumphed over each other by their mutual obscurity. The two great giants in this theological war were the famous Richard Baxter and Dr. Owen. They both wrote a library of books; but the endless controversy between them was the extraordinary and incomprehensible subject, whether the death of Christ was *solutio ejusdem*, or only *tantundem*; that is, whether it was a payment of the very thing, which by law we ought to have paid, or of something held by God to be equivalent. Such was the point on which this debate between Owen and Baxter lasted without end.

Yet these metaphysical absurdities were harmless, compared to what was passing among the more hot fanatics, who were for acting the wild fancies which their melancholy brains engendered; men, who from the places into

which they had thrust themselves, might now be called “the higher orders of society!” These two parties alike sent forth an evil spirit to walk among the multitude. Every one would become his own law-maker, and even his own prophet; the meanest aspired to give his name to his sect. All things were to be put in motion according to the St. Vitus’s dance of the last new saint. “Away with the Law! which cuts off a man’s legs and then bids him walk!” cried one from his pulpit. “Let believers sin as fast as they will, they have a fountain open to wash them;” declared another teacher. We had the *Brownists*, from Robert Brown, the *Vaneists*, from Sir Harry Vane, then we sink down to Mr. Traske, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Robinson, and H. N., or Henry Nicholas, of the Family of Love, besides Mrs. Hutchinson, and the Grindletonian family, who preferred “motions to motives,” and conveniently assumed that “their spirit is not to be tried by the Scripture, but the Scripture by their spirit.” Edwards, the author of “Gangræna,” the adversary of Milton, whose work may still be preserved for its curiosity, though immortalised by the scourge of genius, has furnished a list of about two hundred of such sects in these times. A divine of the Church of England observed to a great sectary, “You talk of the idolatry of Rome: but each of you, whenever you have made and set up a calf, will dance about it.”[278]

This confusion of religions, if, indeed, these pretended modes of faith could be classed among religions, disturbed the consciences of good men, who read themselves in and out of their vacillating creed. It made, at least, even one of the puritans themselves, who had formerly complained that they had not enjoyed sufficient freedom under the bishops, cry out against “this cursed intolerable toleration.” And the fact is, that when the presbyterians had fixed themselves into the government, they published several treatises against toleration! The parallel between these wild notions of reform, and those of another character, run closely together. About this time, well-meaning persons, who were neither enthusiasts from the ambition of founding sects, nor of covering their immorality by their

impiety, were infected by the *religiosa insania*. One case may stand for many. A Mr. Greswold, a gentleman of Warwickshire, whom a Brownist had by degrees enticed from his parish church, was afterwards persuaded to return to it—but he returned with a troubled mind, and lost in the prevalent theological contests. A horror of his future existence shut him out, as it were, from his present one: retiring into his own house, with his children, he ceased to communicate with the living world. He had his food put in at the window; and when his children lay sick, he admitted no one for their relief. His house at length was forced open, and they found two children dead, and the father confined to his bed. He had mangled his Bible, and cut out the titles, contents, and everything but the very text itself; for it seems that he thought that everything human was sinful, and he conceived that the titles of the books and the contents of the chapters were to be cut out of the sacred Scriptures, as having been composed by men.[279]

More terrible it was when the insanity, which had hitherto been more confined to the better classes, burst forth among the common people. Were we to dwell minutely on this period, we should start from the picture with horror: we might, perhaps, console ourselves with a disbelief of its truth; but the drug, though bitter in the mouth, we must sometimes digest. To observe the extent to which the populace can proceed, disfranchised of law and religion, will always leave a memorable recollection.

What occurred in the French Revolution had happened here—an age of impiety! Society itself seemed dissolved, for every tie of private affection and of public duty was unloosened. Even nature was strangely violated! From the first opposition to the decorous ceremonies of the national church, by the simple puritans, the next stage was that of ridicule, and the last of obloquy. They began by calling the surplice a linen rag on the back; baptism a Christ's cross on a baby's face; and the organ was likened to the bellow, the grunt, and the barking of the respective animals. They actually baptized

horses in churches at the fonts; and the jest of that day was, that the Reformation was now a thorough one in England, since our horses went to church.[280] St. Paul's cathedral was turned into a market, and the aisles, the communion-table, and the altar, served for the foulest purposes.[281] The liberty which every one now assumed of delivering his own opinions, led to acts so execrable, that I can find no parallel for them except in the mad times of the French Revolution. Some maintained that there existed no distinction between moral good and moral evil; and that every man's actions were prompted by the Creator. Prostitution was professed as a religious act; a glazier was declared to be a prophet, and the woman he cohabited with was said to be ready to lie in of the Messiah. A man married his father's wife. Murders of the most extraordinary nature were occurring; one woman crucified her mother; another, in imitation of Abraham, sacrificed her child; we hear, too, of parricides. Amidst the slaughters of civil wars, spoil and blood had accustomed the people to contemplate the most horrible scenes. One madman of the many, we find drinking a health on his knees, in the midst of a town, "to the devil! that it might be said that his family should not be extinct without doing some infamous act." A Scotchman, one Alexander Agnew, commonly called "Jock of broad Scotland," whom one cannot call an atheist, for he does not seem to deny the existence of the Creator, nor a future state, had a shrewdness of local humour in his strange notions. Omitting some offensive things, others as strange may exhibit the state to which the reaction of an hypocritical system of religion had driven the common people. "Jock of broad Scotland" said he was nothing in God's common, for God had given him nothing; he was no more obliged to God than to the devil; for God was very greedy. Neither God nor the devil gave the fruits of the ground; the wives of the country gave him his meat. When asked wherein he believed, he answered, "He believed in white meal, water, and salt. Christ was not God; for he came into the world after it was made, and died as other men." He declared that

“he did not know whether God or the devil had the greatest power; but he thought the devil was the greatest. When I die, let God and the devil strive for my soul, and let him that is strongest take it.” He no doubt had been taught by the presbytery to mock religious rites; and when desired to give God thanks for his meat, he said, “Take a sackful of prayers to the mill and grind them, and take your breakfast of them.” To others he said, “I will give you a two-pence, to pray until a boll of meal, and one stone of butter, fall from heaven through the house rigging (roof) to you.” When bread and cheese were laid on the ground by him, he said, “If I leave this, I will long cry to God before he give it me again.” To others he said, “Take a bannock, and break it in two, and lay down one half thereof, and you will long pray to God before he will put the other half to it again!” He seems to have been an anti-trinitarian. He said he received everything from nature, which had ever reigned and ever would. He would not conform to any religious system, nor name the three Persons,—“At all these things I have long shaken my cap,” he said. “Jock of broad Scotland” seems to have been one of those who imagine that God should have furnished them with bannocks ready baked.

The extravagant fervour then working in the minds of the people is marked by the story told by Clement Walker of the soldier who entered a church with a lantern and a candle burning in it, and in the other hand four candles not lighted. He said he came to deliver his message from God, and show it by these types of candles. Driven into the churchyard, and the wind blowing strong, he could not kindle his candles, and the new prophet was awkwardly compelled to conclude his five denouncements, abolishing the Sabbath, tithes, ministers, magistrates, and, at last, the Bible itself, without putting out each candle, as he could not kindle them; observing, however, each time—“And here I should put out the first light, but the wind is so high that I cannot kindle it.”

A perfect scene of the effects which the state of irreligious society produced among the lower orders I am enabled to give from the manuscript life of John Shaw, vicar of Rotherham; with a little tediousness, but with infinite *naïveté*, he relates what happened to himself. This honest divine was puritanically inclined, but there can be no exaggeration in these unvarnished facts. He tells a remarkable story of the state of religious knowledge in Lancashire, at a place called Cartmel: some of the people appeared desirous of religious instruction, declaring that they were without any minister, and had entirely neglected every religious rite, and therefore pressed him to quit his situation at Lymm for a short period. He may now tell his own story.

"I found a very large spacious church, scarce any seats in it; a people very ignorant, and yet willing to learn; so as I had frequently some thousands of hearers, I catechised in season and out of season. The churches were so thronged at nine in the morning, that I had much ado to get to the pulpit. One day, an old man about sixty, sensible enough in other things, and living in the parish of Cartmel, coming to me on some business, I told him that he belonged to my care and charge, and I desired to be informed of his knowledge in religion. I asked him how many Gods there were? He said he knew not. I informing him, asked again how he thought to be saved? He answered he could not tell. Yet thought that was a harder question than the other. I told him that the way to salvation was by Jesus Christ, God-man, who as he was man shed his blood for us on the cross, &c. Oh, sir, said he, I think I heard of that man you speak of once in a play at Kendall, called Corpus-Christ's play,[282] where there was a man on a tree and blood run down, &c. And afterwards he professed he could not remember that he ever heard of salvation by Jesus, but in that play."

The scenes passing in the metropolis, as well as in the country, are opened to us in one of the chronicling poems of George Withers. Our sensible rhymer wrote in November, 1652, "a Darke Lanthorne" on the present subject.

After noticing that God, to mortify us, had sent preachers from the "shop-board and the plough,"

———Such as we seem justly to contemn,
As making truths abhorred, which come from them;

he seems, however, inclined to think that these self-taught "Teachers and Prophets" in their darkness might hold a certain light within them:

————Children, fools,
Women, and madmen, we do often meet
Preaching, and threatening judgments in the street,
Yea by strange actions, postures, tones, and cries,
Themselves they offer to our ears and eyes
As signs unto this nation.——
They act as men in ecstacies have done——
Striving their cloudy visions to declare,
Till they have lost the notions which they had,
And want but few degrees of being mad.[283]

Such is the picture of the folly and of the wickedness, which, after having been preceded by the piety of a religious age, were succeeded by a dominion of hypocritical sanctity, and then closed in all the horrors of immorality and impiety. The parliament at length issued one of their ordinances for "punishing blasphemous and execrable opinions," and this was enforced with greater power than the slighted proclamations of James and Charles; but the curious wording is a comment on our present subject. The preamble notices that "men and women had lately discovered *monstrous opinions*, even such as tended to *the dissolution of human society, and have abused, and turned into licentiousness, the liberty given in matters of religion*." It punishes any person not distempered in his brains, who shall maintain any mere creature to be God; or that all acts of

unrighteousness are not forbidden in the Scriptures; or that God approves of them; or that there is no real difference between moral good and evil, &c.

To this disordered state was the public mind reduced, for this proclamation was only describing what was passing among the people! The view of this subject embraces more than one point, which I leave for the meditation of the politician, as well as the religionist.

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277 "The Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age;" by Samuel Clarke. Folio, 1683. A rare volume, with curious portraits.

278 Alexander Ross's laborious "View of all Religions" may also be consulted with advantage by those who would study this subject.

279 "The Hypocrite Discovered and Cured," by Sam. Torshall, 4to. 1644.

280 There is a pamphlet which records a strange fact. "News from Powles: or the new Reformation of the army, with a true Relation of a Colt that was foaled in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, in London, and how it was publiquely baptised, and the name (because a bald colt) was called Baal-Rex!" 1649. The water they sprinkled from the soldier's helmet on this occasion is described. The same occurred elsewhere. See Foulis's History of the Plots, &c., of our pretended Saints. These men, who baptized horses and pigs in the name of the Trinity, sang psalms when they marched. One cannot easily comprehend the nature of fanaticism, except when we learn that they refused to pay rents!

281 That curious compilation by Bruno Ryves, published in 1646, with the title "Mercurius Rusticus, or the countrie's complaint of the barbarous outrages committed by the sectaries of this late flourishing kingdom," furnishes a fearful detail of "sacrileges, profanations, and plunderings committed in the cathedrall churches."

282 The festival of Corpus Christi, held on the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday, was the period chosen in old times for the performances of miracle-plays by the clergy, or the guilds of various towns; for an account of them see vol. i. p. 352-362.

283 There is a little “Treatise of Humilitie, published by E.D.—Parson, sequestered”—1654; in which, while enforcing the virtue which his book defends, he with much *naïveté* gives a strong opinion of his oppressors. “We acknowledge the justice and mercy of the Lord in punishing us, so we take notice of his wisdom in choosing such instruments to punish us, *men of mean and low rank, and of common parts and abilities*. By these he doth admonish all the honourable, valiant, learned, and wise men of this nation; and as it were write our sin, in the character of our punishment; and in *the low condition* of these instruments of his anger and displeasure, the rod of his wrath, he would abate and punish our great pride.”

BUCKINGHAM’S POLITICAL COQUETRY WITH THE PURITANS.

BUCKINGHAM, observes Hume, “in order to fortify himself against the resentment of James”—on the conduct of the duke in the Spanish match, when James was latterly hearing every day Buckingham against Bristol, and Bristol against Buckingham—“had affected popularity, and entered into the cabals of the puritans; but afterwards, being secure of the confidence of Charles, he had since abandoned this party; and on that account was the more exposed to their hatred and resentment.”

The political coquetry of a minister coalescing with an opposition party, when he was on the point of being disgraced, would doubtless open an involved scene of intrigue; and what one exacted, and the other was content to yield, towards the mutual accommodation, might add one more example

to the large chapter of political infirmity. Both workmen attempting to convert each other into tools, by first trying their respective malleability on the anvil, are liable to be disconcerted by even a slight accident, whenever that proves, to perfect conviction, how little they can depend on each other, and that each party comes to cheat, and not to be cheated!

This piece of secret history is in part recoverable from good authority. The two great actors were the Duke of Buckingham and Dr. Preston, the master of Emmanual College, and the head of the puritan party.

Dr. Preston was an eminent character, who from his youth was not without ambition. His scholastic learning, the subtilty of his genius, and his more elegant accomplishments, had attracted the notice of James, at whose table he was perhaps more than once honoured as a guest; a suspicion of his puritanic principles was perhaps the only obstacle to his court preferment; yet Preston unquestionably designed to play a political part. He retained the favour of James by the king's hope of withdrawing the doctor from the opposition party, and commanded the favour of Buckingham by the fears of that minister; when, to employ the quaint style of Hacket, the duke foresaw that "he might come to be tried in the furnace of the next sessions of parliament, and he had need to make the refiners his friends:" most of these "refiners" were the puritanic or opposition party. Appointed one of the chaplains of Prince Charles, Dr. Preston had the advantage of being in frequent attendance; and as Hacket tells us, "this politic man felt the pulse of the court, and wanted not the intelligence of all dark mysteries through the Scotch in his highness's bed-chamber." A close communication took place between the duke and Preston, who, as Hacket describes, was "a good crow to smell carrion." He obtained an easy admission to the duke's closet at least thrice a week, and their notable conferences Buckingham appears to have communicated to his confidential friends. Preston, intent on carrying all his points, skilfully commenced with the smaller ones. He winded the

duke circuitously,—he worked at him subterraneously. This wary politician was too sagacious to propose what he had at heart—the extirpation of the hierarchy! The thunder of James's voice, "No bishop! no king!" in the conference at Hampton Court, still echoed in the ear of the puritan. He assured the duke that the love of the people was his only anchor, which could only be secured by the most popular measures. A new sort of reformation was easy to execute. Cathedrals and collegiate churches maintained by vast wealth, and the lands of the chapter, only fed "fat, lazy, and unprofitable drones." The dissolution of the foundations of deans and chapters would open an ample source to pay the king's debts, and scatter the streams of patronage. "You would then become the darling of the commonwealth;" I give the words as I find them in Hacket. "If a crumb stick in the throat of any considerable man that attempts an opposition, it will be easy to wash it down with manors, woods, royalties, tythes, &c." It would be furnishing the wants of a number of gentlemen; and he quoted a Greek proverb, "that when a great oak falls, every neighbour may scuffle for a faggot."

Dr. Preston was willing to perform the part which Knox had acted in Scotland! He might have been certain of a party to maintain this national violation of property; for he who calls out "Plunder!" will ever find a gang. These acts of national injustice, so much desired by revolutionists, are never beneficial to the people; they never partake of the spoliation, and the whole terminates in the gratification of private rapacity.

It was not, however, easy to obtain such perpetual access to the minister, and at the same time escape from the watchful. Archbishop Williams, the lord keeper, got sufficient hints from the king; and in a tedious conference with the duke, he wished to convince him that Preston had only offered him "flitten milk, out of which he should churn nothing!" The duke was, however, smitten by the new project, and made a remarkable answer: "You

lose yourself in generalities: make it out to me, in particular, if you can, that the motion you pick at will find repulse, and be baffled in the House of Commons. I know not how you bishops may struggle, but I am much deluded if a great part of the knights and burgesses would not be glad to see this alteration." We are told on this, that Archbishop Williams took out a list of the members of the House of Commons, and convinced the minister that an overwhelming majority would oppose this projected revolution, and that in consequence the duke gave it up.

But this anterior decision of the duke may be doubtful, since Preston still retained the high favour of the minister, after the death of James. When James died at Theobalds, where Dr. Preston happened to be in attendance, he had the honour of returning to town in the new king's coach with the Duke of Buckingham. The doctor's servile adulation of the minister gave even great offence to the over-zealous puritans. That he was at length discarded is certain; but this was owing not to any deficient subserviency on the side of our politician, but to one of those unlucky circumstances which have often put an end to temporary political connexions, by enabling one party to discover what the other thinks of him.

I draw this curious fact from a manuscript narrative in the handwriting of the learned William Wotton. When the puritanic party foolishly became jealous of the man who seemed to be working at root and branch for their purposes, they addressed a letter to Preston, remonstrating with him for his servile attachment to the minister; on which he confidently returned an answer, assuring them that he was as fully convinced of the vileness and profligacy of the Duke of Buckingham's character as any man could be, but that there was no way to come at him but by the lowest flattery, and that it was necessary for the glory of God that such instruments should be made use of as could be had; and for that reason, and that alone, he showed that respect to the reigning favourite, and not for any real honour that he had for

him. This letter proved fatal; some officious hand conveyed it to the duke! When Preston came, as usual, the duke took his opportunity of asking him what he had ever done to disoblige him, that he should describe him in such black characters to his own party? Preston, in amazement, denied the fact, and poured forth professions of honour and gratitude. The duke showed him his own letter. Dr. Preston instantaneously felt a political apoplexy; the labours of some years were lost in a single morning. The baffled politician was turned out of Wallingford House, never more to see the enraged minister! And from that moment Buckingham wholly abandoned the puritans, and cultivated the friendship of Laud. This happened soon after James the First's death. Wotton adds, "This story I had from one who was extremely well versed in the secret history of the time."[284]

284 Wotton delivered this memorandum to the literary antiquary, Thomas Baker; and Kennet transcribed it in his Manuscript Collections. Lansdowne MSS. No. 932-88. The life of Dr. Preston, in Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary, may be consulted with advantage.

SIR EDWARD COKE'S EXCEPTIONS AGAINST THE HIGH SHERIFF'S OATH.

A CURIOUS fact will show the revolutionary nature of human events, and the necessity of correcting our ancient statutes, which so frequently hold out punishments and penalties for objects which have long ceased to be criminal; as well as for persons against whom it would be barbarous to allow some unrepealed statute to operate.

When a political stratagem was practised by Charles the First to keep certain members out of the House of Commons, by pricking them down as sheriffs in their different counties, among them was the celebrated Sir Edward Coke, whom the government had made High Sheriff for Bucks. It was necessary, perhaps, to be a learned and practised lawyer to discover the means he took, in the height of his resentment, to elude the insult. This great lawyer, who himself, perhaps, had often administered the oath to the sheriffs, which had, century after century, been usual for them to take, to the surprise of all persons drew up Exceptions against the Sheriff's Oath, declaring that no one could take it. Coke sent his Exceptions to the

attorney-general, who, by an immediate order in council, submitted them to "all the judges of England." Our legal luminary had condescended only to some ingenious cavilling in three of his exceptions; but the fourth was of a nature which could not be overcome. All the judges of England assented, and declared, that there was one part of this ancient oath which was perfectly irreligious, and must ever hereafter be left out! This article was, "That you shall do all your pain and diligence to destroy and make to cease all manner of heresies, commonly called *Lollaries*, within your bailiwick, &c."[285] The Lollards were the most ancient of protestants, and had practised Luther's sentiments; it was, in fact, condemning the established religion of the country! An order was issued from Hampton Court, for the abrogation of this part of the oath; and at present all high sheriffs owe this obligation to the resentment of Sir Edward Coke, for having been pricked down as Sheriff of Bucks, to be kept out of parliament! The merit of having the oath changed, *instanter*, he was allowed; but he was not excused taking it, after it was accommodated to the conscientious and lynx-eyed detection of our enraged lawyer.

285 Rushworth's Historical Collections, vol. i. p. 199.

SECRET HISTORY OF CHARLES THE FIRST AND HIS FIRST PARLIAMENTS.

THE reign of Charles the First, succeeded by the Commonwealth of England, forms a period unparalleled by any preceding one in the annals of mankind. It was for the English nation the great result of all former attempts to ascertain and to secure the just freedom of the subject. The prerogative of the sovereign and the rights of the people were often imagined to be mutual encroachments, and were long involved in contradiction, in an age of unsettled opinions and disputed principles. At length the conflicting parties of monarchy and democracy, in the weakness of their passions, discovered how much each required the other for its protector. This age offers the finest speculations in human nature; it opens a protracted scene of glory and of infamy; all that elevates, and all that humiliates our kind, wrestling together, and expiring in a career of glorious deeds, of revolting crimes, and even of ludicrous infirmities!

The French Revolution is the commentary of the English; and a commentary at times more important than the text which it elucidates. It has thrown a freshness over the antiquity of our own history; and, on returning to it, we seem to possess the feelings, and to be agitated by the interests, of contemporaries. The circumstances and the persons which so many imagine had passed away, have been reproduced under our own eyes. In other histories we accept the knowledge of the characters and the incidents on the evidence of the historian; but here we may take them from our own conviction, since to extinct names and to past events we can apply the reality which we ourselves have witnessed.

Charles the First had scarcely ascended the throne ere he discovered that in his new parliament he was married to a sullen bride: the youthful monarch, with the impatience of a lover, warm with hope and glory, was ungraciously repulsed even in the first favours! The prediction of his father remained, like the handwriting on the wall; but, seated on the throne, Hope was more congenial to youth than Prophecy.

As soon as Charles the First could assemble a parliament, he addressed them with an earnestness, in which the simplicity of words and thoughts strongly contrasted with the oratorical harangues of the late monarch. It cannot be alleged against Charles the First, that he preceded the parliament in the war of words. He courted their affections; and even in this manner of reception, amidst the dignity of the regal office, studiously showed his exterior respect by the marked solemnity of their first meeting. As yet uncrowned, on the day on which he first addressed the Lords and Commons, he wore his crown, and vailed it at the opening, and on the close of his speech; a circumstance to which the parliament had not been accustomed. Another ceremony gave still greater solemnity to the meeting; the king would not enter into business till they had united in prayer. He commanded the doors to be closed, and a bishop to perform the office. The suddenness of this unexpected command disconcerted the catholic lords, of whom the less rigid knelt, and the moderate stood: there was one startled papist who did nothing but cross himself![286]

The speech may be found in Rushworth; the friendly tone must be shown here.

> I hope that you do remember that you were pleased to employ me to advise my father to break off the treaties (with Spain). I came into this business willingly and freely, like a young man, and consequently rashly; but it was by your interest—your engagement. I pray you to remember, that this being my *first action*, and begun by *your advice and entreaty*, what a great dishonour it were to you and me that it should fail for that assistance you are able to give me!

This effusion excited no sympathy in the house. They voted not a seventh part of the expenditure necessary to proceed with a war, into which, as a popular measure, they themselves had forced the king.

At Oxford the king again reminded them that he was engaged in a war “from their desires and advice.” He expresses his disappointment at their

insufficient grant, “far short to set forth the navy now preparing.” The speech preserves the same simplicity.

Still no echo of kindness responded in the house. It was, however, asserted, in a vague and quibbling manner, that “though a former parliament did engage the king in a war, yet, (if things were managed by a contrary design, and the treasure misemployed) *this parliament is not bound by another parliament*:” and they added a cruel mockery, “that the king should help the cause of the Palatinate with *his own money*!”—this foolish war, which James and Charles had so long borne their reproaches for having avoided as hopeless, but which the puritanic party, as well as others, had continually urged as necessary for the maintenance of the protestant cause in Europe.

Still no supplies! but protestations of duty, and petitions about grievances, which it had been difficult to specify. In their “Declaration” they style his Majesty “Our dear and dread sovereign,” and themselves “his poor Commons:” but they concede no point—they offer no aid! The king was not yet disposed to quarrel, though he had in vain pressed for dispatch of business, lest the season should be lost for the navy; again reminding them, that “it was the *first request* that he ever made unto them!” On the pretence of the plague at Oxford, Charles prorogued parliament, with a promise to reassemble in the winter.

There were a few whose hearts had still a pulse to vibrate with the distresses of a youthful monarch, perplexed by a war which they themselves had raised. But others, of a more republican complexion, rejected “*Necessity*, as a dangerous counsellor, which would be always furnishing arguments for supplies. If the king was in danger and necessity, those ought to answer for it who have put both king and kingdom into this peril: and if the state of things would not admit a redress of grievances, there cannot be so much *necessity for money*.”

The first parliament abandoned the king!

Charles now had no other means to despatch the army and fleet, in a bad season, but by borrowing money on privy seals: these were letters, where the loan exacted was as small as the style was humble. They specified, “that this loan, without inconvenience to any, is only intended for the service of the public. Such private helps for public services which cannot be deferred,” the king premises, had been often resorted to; but this “being the *first time* that we have required anything in this kind, we require but *that sum which few men would deny a friend*.” As far as I can discover, the highest sum assessed from great personages was twenty pounds! The king was willing to suffer any mortification, even that of a charitable solicitation, rather than endure the obdurate insults of parliament! All donations were received, from ten pounds to five shillings: this was the mockery of an alms-basket! Yet with contributions and savings so trivial, and exacted with such a warm appeal to their feelings, was the king to send out a fleet with ten thousand men—to take Cadiz!

This expedition, like so many similar attempts from the days of Charles the First to those of the great Lord Chatham, and to our own—concluded in a nullity! Charles, disappointed in this predatory attempt, in despair called his *second* parliament—as he says, “in the midst of his necessities—and to learn from them how he was to frame his course and counsels.”

The Commons, as duteously as ever, profess that “No king was ever dearer to his people, and that they really intend to assist his majesty in such a way as may make him safe at home and feared abroad”—but it was to be on condition that he would be graciously pleased to accept “the information and advice of parliament in discovering the causes of the great evils, and redress their grievances.” The king accepted this “as a satisfactory answer;” but Charles comprehended their drift—“You specially aim at the Duke of Buckingham; what he hath done to change your minds I wot not.” The style

of the king now first betrays angered feelings; the secret cause of the uncomplying conduct of the Commons was hatred of the favourite—but the king saw that they designed to control the executive government, and he could ascribe their antipathy to Buckingham but to the capriciousness of popular favour; for not long ago he had heard Buckingham hailed as "their saviour." In the zeal and firmness of his affections, Charles always considered that he himself was aimed at in the person of his confidant, his companion, and his minister!

Some of "the bold speakers," as the heads of the opposition are frequently designated in the manuscript letters, have now risen into notice. Sir John Eliot, Dr. Turner, Sir Dudley Digges, Mr. Clement Coke, poured themselves forth in a vehement, not to say seditious style, with invectives more daring than had ever before thundered in the House of Commons! The king now told them—"I come to show your errors, and, as I may call it, *unparliamentary proceedings of parliament*." The lord keeper then assured them, that "when the irregular humours of *some particular persons* were settled, the king would hear and answer all just grievances; but the king would have them also to know that he was equally jealous to the contempt of his royal rights, which his majesty would not suffer to be violated by any pretended course of parliamentary liberty. The king considered the parliament as his council; but there was a difference between councilling and controlling, and between liberty and the abuse of liberty." He finished by noticing their extraordinary proceedings in their impeachment of Buckingham. The king, resuming his speech, remarkably reproached the parliament—

Now that you have all things according to your wishes, and that *I am so far engaged that you think there is no retreat, now you begin to set the dice, and make your own game*. But I pray you be not deceived; it is not a parliamentary way, nor is it a way to deal with a king. Mr. Clement Coke told you, "It was better to be eaten up by a foreign enemy than to be destroyed at home!" Indeed, I think it

more honour for a king to be invaded and almost destroyed by a foreign enemy than to *be despised by his own subjects*.

The king concluded by asserting his privilege to call or to forbid parliaments.

The style of "the bold speakers" appeared at least as early as in April; I trace their spirit in letters of the times, which furnish facts and expressions that do not appear in our printed documents.

Among the earliest of our patriots, and finally the great victim of his exertions, was Sir John Eliot, vice-admiral of Devonshire. He, in a tone which "rolled back to Jove his own bolts," and startled even the writer, who was himself biassed to the popular party, "made a resolute, I doubt whether a timely, speech." He adds Eliot asserted that "They came not thither either to do what the king should command them, nor to abstain when he forbade them; they came to continue constant, and to maintain their privileges. They would not give their posterity a cause to curse them for losing their privileges by restraint, which their forefathers had left them."[287]

On the 8th of May the impeachment of the duke was opened by Sir Dudley Digges, who compared the duke to a meteor exhaled out of putrid matter. He was followed by Glanville, Selden, and others. On this first day the duke sat out-facing his accusers and out-braving their accusations, which the more highly exasperated the house.[288] On the following day the duke was absent, when the epilogue to this mighty piece was elaborately delivered by Sir John Eliot, with a force of declamation and a boldness of personal allusion which have not been surpassed in the invectives of the modern Junius.

Eliot, after expatiating on the favourite's ambition in procuring and getting into his hands the greatest offices of strength and power in the

kingdom, and the means by which he had obtained them, drew a picture of "the inward character of the duke's mind." The duke's plurality of offices reminded him "of a chimerical beast called by the ancients *Stellionatus*, so blurred, so spotted, so full of foul lines that they knew not what to make of it! In setting up himself he hath set upon the kingdom's revenues, the fountain of supply, and the nerves of the land. He intercepts, consumes, and exhausts the revenues of the crown; and, by emptying the veins the blood should run in, he hath cast the kingdom into a high consumption." He descends to criminate the duke's magnificent tastes; he who had something of a congenial nature; for Eliot was a man of fine literature. "Infinite sums of money, and mass of land exceeding the value of money, contributions in parliament have been heaped upon him; and how have they been employed? Upon costly furniture, sumptuous feasting, and magnificent building, *the visible evidence of the express exhausting of the state*!"

Eliot eloquently closes—

> Your lordships have an *idea* of the man, what he is in himself, what in his affections! You have seen his power, and some, I fear, have felt it. You have known his practice, and have heard the effects. Being such, what is he in reference to king and state; how compatible or incompatible with either? In reference to the king, he must be styled the canker in his treasure; in reference to the state the moth of all goodness. I can hardly find him a parallel; but none were so like him as Sejanus, who is described by Tacitus, *Audax; sui obtegens, in alios criminator; juxta adulatio et superbia*. Sejanus's pride was so excessive, as Tacitus saith, that he neglected all councils, mixed his business and service with the prince, seeming to confound their actions, and was often styled *Imperatoris laborum socius*. Doth not this man the like? Ask England, Scotland, and Ireland—and they will tell you! How lately and how often hath this man commixed his actions in discourses with actions of the king's! My lords! I have done—you see the man!

The parallel of the duke with Sejanus electrified the house; and, as we shall see, touched Charles on a convulsive nerve.

The king's conduct on this speech was the beginning of his troubles, and the first of his more open attempts to crush the popular party. In the House of Lords the king defended the duke, and informed them, "I have thought fit to take order for the *punishing some insolent speeches* lately spoken." I find a piece of secret history enclosed in a letter, with a solemn injunction that it might be burnt. "The king this morning complained of Sir John Eliot for comparing the duke to *Sejanus*, in which he said implicitly he must intend *me* for *Tiberius*!" On that day the prologue and the epilogue orators—Sir Dudley Digges, who had opened the impeachment against the duke, and Sir John Eliot, who had closed it—were called out of the house by two messengers, who showed their warrants for committing them to the Tower.289

On this memorable day a philosophical politician might have presciently marked the seed-plots of events, which not many years afterwards were apparent to all men. The passions of kings are often expatiated on; but, in the present anti-monarchical period, the passions of parliaments are not imaginable! The democratic party in our constitution, from the meanest of motives, from their egotism, their vanity, and their audacity, hate kings; they would have an abstract being, a chimerical sovereign on the throne—like a statue, the mere ornament of the place it fills,—and insensible, like a statue, to the invectives they would heap on its pedestal!

The commons, with a fierce spirit of reaction for the king's "punishing some insolent speeches," at once sent up to the lords for the commitment of the duke!290 But when they learnt the fate of the patriots, they instantaneously broke up! In the afternoon they assembled in Westminster-hall, to interchange their private sentiments on the fate of the two imprisoned members, in sadness and indignation.291

The following day the commons met in their own house. When the speaker reminded them of the usual business, they all cried out, "Sit down!

sit down!" They would touch on no business till they were "righted in their liberties!"[292] An open committee of the whole house was formed, and no member suffered to quit the house; but either they were at a loss how to commence this solemn conference, or expressed their indignation by a sullen silence. To soothe and subdue "the bold speakers" was the unfortunate attempt of the vice-chamberlain, Sir Dudley Carleton, who had long been one of our foreign ambassadors; and who, having witnessed the despotic governments on the continent, imagined that there was no deficiency of liberty at home. "I find," said the vice-chamberlain, "by the great silence in this house, that it is a fit time to be heard, if you will grant me the patience." Alluding to one of the king's messages, where it was hinted that, if there was "no correspondency between him and the parliament, he should be forced to *use new counsels*," "I pray you consider what these new counsels are, and may be: I fear to declare those I conceive!" However, Sir Dudley plainly hinted at them, when he went on observing, that "when monarchs began to know their own strength, and saw the turbulent spirit of their *parliaments*, they had overthrown them in all Europe, except here only with us." Our old ambassador drew an amusing picture of the effects of despotic governments, in that of France—"If you knew the subjects in foreign countries as well as myself, to see them look, not like our nation, with store of flesh on their backs, but like so many ghosts and not men, being nothing but skin and bones, with some thin cover to their nakedness, and wearing only wooden shoes on their feet, so that they cannot eat meat, or wear good clothes, but they must pay the king for it; this is a misery beyond expression, and that which we are yet free from!" A long residence abroad had deprived Sir Dudley Carleton of any sympathy with the high tone of freedom, and the proud jealousy of their privileges, which, though yet unascertained, undefined, and still often contested, was breaking forth among the commons of England. It was fated that the

celestial spirit of our national freedom should not descend among us in the form of the mystical dove!

Hume observes on this speech, that "these imprudent suggestions rather gave warning than struck terror." It was evident that the event, which implied "new counsels," meant what subsequently was practised—the king governing without a parliament! As for "the ghosts who wore wooden shoes," to which the house was congratulated that they had not *yet* been reduced, they would infer that it was the more necessary to provide against the possibility of such strange apparitions! Hume truly observes, "The king reaped no further benefit from this attempt than to exasperate the house still further." Some words, which the duke persisted in asserting had dropped from Digges, were explained away, Digges declaring that they had not been used by him; and it seems probable that he was suffered to eat his words. Eliot was made of "sterner stuff;" he abated not a jot of whatever he had spoken of "that man," as he affected to call Buckingham.

The commons, whatever might be their patriotism, seem at first to have been chiefly moved by a personal hatred of the favourite;293 and their real charges against him amounted to little more than pretences and aggravations. The king, whose personal affections were always strong, considered his friend innocent; and there was a warm, romantic feature in the character of the youthful monarch, which scorned to sacrifice his faithful companion to his own interests, and to immolate the minister to the clamours of the commons. Subsequently, when the king did this in the memorable case of the guiltless Strafford, it was the only circumstance which weighed on his mind at the hour of his own sacrifice! Sir Robert Cotton told a friend, on the day on which the king went down to the house of lords, and committed the two patriots, that "he had of late been often sent for to the king and duke, and that the king's affection towards him was very admirable, and no whit lessened. Certainly," he added, "the king will never

yield to the duke's fall, being a young man, resolute, magnanimous, and tenderly and firmly affectionate where he takes."[294] This authentic character of Charles the First, by that intelligent and learned man, to whom the nation owes the treasures of its antiquities, is remarkable. Sir Robert Cotton, though holding no rank at court, and in no respect of the duke's party, was often consulted by the king, and much in his secrets. How the king valued the judgment of this acute and able adviser, acting on it in direct contradiction and to the mortification of the favourite, I shall probably have occasion to show.

The commons did not decline in the subtle spirit with which they had begun; they covertly aimed at once to subjugate the sovereign, and to expel the minister! A remonstrance was prepared against the levying of tonnage and poundage, which constituted half of the crown revenues; and a petition, "equivalent to a command," for removing Buckingham from his majesty's person and councils.[295] The remonstrance is wrought up with a high spirit of invective against "the unbridled ambition of the duke," whom they class "among those vipers and pests to their king and commonwealth, as so expressly styled by your most royal father." They request that "he would be pleased to remove this person from access to his sacred presence, and that he would not balance this one man with all these things, and with the affairs of the Christian world."

The king hastily dissolved this *second* parliament; and when the lords petitioned for its continuance, he warmly and angrily exclaimed, "Not a moment longer!" It was dissolved in June, 1626.

The patriots abandoned their sovereign to his fate, and retreated home sullen, indignant, and ready to conspire among themselves for the assumption of their disputed or their defrauded liberties. They industriously dispersed their remonstrance, and the king replied by a declaration; but an attack is always more vigorous than a defence. The declaration is spiritless,

and evidently composed under suppressed feelings, which, perhaps, knew not how to shape themselves. The “Remonstrance” was commanded everywhere to be burnt; and the effect which it produced on the people we shall shortly witness.

The king was left amidst the most pressing exigencies. At the dissolution of the first parliament he had been compelled to practise a humiliating economy. Hume has alluded to the numerous wants of the young monarch; but he certainly was not acquainted with the king’s extreme necessities. His coronation seemed rather a private than a public ceremony. To save the expenses of the procession from the Tower through the city to Whitehall, that customary pomp was omitted; and the reason alleged was “to save the charge for more noble undertakings!” that is, for means to carry on the Spanish war without supplies! But now the most extraordinary changes appeared at court. The king mortgaged his lands in Cornwall to the aldermen and companies of London. A rumour spread that the small pension list must be revoked; and the royal distress was carried so far, that all the tables at court were laid down, and the courtiers put on board-wages! I have seen a letter which gives an account of “the funeral supper at Whitehall, whereat twenty-three tables were buried, being from henceforth converted to board-wages;” and there I learn, that “since this dissolving of house-keeping, his majesty is but slenderly attended.” Another writer, who describes himself to be only a looker-on, regrets, that while the men of the law spent ten thousand pounds on a single masque, they did not rather make the king rich; and adds, “I see a rich commonwealth, a rich people, and the crown poor!” This strange poverty of the court of Charles seems to have escaped the notice of our general historians. Charles was now to victual his fleet with the savings of the board-wages! for this “surplusage” was taken into account!

The fatal descent on the Isle of Rhé sent home Buckingham discomfited, and spread dismay through the nation. The best blood had been shed from the wanton bravery of an unskilful and romantic commander, who, forced to retreat, would march, but not fly, and was the very last man to quit the ground which he could not occupy. In the eagerness of his hopes, Buckingham had once dropped, as I learn, that “before Midsummer he should be more honoured and beloved by the commons than ever was the Earl of Essex:” and thus he rocked his own and his master’s imagination in cradling fancies. This volatile hero, who had felt the capriciousness of popularity, thought that it was as easily regained as it was easily lost; and that a chivalric adventure would return to him that favour which at this moment might have been denied to all the wisdom, the policy, and the arts of an experienced statesman.

The king was now involved in more intricate and desperate measures; and the nation was thrown into a state of agitation, of which the page of popular history yields but a faint impression.

The spirit of insurrection was stalking forth in the metropolis and in the country. The scenes which I am about to describe occurred at the close of 1626: an inattentive reader might easily mistake them for the revolutionary scenes of 1640. It was an unarmed rebellion.

An army and a navy had returned unpaid, and sore with defeat. The town was scoured by mutinous seamen and soldiers, roving even into the palace of the sovereign. Soldiers without pay form a society without laws. A band of captains rushed into the duke’s apartment as he sat at dinner; and when reminded by the duke of a late proclamation, forbidding all soldiers coming to court in troops, on pain of hanging, they replied, that “Whole companies were ready to be hanged with them! that the king might do as he pleased with their lives; for that their reputation was lost, and their honour forfeited, for want of their salary to pay their debts.” When a petition was once

presented, and it was inquired who was the composer of it, a vast body tremendously shouted “All! all!” A multitude, composed of seamen, met at Tower-hill, and set a lad on a scaffold, who, with an “O yes!” proclaimed that King Charles had promised their pay, or the duke had been on the scaffold himself! These, at least, were grievances more apparent to the sovereign than those vague ones so perpetually repeated by his unfaithful commons. But what remained to be done? It was only a choice of difficulties between the disorder and the remedy. At the moment, the duke got up what he called “The council of the sea;” was punctual at its first meeting, and appointed three days in a week to sit—but broke his appointment the second day—they found him always otherwise engaged; and “the council of the sea” turned out to be one of those shadowy expedients which only lasts while it acts on the imagination. It is said that thirty thousand pounds would have quieted these disorganised troops; but the exchequer could not supply so mean a sum. Buckingham in despair, and profuse of life, was planning a fresh expedition for the siege of Rochelle; a new army was required. He swore, “if there was money in the kingdom it should be had!”

Now began that series of contrivances, and artifices, and persecutions to levy money. Forced loans, or pretended free-gifts, kindled a resisting spirit. It was urged by the court party, that the sums required were, in fact, much less in amount than the usual grants of subsidies; but the cry, in return for “a subsidy,” was always “a Parliament!” Many were heavily fined for declaring that “they knew no law, besides that of Parliament, to compel men to give away their own goods.” The king ordered that those who would not subscribe to the loans should not be forced; but it seems there were orders in council to specify those householders’ names who would not subscribe; and it further appears that those who would not pay in purse should in person. Those who were pressed were sent to the *dépôt*; but either the soldiers would not receive these good citizens, or they found easy means to

return. Every mode which the government invented seems to have been easily frustrated, either by the intrepidity of the parties themselves, or by that general understanding which enabled the people to play into one another's hands. When the common council had consented that an imposition should be laid, the citizens called the Guildhall the *Yield-all*! And whenever they levied a distress, in consequence of a refusal to pay it, nothing was to be found but "Old ends, such as nobody cared for." Or if a severer officer seized on commodities, it was in vain to offer pennyworths where no customer was to be had. A wealthy merchant, who had formerly been a cheesemonger, was summoned to appear before the privy council, and required to lend the king two hundred pounds, or else to go himself to the army, and serve it with cheese. It was not supposed that a merchant, so aged and wealthy, would submit to resume his former mean trade; but the old man, in the spirit of the times, preferred the hard alternative, and balked the new project of finance, by shipping himself with his cheese. At Hicks's Hall the duke and the Earl of Dorset sat to receive the loans; but the duke threatened, and the earl affected to treat with levity, men who came before them with all the suppressed feelings of popular indignation. The Earl of Dorset asking a fellow who pleaded inability to lend money, of what trade he was, and being answered "a tailor," said: "Put down your name for such a sum; one snip will make amends for all!" The tailor quoted scripture abundantly, and shook the bench with laughter or with rage by his anathemas, till he was put fast into a messenger's hands. This was one Ball, renowned through the parish of St. Clement's; and not only a tailor, but a prophet. Twenty years after, tailors and prophets employed messengers themselves![296]

These are instances drawn from the inferior classes of society; but the same spirit actuated the country gentlemen: one instance represents many. George Gatesby, of Northamptonshire, being committed to prison as a loan-recusant, alleged, among other reasons for his non-compliance, that "he

considered that this loan might become a precedent; and that every precedent, he was told by the lord president, was a flower of the prerogative." The lord president told him that "he lied!" Gatesby shook his head, observing, "I come not here to contend with your lordship, but to suffer!" Lord Suffolk then interposing, entreated the lord president would not too far urge his kinsman, Mr. Gatesby. This country gentleman waived any kindness he might owe to kindred, declaring, that "he would remain master of his own purse." The prisons were crowded with these loan-recusants, as well as with those who had sinned in the freedom of their opinions. The country gentlemen insured their popularity by their committals; and many stout resistors of the loans were returned in the following parliament against their own wishes.[297] The friends of these knights and country gentlemen flocked to their prisons; and when they petitioned for more liberty and air during the summer, it was policy to grant their request. But it was also policy that they should not reside in their own counties: this relaxation was only granted to those who, living in the south, consented to sojourn in the north; while the dwellers in the north were to be lodged in the south!

In the country the disturbed scenes assumed even a more alarming appearance than in London. They not only would not provide money, but when money was offered by government, the men refused to serve; a conscription was not then known: and it became a question, long debated in the privy council, whether those who would not accept press-money should not be tried by martial law. I preserve in the note a curious piece of secret information.[298] The great novelty and symptom of the times was the scattering of letters. Sealed letters, addressed to the leading men of the country, were found hanging on bushes; anonymous letters were dropped in shops and streets, which gave notice that the day was fast approaching when "Such a work was to be wrought in England as never was the like, which will be for our good." Addresses multiplied "To all true-hearted

Englishmen!" A groom detected in spreading such seditious papers, and brought into the inexorable Star-chamber, was fined three thousand pounds! The leniency of the punishment was rather regretted by two bishops; if it was ever carried into execution, the unhappy man must have remained a groom who never after crossed a horse!

There is one difficult duty of an historian, which is too often passed over by the party-writer; it is to pause whenever he feels himself warming with the passions of the multitude, or becoming the blind apologist of arbitrary power. An historian must transform himself into the characters which he is representing, and throw himself back into the times which he is opening; possessing himself of their feelings and tracing their actions, he may then at least hope to discover truths which may equally interest the honourable men of all parties.

This reflection has occurred from the very difficulty into which I am now brought. Shall we at once condemn the king for these arbitrary measures? It is, however, very possible that they were never in his contemplation! Involved in inextricable difficulties, according to his feelings, he was betrayed by parliament; and he scorned to barter their favour by that vulgar traffic of treachery—the immolation of the single victim who had long attached his personal affections; a man at least as much envied as hated! that hard lesson had not yet been inculcated on a British sovereign, that his bosom must be a blank for all private affection; and had that lesson been taught, the character of Charles was destitute of all aptitude for it. To reign without a refractory parliament, and to find among the people themselves subjects more loyal than their representatives, was an experiment—and a fatal one! Under Charles, the liberty of the subject, when the necessities of the state pressed on the sovereign, was matter of discussion, disputed as often as assumed; the divines were proclaiming as rebellious those who refused their contributions to aid the government;299 and the law-sages

alleged precedents for raising supplies in the manner which Charles had adopted. Selden, whose learned industry was as vast as the amplitude of his mind, had to seek for the freedom of the subject in the dust of the records of the Tower—and the omnipotence of parliaments, if any human assembly may be invested with such supernatural greatness, had not yet awakened the hoar antiquity of popular liberty.

A general spirit of insurrection, rather than insurrection itself, had suddenly raised some strange appearances through the kingdom. "The remonstrance" of parliament had unquestionably quickened the feelings of the people; but yet the lovers of peace and the reverencers of royalty were not a few; money and men were procured to send out the army and the fleet. More concealed causes may be suspected to have been at work. Many of the heads of the opposition were pursuing some secret machinations; about this time I find many mysterious stories—indications of secret societies—and other evidences of the intrigues of the popular party.

Little matters, sometimes more important than they appear, are suitable to our minute sort of history. In November, 1626, a rumour spread that the king was to be visited by an ambassador from "the President of the Society of the Rosycross." He was indeed an heteroclite ambassador, for he is described "as a youth with never a hair on his face;" in fact, a child who was to conceal the mysterious personage which he was for a moment to represent. He appointed Sunday afternoon to come to court, attended by thirteen coaches. He was to proffer to his majesty, provided the king accepted his advice, three millions to put into his coffers; and by his secret councils he was to unfold matters of moment and secrecy. A Latin letter was delivered to "David Ramsey of the clock," to hand over to the king: a copy of it has been preserved in a letter of the times; but it is so unmeaning, that it could have had no effect on the king, who, however, declared that he would not admit him to an audience, and that if he could tell where "the

President of the Rosycross" was to be found, unless he made good his offer, he would hang him at the court-gates. This served the town and country for talk till the appointed Sunday had passed over, and no ambassador was visible! Some considered this as the plotting of crazy brains, but others imagined it to be an attempt to speak with the king in private, on matters respecting the duke.

There was also discovered, by letters received from Rome, "a whole parliament of Jesuits sitting" in "a fair-hanged vault" in Clerkenwell.[300] Sir John Cooke would have alarmed the parliament, that on St. Joseph's day these were to have occupied their places; ministers are supposed sometimes to have conspirators for "the nonce;" Sir Dudley Digges, in the opposition, as usual, would not believe in any such political necromancers; but such a party were discovered; Cooke would have insinuated that the French ambassador had persuaded Louis that the divisions between Charles and his people had been raised by his ingenuity, and was rewarded for the intelligence; this is not unlikely. After all, the parliament of Jesuits might have been a secret college of the order; for, among other things seized on, was a considerable library.

When the parliament was sitting, a sealed letter was thrown under the door, with this superscription, *Cursed be the man that finds this letter, and delivers it not to the House of Commons*. The Serjeant-at-Arms delivered it to the Speaker, who would not open it till the house had chosen a committee of twelve members to inform them whether it was fit to be read. Sir Edward Coke, after having read two or three lines, stopped, and according to my authority, "durst read no further, but immediately sealing it, the committee thought fit to send it to the king, who they say, on reading it through, cast it into the fire, and sent the House of Commons thanks for their wisdom in not publishing it, and for the discretion of the committee in so far tendering his

honour, as not to read it out, when they once perceived that it touched his majesty."[301]

Others, besides the freedom of speech, introduced another form, "A speech without doors," which was distributed to the members of the house. It is in all respects a remarkable one, occupying ten folio pages in the first volume of Rushworth.

Some in office appear to have employed extraordinary proceedings of a similar nature. An intercepted letter written from the archduchess to the King of Spain, was delivered by Sir H. Martyn at the council-board on New Year's-day, who found in it some papers relating to the navy. The duke immediately said he would show it to the king; and, accompanied by several lords, went into his majesty's closet. The letter was written in French; it advised the Spanish court to make a sudden war with England, for several reasons; his majesty's want of skill to govern of himself; the weakness of his council in not daring to acquaint him with the truth; want of money; disunion of the subjects' hearts from their prince, &c. The king only observed, that the writer forgot that the archduchess writes to the King of Spain in Spanish, and sends her letters overland.

I have to add an important fact. I find certain evidence that the heads of the opposition were busily active in thwarting the measures of government. Dr. Samuel Turner, the member for Shrewsbury, called on Sir John Cage, and desired to speak to him privately; his errand was to entreat him to resist the loan, and to use his power with others to obtain this purpose. The following information comes from Sir John Cage himself. Dr. Turner "being desired to stay, he would not a minute, but instantly took horse, saying he had more places to go to, and time pressed; *that there was a company of them had divided themselves into all parts, every one having had a quarter assigned to him, to perform this service for the commonwealth*." This was written in November, 1626. This unquestionably

amounts to a secret confederacy watching out of parliament as well as in; and those strange appearances of popular defection exhibited in the country, which I have described, were in great part the consequences of the machinations and active intrigues of the popular party.[302]

The king was not disposed to try a *third* parliament. The favourite, perhaps to regain that popular favour which his greatness had lost him, is said in private letters to have been twice on his knees to intercede for a new one. The elections, however, foreboded no good; and a letter-writer connected with the court, in giving an account of them, prophetically declared, "we are without question undone!"

The king's speech opens with the spirit which he himself felt, but which he could not communicate:—

"The times are for action: wherefore, for example's sake, I mean not to spend much time in words! If you, which God forbid, should not do your duties in contributing what the state at this time needs, I must, in discharge of my conscience, *use those other means* which God hath put into my hands, to save that, which the follies of some particular men may otherwise hazard to lose." He added, with the loftiness of ideal majesty—"Take not this as a threatening, for I scorn to threaten any but my equals; but as an admonition from him, that, both out of nature and duty, hath most care of your preservations and prosperities:" and in a more friendly tone he requested them "To remember a thing to the end that we may forget it. You may imagine that I come here with a doubt of success, remembering the distractions of the last meeting; but I assure you that I shall very easily forget and forgive what is past."

A most crowded house now met, composed of the wealthiest men; for a lord, who probably considered that property was the true balance of power, estimated that they were able to buy the upper-house, his majesty only excepted! The aristocracy of wealth had already begun to be felt. Some ill omens of the parliament appeared. Sir Robert Philips moved for a general fast: "we had one for the plague which it pleased God to deliver us from, and we have now so many plagues of the commonwealth about his

majesty's person, that we have need of such, an act of humiliation." Sir Edward Coke held it most necessary, "because there are, I fear, some devils that will not be cast out but by fasting and prayer."

Many of the speeches in "this great council of the kingdom" are as admirable pieces of composition as exist in the language. Even the court-party were moderate, extenuating rather than pleading for the late necessities. But the evil spirit of party, however veiled, was walking amidst them all: a letter-writer represents the natural state of feelings: "Some of the parliament talk desperately; while others, of as high a course to enforce money if they yield not!" Such is the perpetual action and reaction of public opinion; when one side will give too little, the other is sure to desire too much!

The parliament granted subsidies.—Sir John Cooke having brought up the report to the king, Charles expressed great satisfaction, and declared that he felt now more happy than any of his predecessors. Inquiring of Sir John by how many voices he had carried it? Cooke replied, "But by one!"—at which his majesty seemed appalled, and asked how many were against him? Cooke answered, "None! the unanimity of the House made all but *one voice*!" at which his majesty wept![303] If Charles shed tears, or as Cooke himself expresses it, in his report to the House, "was much affected," the emotion was profound: for on all sudden emergencies Charles displayed an almost unparalleled command over the exterior violence of his feelings.

The favourite himself sympathised with the tender joy of his royal master; and, before the king, voluntarily offered himself as a peace-sacrifice. In his speech at the council-table, he entreats the king that he, who had the honour to be his majesty's favourite, might now give up that title to them.—A warm genuine feeling probably prompted these words:—

"To open my heart, please to pardon me a word more; I must confess I have long lived in pain, sleep hath given me no rest, favours and fortune no content; such have been my secret sorrows, to be thought the man of separation, and that divided the king from his people, and them from him; but I hope it shall appear they were some mistaken minds that would have made me the evil spirit that walketh between a good master and a loyal people."[304]

Buckingham added, that for the good of his country he was willing to sacrifice his honours; and since his plurality of offices had been so strongly excepted against,[305] that he was content to give up the Master of the Horse to Marquess Hamilton, and the Warden of the Cinque Ports to the Earl of Carlisle; and was willing that the parliament should appoint another admiral for all services at sea.

It is as certain as human evidence can authenticate, that on the king's side all was grateful affection; and that on Buckingham's there was a most earnest desire to win the favours of parliament; and what are stronger than all human evidence, those unerring principles in human nature itself, which are the secret springs of the heart, were working in the breasts of the king and his minister; for neither were tyrannical. The king undoubtedly sighed to meet parliament with the love which he had at first professed; he declared that "he should now rejoice to meet with his people often." Charles had no innate tyranny in his constitutional character; and Buckingham at times was susceptible of misery amidst his greatness, as I have elsewhere shown.[306] It could not have been imagined that the luckless favourite, on the present occasion, should have served as a pretext to set again in motion the chaos of evil! Can any candid mind suppose that the king or the duke meditated the slightest insult on the patriotic party, or would in the least have disturbed the apparent reconciliation! Yet it so happened! Secretary Cooke, at the close of his report of the king's acceptance of the subsidies, mentioned that the duke had fervently beseeched the king to grant the house

all their desires! Perhaps the mention of the duke's name was designed to ingratiate him into their toleration.

Sir John Eliot caught fire at the very name of the duke, and vehemently checked the secretary for having dared to introduce it; declaring, that "they knew of no other distinction but of king and subjects. By intermingling a subject's speech with the king's message, he seemed to derogate from the honour and majesty of a king. Nor would it become any subject to bear himself in such a fashion, as if no grace ought to descend from the king to the people, nor any loyalty ascend from the people to the king, but through him only."

This speech was received by many with acclamations; some cried out, "Well spoken, Sir John Eliot!"[307] It marks the heated state of the political atmosphere, where even the lightest coruscation of a hated name made it burst into flames!

I have often suspected that Sir John Eliot, by his vehement personality, must have borne a personal antipathy to Buckingham. I have never been enabled to ascertain the fact; but I find that he has left in manuscript a collection of satires, or Verses, being chiefly invectives against the Duke of Buckingham, to whom he bore a bitter and most inveterate enmity. Could we sometimes discover the motives of those who first head political revolutions, we should find how greatly personal hatreds have actuated them in deeds which have come down to us in the form of patriotism, and how often the revolutionary spirit disguises its private passions by its public conduct.[308]

But the supplies, which had raised tears from the fervent gratitude of Charles, though voted, were yet withheld. They resolved that grievances and supplies go hand in hand. The commons entered deeply into constitutional points of the highest magnitude. The curious erudition of

Selden and Coke was combined with the ardour of patriots who merit no inferior celebrity, though not having consecrated their names by their laborious literature, we only discover them in the obscure annals of parliament. To our history, composed by writers of different principles, I refer the reader for the arguments of lawyers, and the spirit of the commons. My secret history is only its supplement.

The king's prerogative, and the subject's liberty, were points hard to distinguish, and were established but by contest. Sometimes the king imagined that "the house pressed not upon the abuses of power, but only upon power itself." Sometimes the commons doubted whether they had anything of their own to give; while their property and their persons seemed equally insecure. Despotism seemed to stand on one side, and Faction on the other—Liberty trembled!

The conference of the commons before the lords, on the freedom and person of the subject, was admirably conducted by Selden and by Coke. When the king's attorney affected to slight the learned arguments and precedents, pretending to consider them as mutilated out of the records, and as proving rather against the commons than for them, Sir Edward Coke rose, affirming to the house, upon his skill in the law, that "it lay not under Mr. Attorney's cap to answer any one of their arguments." Selden declared that he had written out all the records from the Tower, the Exchequer, and the King's Bench, with his own hand; and "would engage his head, Mr. Attorney should not find in all these archives a single precedent omitted." Mr. Littleton said, that he had examined every one *syllabatim*, and whoever said they were mutilated spoke false! Of so ambiguous and delicate a nature was then the liberty of the subject, that it seems they considered it to depend on precedents!

A startling message, on the 12th of April, was sent by the king for despatch of business. The house, struck with astonishment, desired to have

it repeated. They remained sad and silent. No one cared to open the debate. A whimsical politician, Sir Francis Nethersole,[309] suddenly started up, entreating leave to tell his last night's dream. Some laughing at him, he observed, that "kingdoms had been saved by dreams!" Allowed to proceed, he said, "he saw two good pastures; a flock of sheep was in the one, and a bell-wether alone in the other; a great ditch was between them, and a narrow bridge over the ditch."

He was interrupted by the Speaker, who told him that it stood not with the gravity of the house to listen to dreams; but the house was inclined to hear him out.

"The sheep would sometimes go over to the bell-wether, or the bell-wether to the sheep. Once both met on the narrow bridge, and the question was who should go back, since both could not go on without danger. One sheep gave counsel that the sheep on the bridge should lie on their bellies, and let the bell-wether go over their backs. The application of this dilemma he left to the house."[310] It must be confessed that the bearing of the point was more ambiguous than some of the important ones that formed the matters of their debates. *Davus sum, non Œdipus!* It is probable that this fantastical politician did not vote with the opposition; for Eliot, Wentworth, and Coke, protested against the interpretation of dreams in the house!

When the attorney-general moved that the liberties of the subject might be moderated, to reconcile the differences between themselves and the sovereign, Sir Edward Coke observed, that "the true mother would never consent to the dividing of her child." On this, Buckingham swore that Coke intimated that the king, his master, was the prostitute of the state. Coke protested against the misinterpretation. The dream of Nethersole, and the metaphor of Coke, were alike dangerous in parliamentary discussion.

In a manuscript letter it is said that the House of Commons sat four days without speaking or doing anything. On the first of May, Secretary Cooke delivered a message, asking whether they would rely upon the *king's word*? This question was followed by a long silence. Several speeches are reported in the letters of the times, which are not in Rushworth. Sir Nathaniel Rich observed that, "confident as he was of the royal word, what did any indefinite word ascertain?" Pym said, "We have his majesty's coronation oath to maintain the laws of England; what need we then take his word?" He proposed to move "Whether we should take the king's word or no." This was resisted by Secretary Cooke; "What would they say in foreign parts, if the people of England would not trust their king?" He desired the house to call Pym to order; on which Pym replied, "Truly, Mr. Speaker, I am just of the same opinion I was; viz., that the king's oath was as powerful as his word." Sir John Eliot moved that it be put to the question, "because they that would have it, do urge us to that point." Sir Edward Coke on this occasion made a memorable speech, of which the following passage is not given in Rushworth:—

"We sit now in parliament, and therefore must take his *majesty's word no otherwise than in a parliamentary way*; that is, of a matter agreed on by both houses—his majesty sitting on his throne in his robes, with his crown on his head, and sceptre in his hand, and in full parliament; and his royal assent being entered upon record, *in perpetuam rei memoriam*. This was *the royal word of a king in parliament*, and not a word delivered in a chamber, and out of the mouth of a secretary at the second hand; therefore I motion, that the House of Commons, *more majorum*, should draw up a petition, *de droict*, to his majesty; which, being confirmed by both houses, and assented unto by his majesty, will be as firm an act as any. Not that I distrust the king, but that I cannot take his trust but in a parliamentary way."[311]

In this speech of Sir Edward Coke we find the first mention, in the legal style, of the ever-memorable "Petition of Right," which two days after was finished. The reader must pursue its history among the writers of opposite parties.

On Tuesday, June 5, a royal message announced that on the 11th the present sessions would close. This utterly disconcerted the commons. Religious men considered it as a judicial visitation for the sins of the people; others raged with suppressed feelings; they counted up all the disasters which had of late occurred, all which were charged to one man: they knew not, at a moment so urgent, when all their liberties seemed at stake, whether the commons should fly to the lords, or to the king. Sir John Eliot said, that as they intended to furnish his majesty with money, it was proper that he should give them time to supply him with counsel: he was renewing his old attacks on the duke, when he was suddenly interrupted by the Speaker, who, starting from the chair, declared that he was commanded not to suffer him to proceed; Eliot sat down in sullen silence. On Wednesday, Sir Edward Coke broke the ice of debate. "That man," said he of the duke, "is the grievance of grievances! As for going to the lords," he added, "that is not *via regia*; our liberties are impeached—it is our concern!"

On Thursday, the vehement cry of Coke against Buckingham was followed up; as, says a letter-writer, when one good hound recovers the scent, the rest come in with a full cry.312 A sudden message from the king absolutely forbade them to asperse any of his majesty's ministers, otherwise his majesty would instantly dissolve them.

This fell like a thunderbolt; it struck terror and alarm; and at the instant the House of Commons was changed into a scene of tragical melancholy! All the opposite passions of human nature—all the national evils which were one day to burst on the country seemed, on a sudden, concentrated in this single spot! Some were seen weeping, some were expostulating, and some, in awful prophecy, were contemplating the future ruin of the kingdom; while others, of more ardent daring, were reproaching the timid, quieting the terrified, and infusing resolution into the despairing. Many

attempted to speak, but were so strongly affected that their very utterance failed them. The venerable Coke, overcome by his feelings when he rose to speak, found his learned eloquence falter on his tongue; he sat down, and tears were seen on his aged cheeks. The name of the public enemy of the kingdom was repeated, till the Speaker, with tears covering his face, declared he could no longer witness such a spectacle of woe in the commons of England, and requested leave of absence for half an hour. The speaker hastened to the king to inform him of the state of the house. They were preparing a vote against the duke, for being an arch-traitor and arch-enemy to king and kingdom, and were busied on their "Remonstrance," when the Speaker, on his return, after an absence of two hours, delivered his majesty's message, that they should adjourn till the next day.

This was an awful interval of time; many trembled for the issue of the next morning: one letter-writer calls it "that black and doleful Thursday!" and another, writing before the house met, observes, "What we shall expect this morning, God of heaven knows; we shall meet timely."[313]

Charles probably had been greatly affected by the report of the Speaker, on the extraordinary state into which the whole house had been thrown; for on Friday the royal message imported that the king had never any intention of "barring them from their right, but only to avoid scandal, that his ministers should not be accused for their counsel to him; and still he hoped that all Christendom might notice a sweet parting between him and his people." This message quieted the house, but did not suspend their preparations for a "Remonstrance," which they had begun on the day they were threatened with a dissolution.

On Saturday, while they were still occupied on the "Remonstrance," unexpectedly, at four o'clock, the king came to parliament, and the commons were called up. Charles spontaneously came to reconcile himself to parliament. The king now gave his second answer to the "Petition of

Right." He said—"My maxim is, that the people's liberties strengthen the king's prerogative; and the king's prerogative is to defend the people's liberties. Read your petition, and you shall have an answer that I am sure will please you."[314] They desired to have the ancient form of their ancestors, "Soit droit fait come il est desyré," and not as the king had before given it, with any observation on it. Charles now granted this; declaring that his second answer to the petition in nowise differed from his first; "but you now see how ready I have shown myself to satisfy your demands; I have done my part; wherefore, if this parliament have not a happy conclusion, the sin is yours,—I am free from it!"

Popular gratitude is at least as vociferous as it is sudden. Both houses returned the king acclamations of joy; everyone seemed to exult at the happy change which a few days had effected in the fate of the kingdom. Everywhere the bells rung, bonfires were kindled, an universal holiday was kept through the town, and spread to the country: but an ominous circumstance has been registered by a letter-writer; the common people, who had caught the contagious happiness, imagined that all this public joy was occasioned by the king's consenting to commit the duke to the Tower!

Charles has been censured, even by Hume, for his "evasions and delays" in granting his assent to the "Petition of Right;" but now, either the parliament had conquered the royal unwillingness, or the king was zealously inclined on reconciliation. Yet the joy of the commons did not outlast the bonfires in the streets; they resumed their debates as if they had never before touched on the subjects: they did not account for the feelings of the man whom they addressed as the sovereign. They sent up a "Remonstrance" against the duke,[315] and introduced his mother into it, as a patroness of popery. Charles declared, that after having granted the famous "Petition," he had not expected such a return as this "Remonstrance." "How acceptable it is," he afterwards said, "every man may judge; no wise man

can justify it." After the reading of the Remonstrance, the duke fell on his knees, desiring to answer for himself; but Charles no way relaxed in showing his personal favour.[316]

The duke was often charged with actions and with expressions of which, unquestionably, he was not always guilty; and we can more fairly decide on some points relating to Charles and the favourite, for we have a clearer notion of them than his contemporaries. The active spirits in the commons were resolved to hunt down the game to the death: for they now struck at, as the king calls it, "one of the chief maintenances of my crown," in tonnage and poundage, the levying of which, they now declared, was a violation of the liberties of the people. This subject again involved legal discussions, and another "Remonstrance." They were in the act of reading it, when the king suddenly came down to the house, sent for the Speaker, and prorogued the parliament. "I am forced to end this session," said Charles, "some few hours before I meant, being not willing to receive any more Remonstrances, to which I must give a harsh answer." There was at least as much of sorrow as of anger in this closing speech.

Buckingham once more was to offer his life for the honour of his master —and to court popularity! It is well known with what exterior fortitude Charles received the news of the duke's assassination; this imperturbable majesty of his mind—insensibility it was not—never deserted him on many similar occasions. There was no indecision—no feebleness in his conduct; and that extraordinary event was not suffered to delay the expedition. The king's personal industry astonished all the men in office. One writes that the king had done more in six weeks than in the duke's time had been done in six months. The death of Buckingham caused no change; the king left every man to his own charge, but took the general direction into his own hands.[317] In private, Charles deeply mourned the loss of Buckingham; he gave no encouragement to his enemies: the king called him "his martyr," and

declared “the world was greatly mistaken in him; for it was thought that the favourite had ruled his majesty, but it was far otherwise; for that the duke had been to him a faithful and an obedient servant.”[318] Such were the feelings and ideas of the unfortunate Charles the First, which it is necessary to become acquainted with to judge of; few have possessed the leisure or the disposition to perform this historical duty, involved as it is in the history of our passions. If ever the man shall be viewed, as well as the monarch, the private history of Charles the First will form one of the most pathetic of biographies.[319]

All the foreign expeditions of Charles the First were alike disastrous: the vast genius of Richelieu, at its meridian, had paled our ineffectual star! The dreadful surrender of Rochelle had sent back our army and navy baffled and disgraced; and Buckingham had timely perished, to save one more reproach, one more political crime, attached to his name. Such failures did not improve the temper of the times; but the most brilliant victory would not have changed the fate of Charles, nor allayed the fiery spirits in the commons, who, as Charles said, “not satisfied in hearing complainers, had erected themselves into inquisitors after complaints.”

Parliament met. The king’s speech was conciliatory. He acknowledged that the exaction of the duties of the customs was not a right which he derived from his hereditary prerogative, but one which he enjoyed as the gift of his people. These duties as yet had not indeed been formally confirmed by parliament, but they had never been refused to the sovereign. The king closed with a fervent ejaculation that the session, begun with confidence, might end with a mutual good understanding.[320]

The shade of Buckingham was no longer cast between Charles the First and the commons. And yet we find that “their dread and dear sovereign” was not allowed any repose on the throne.

A new demon of national discord, Religion, in a metaphysical garb, reared its distracted head. This evil spirit had been raised by the conduct of the court divines, whose political sermons, with their attempts to return to the more solemn ceremonies of the Romish church, alarmed some tender consciences; it served as a masked battery for the patriotic party to change their ground at will, without slackening their fire. When the king urged for the duties of his customs, he found that he was addressing a committee sitting for religion. Sir John Eliot threw out a singular expression. Alluding to some of the bishops, whom he called "masters of ceremonies," he confessed that some ceremonies were commendable, such as "that we should stand up at the repetition of the creed, to testify the resolution of our hearts to defend the religion we profess, and in some churches they did not only stand upright, but *with their swords drawn*." His speech was a spark that fell into a well-laid train; scarcely can we conceive the enthusiastic temper of the House of Commons at that moment, when, after some debate, they entered into *a vow* to preserve "the articles of religion established by parliament in the *thirteenth year of our late Queen Elizabeth*!" and this *vow* was immediately followed up by a petition to the king for *a fast* for the increasing miseries of the reformed churches abroad. Parliaments are liable to have their passions! Some of these enthusiasts were struck by a panic, not perhaps warranted by the danger, of "Jesuits and Armenians." The king answered them in good-humour; observing, however, on the state of the reformed abroad; "that fighting would do them more good than fasting." He granted them their fast, but they would now grant no return; for now they presented "a Declaration" to the king, that tonnage and poundage must give precedency to religion! The king's answer still betrays no ill temper. He confessed that he did not think that "religion was in so much danger as they affirmed." He reminds them of tonnage and poundage; "I do not so much desire it out of greediness of the thing, as out of a desire to put an end to those questions that arise between me and some of my subjects."

Never had the king been more moderate in his claims, or more tender in his style; and never had the commons been more fierce, and never, in truth, so utterly inexorable! Often kings are tyrannical, and sometimes are parliaments! A body corporate, with the infection of passion, may perform acts of injustice equally with the individual who abuses the power with which he is invested. It was insisted that Charles should give up the receivers of the customs, who were denounced as capital enemies to the king and kingdom; while those who submitted to the duties were declared guilty as accessories. When Sir John Eliot was pouring forth invectives against some courtiers—however they may have merited the blast of his eloquence—he was sometimes interrupted and sometimes cheered, for the stinging personalities. The timid Speaker, refusing to put the question, suffered a severe reprimand from Selden: "If you will not put it, we must sit still, and thus we shall never be able to do anything!" The house adjourned in great heat; the dark prognostic of their next meeting, which Sir Symonds D'Ewes has remarked in his Diary as "the most gloomy, sad, and dismal day for England that happened for five hundred years!"

On this fatal day,[321] the Speaker still refusing to put the question, and announcing the king's command for an adjournment, Sir John Eliot stood up! The Speaker attempted to leave the chair, but two members, who had placed themselves on each side, forcibly kept him down—Eliot, who had prepared "a short declaration," flung down a paper on the floor, crying out that it might be read! His party vociferated for the reading—others that it should not. A sudden tumult broke out; Coriton, a fervent patriot, struck another member, and many laid their hands on their swords.[322] "Shall we," said one, "be sent home as we were last sessions, turned off like scattered sheep?" The weeping, trembling Speaker, still persisting in what he held to be his duty, was dragged to and fro by opposite parties; but neither he nor the clerk would read the paper, though the Speaker was bitterly reproached by his kinsman, Sir Peter Hayman, "as the disgrace of his country, and a

blot to a noble family." Eliot, finding the house so strongly divided, undauntedly snatching up the paper, said, "I shall then express that by my tongue which this paper should have done." Denzil Holles assumed the character of Speaker, putting the question: it was returned by the acclamations of the party. The doors were locked and the keys laid on the table. The king sent for the serjeant and mace, but the messenger could obtain no admittance—the usher of the black rod met no more regard. The king then ordered out his guard—in the meanwhile the protest was completed. The door was flung open, the rush of the members was so impetuous that the crowd carried away among them the serjeant and the usher in the confusion and riot. Many of the members were struck by horror amidst this conflict, it was a sad image of the future! Several of the patriots were committed to the Tower. The king on dissolving this parliament, which was the last till the memorable "Long Parliament," gives us, at least, his idea of it:—"It is far from me to judge all the House alike guilty, for there are there as dutiful subjects as any in the world; it being but some few vipers among them that did cast this mist of undutifulness over most of their eyes."[323]

Thus have I traced, step by step, the secret history of Charles the First and his early Parliaments. I have entered into their feelings, while I have supplied new facts, to make everything as present and as true as my faithful diligence could repeat the tale. It was necessary that I should sometimes judge of the first race of our patriots as some of their contemporaries did; but it was impossible to avoid correcting these notions by the more enlarged views of their posterity. This is the privilege of an historian and the philosophy of his art. There is no apology for the king, nor any declamation for the subject. Were we only to decide by the final results of this great conflict, of which what we have here narrated is but the faint beginning, we should confess that Sir John Eliot and his party were the first fathers of our political existence; and we should not withhold from them the inexpressible

gratitude of a nation's freedom! But human infirmity mortifies us in the noblest pursuits of man; and we must be taught this penitential and chastising wisdom. The story of our patriots is involved; Charles appears to have been lowering those high notions of his prerogative, which were not peculiar to him, and was throwing himself on the bosom of his people. The severe and unrelenting conduct of Sir John Eliot, his prompt eloquence and bold invective, well fitted him for the leader of a party. He was the lodestone, drawing together the looser particles of iron. Never sparing, in the monarch, the errors of the man, never relinquishing his royal prey, which he had fastened on, Eliot, with Dr. Turner and some others, contributed to make Charles disgusted with all parliaments. Without any dangerous concessions, there was more than one moment when they might have reconciled the sovereign to themselves, and not have driven him to the fatal resource of attempting to reign without a parliament![324]

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286 From manuscript letters of the times.

287 Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 317.

288 The king had said in his speech to parliament, "I must let you know I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you, much less such as are of eminent place, and near unto me;" hence the security of Buckingham, who showed the most perfect contempt for the speakers who thus violently attacked him.

289 Our printed historical documents, Kennett, Frankland, &c., are confused in their details, and facts seem misplaced for want of dates. They all equally copy Rushworth, the only source of our history of this period. Even Hume is involved in the obscurity. The king's speech was on the *eleventh* of May. As Rushworth has not furnished dates, it would seem that the two orators had been sent to the Tower *before the king's speech* to the lords.

290 The king attended the House of Lords to explain his intentions verbally, taking the minister with him, though under impeachment. "Touching the matters against him," said the king, "I myself can be a witness to clear him in every one of them."

291 They decided on stopping all business till satisfaction was given them, which ended in the release of Digges and Eliot in a few days.

292 Frankland, an inveterate royalist, in copying Rushworth, inserts "their *pretended* liberties;" exactly the style of catholic writers when they mention protestantism by "la religion *prétendue reformée*." All party writers use the same style!

293 The strength of the popular hatred may be seen in the articles on Buckingham and Felton in vol. ii. Satires in manuscript abounded, and by their broad-spoken pungency rendered the duke a perfect *bête noir* to the people.

294 Manuscript letter.

295 Rushworth, i. 400. Hume, vi. 221, who enters widely into the views and feelings of Charles.

296 The Radicals of that day differed from ours in the means, though not in the end. They at least referred to their Bibles, and rather more than was required; but superstition is as mad as atheism! Many of the puritans confused their brains with the study of the Revelations; believing Prince Henry to be prefigured in the Apocalypse, some prophesied that he should overthrow "the beast." Ball, our tailor, was this very prophet; and was so honest as to believe in his own prophecy. Osborn tells, that Ball put out money on adventure; *i. e.*, to receive it back double or treble, when King James should be elected pope! So that though he had no money for a loan, he had to spare for a prophecy.

This Ball has been confounded with a more ancient radical, Ball, a priest, and a principal mover in Wat Tyler's insurrection. Our Ball must have been very notorious, for Jonson has noticed his "admired discourses." Mr. Gifford, without any knowledge of my account of this tailor-prophet, by his active sagacity has rightly indicated him.—See Jonson's Works, vol. v. p. 241.

297 It is curious to observe that the Westminster elections, in the fourth year of Charles's reign, were exactly of the same turbulent character as those which we witness in our days. The duke had counted by his interest to bring in Sir Robert Pye. The contest was severe, but accompanied by some of those ludicrous electioneering scenes which still amuse the mob.

Whenever Sir Robert Pye's party cried—"A Pye! a Pye! a Pye!" the adverse party would cry —"A pudding! a pudding! a pudding!" and others—"A lie! a lie! a lie!" This Westminster election of two hundred years ago ended as we have seen some others; they rejected all who had urged the payment of the loans; and, passing by such men as Sir Robert Cotton, and their last representative, they fixed on a brewer and a grocer for the two members for Westminster.

298 Extract from a manuscript letter:—"On Friday last I hear, but as a secret, that it was debated at the council-table whether our Essex men, who refused to take press-money, should not be punished by martial-law, and hanged up on the next tree to their dwellings, for an example of terror to others. My lord keeper, who had been long silent, when, in conclusion, it came to his course to speak, told the lords, that as far as he understood the law, *none were liable to martial law but martial men*. If these had taken press-money, and afterwards run from their colours, they might then be punished in that manner; but yet they were no soldiers, and refused to be. Secondly, he thought a subsidy, new by law, could not be pressed against his will for a foreign service; it being supposed, in law, the service of his purse excused that of his person, unless his own country were in danger; and he appealed to my lord treasurer, and my lord president, whether it was not so, who both assented it was so, though some of them faintly, as unwilling to have been urged to such an answer. So it is thought that proposition is dashed; and it will be tried what may be done in the Star-chamber against these refractories."

299 A member of the house, in James the First's time, called this race of divines "Spaniels to the court and wolves to the people." Dr. Mainwaring, Dr. Sibthorpe, and Dean Bargrave were seeking for ancient precedents to maintain absolute monarchy, and to inculcate passive obedience. Bargrave had this passage in his sermon: "It was the speech of a man renowned for wisdom in our age, that if he were *commanded* to put forth to sea in a ship that had neither mast nor tackling, he would do it:" and being asked what wisdom that were, replied, "The wisdom must be in him that hath power to command, not in him that conscience binds to obey." Sibthorpe, after he published his sermon, immediately had his house burnt down. Dr. Mainwaring, says a manuscript letter-writer, "sent the other day to a friend of mine, to help him to all the ancient precedents he could find, to strengthen his opinion (for absolute monarchy), who answered him he could help him in nothing but only to hang him, and that if he lived till a parliament, or, &c., he should be sure of a halter." Mainwaring afterwards submitted to

parliament; but after the dissolution got a free pardon. The panic of popery was a great evil. The divines, under Laud, appeared to approach to Catholicism; but it was probably only a project of reconciliation between the two churches, which Elizabeth, James, and Charles equally wished. Mr. Cosins, a letter-writer, is censured for "superstition" in this bitter style: "Mr. Cosins has impudently made three editions of his prayer-book, and one which he gives away in private, different from the published ones. An audacious fellow, whom my Lord of Durham greatly admireth. I doubt if he be a sound protestant: he was so blind at even-song on Candlemas-day, that he could not see to read prayers in the minster with less than three hundred and forty candles, whereof sixty he caused to be placed about the high altar; besides he caused the picture of our Saviour, supported by two angels, to be set in the choir. The committee is very hot against him, and no matter if they trounce him." This was Cosins, who survived the revolution, and returning with Charles the Second, was raised to the see of Durham: the charitable institutions he has left are most munificent.

300 Rushworth's Collections, i. 514.

301 I deliver this fact as I find it in a private letter; but it is noticed in the Journals of the House of Commons, 23 Junii, 4º. Caroli Regis. "Sir Edward Coke reporteth that they find that, enclosed in the letter, to be unfit for any subject's ear to hear. Read but one line and a half of it, and could not endure to read more of it. It was ordered to be sealed and delivered into the king's hands by eight members, and to acquaint his majesty with the place and time of finding it; particularly that upon the reading of one line and a half at most, they would read no more, but sealed it up, and brought it to the House."

302 I have since discovered, by a manuscript letter, that this *Dr. Turner* was held in contempt by the king; that he was ridiculed at court, which he haunted, for his want of veracity; in a word, that he was a disappointed courtier!

303 This circumstance is mentioned in a manuscript letter; what Cooke declared to the House is in Rushworth, vol. i. p. 525.

304 I refer the critical student of our history to the duke's speech at the council-table as it appears in Rushworth, i. 525: but what I add respecting his personal sacrifices is from

manuscript letters. Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 490, &c.

305 On this subject, see note to the brief article on Buckingham in vol. i.

306 Curiosities of Literature, First Series, vol. iii. p. 438, ed. 1817; vol. v. p. 277, ed. 1823; vol. iii. p. 429, ed. 1824; vol. iv. p. 148 ed. 1834; p. 301, ed. 1840, or vol. ii. p. 357, of this edition.

307 I find this speech, and an account of its reception, in manuscript letters; the fragment in Rushworth contains no part of it. I. 526. Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 490, &c.

308 Modern history would afford more instances than perhaps some of us suspect. I cannot pass over an illustration of my principle, which I shall take from two very notorious politicians —Wat Tyler and Sir William Walworth!

Wat, when in servitude, had been beaten by his master, Richard Lyons, a great merchant of wines, and a sheriff of London. This chastisement, working on an evil disposition, appears never to have been forgiven; and when this Radical assumed his short-lived dominion, he had his old master beheaded, and his head carried before him on the point of a spear! So Grafton tells us, to the eternal obloquy of this arch-jacobin, who “was a crafty fellow, and of an excellent wit, but wanting grace.” I would not sully the patriotic blow which ended the rebellion with the rebel; yet there are secrets in history! Sir William Walworth, “the ever famous mayor of London,” as Stowe designates him, has left the immortality of his name to one of our suburbs; but having discovered in Stowe’s “Survey,” that Walworth was the landlord of the stews on the Bank-side, which he farmed out to the Dutch *vrows*, and which Wat had pulled down, I am inclined to suspect that private feeling first knocked down the saucy ribald, and then thrust him through and through with his dagger; and that there was as much of personal vengeance as patriotism, which crushed the demolisher of so much valuable property!

309 I have formed my idea of Sir Francis Nethersole from some strange incidents in his *political* conduct, which I have read in some contemporary letters. He was, however, a man of some eminence, had been Orator for the University of Cambridge, agent for James I. with the Princes of the Union in Germany, and also Secretary to the Queen of Bohemia. He founded and endowed a free-school at Polesworth in Warwickshire.

310 Manuscript letter.

311 These speeches are entirely drawn from those manuscript letters to which I have frequently referred. Coke's may be substantially found in Rushworth, but without a single expression as here given.

312 The popular opinion is well expressed in the following lines preserved in Sloane MS. 826:—

When only one doth rule and guide the ship,
Who neither card nor compass knew before,
The master pilot and the rest asleep,
The stately ship is split upon the shore;
But they awaking start up, stare, and cry,
"Who did this fault?"—"Not I,"—"Nor I,"—"Nor I."
So fares it with a great and wealthy state
Not govern'd by the master, but his mate.

313 This last letter is printed in Rushworth, vol. i. p. 609.

314 The king's answer is in Rushworth, vol. i. p. 613.

315 This eloquent state paper is in Rushworth, vol. i. p. 619.

316 This interview is taken from manuscript letters.

317 Manuscript Letters: Lord Dorset to the Earl of Carlisle.—Sloane MSS. 4178. Letter 519.

318 Manuscript Letter.

319 I have given (vol. ii. p. 336) the "Secret History of Charles the First and his Queen," where I have traced the firmness and independence of his character. In another article will be found as much of the "Secret History of the Duke of Buckingham" as I have been enabled to acquire.

320 "To conclude," said the king; "let us not be jealous one of the other's actions."

321 Monday, 2nd of March, 1629.

322 It was imagined out of doors that swords had been drawn; for a Welsh page running in great haste, when he heard the noise, to the door, cried out, “I pray you let hur in! let hur in! to give hur master his sword!”—*Manuscript Letter.*

323 At the time many undoubtedly considered that it was a mere faction in the house. Sir Symonds D’Ewes was certainly no politician—but, unquestionably, his ideas were not peculiar to himself. Of the last third parliament he delivers this opinion in his Diary: “I cannot deem but the greater part of the house were morally honest men; but these were the least guilty of the fatal breach, being only misled by *some other Machiavelian politics, who seemed zealous for the liberty of the commonwealth*, and by that means, *in the moving of their outward freedom*, drew the votes of those good men to their side.”

324 Since the publication of the present article, I have composed my “Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First,” in five volumes.

THE RUMP.

TEXT and commentary! The French Revolution abounds with wonderful “explanatory notes” on the English. It has cleared up many obscure passages—and in the political history of Man, both pages must be read together.

The opprobrious and ludicrous nickname of “the Rump,” stigmatised a faction which played the same part in the English Revolution as the “Montagne” of the Jacobins did in the French. It has been imagined that our English Jacobins were impelled by a principle different from that of their modern rivals; but the madness of avowed atheism, and the frenzy of hypocritical sanctity, in the circle of crimes meet at the same point. Their history forms one of those useful parallels where, with truth as unerring as mathematical demonstration, we discover the identity of human nature. Similarity of situation, and certain principles, producing similar personages and similar events, finally settle in the same results. The Rump, as long as human nature exists, can be nothing but the Rump, however it may be thrown uppermost.

The origin of this political by-name has often been inquired into; and it is somewhat curious, that, though all parties consent to reprobate it, each assigns for it a different allusion. In the history of political factions there is always a mixture of the ludicrous with the tragic; but, except their modern brothers, no faction like the present ever excited such a combination of extreme contempt and extreme horror.

Among the rival parties in 1659, the loyalists and the presbyterians acted as we may suppose the Tories and the Whigs would in the same predicament; a secret reconciliation had taken place, to bury in oblivion their former jealousies, that they might unite to rid themselves from that tyranny of tyrannies, a hydra-headed government; or, as Hume observes, that “all efforts should be used for the overthrow of the Rump; so they called the parliament, in allusion to that part of the animal body.” The sarcasm of the allusion seemed obvious to our polished historian; yet, looking more narrowly for its origin, we shall find how indistinct were the notions of this nickname among those who lived nearer to the times. Evelyn says that “the Rump parliament was so called as containing some few rotten

members of the other." Roger Coke describes it thus: "You must now be content with a piece of the Commons called 'the Rump.'" And Carte calls the Rump, "the carcass of a house," and seems not precisely aware of the contemptuous allusion. But how do "rotten members" and "a carcass" agree with the notion of "a Rump?" Recently the editor of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson has conveyed a novel origin. "The number of the members of the Long Parliament having been by seclusion, death, &c., very much reduced,"—a remarkable &c. this! by which our editor seems adroitly to throw a veil over the forcible transportation by the Rumpers of two hundred members at one swoop,—"the remainder was compared to the *rump of a fowl which was left*, all the rest being eaten." Our editor even considers this to be "a coarse emblem;" yet "the rump of a fowl" could hardly offend even a lady's delicacy! Our editor, probably, was somewhat anxious not to degrade *too lowly* the anti-monarchical party, designated by this opprobrious term. Perhaps it is pardonable in Mrs. Macaulay, an historical lady, and a "Rumper," for she calls the "Levellers" a "brave and virtuous party," to have passed over in *her* history any mention of the offensive term at all, as well as the ridiculous catastrophe which they underwent in the political revolution, which, however, we must beg leave not to pass by.

This party-coinage has been ascribed to Clement Walker, their bitter antagonist; who, having sacrificed no inconsiderable fortune to the cause of what he considered constitutional liberty, was one of the violent ejected members of the Long Parliament, and perished in prison, a victim to honest, unbending principles. His "History of Independency" is a rich legacy bequeathed to posterity, of all their great misdoings, and their petty villanies, and, above all, of their secret history. One likes to know of what blocks the idols of the people are sometimes carved out.

Clement Walker notices "the votes and acts of this *fag end*; this RUMP of a parliament, with corrupt maggots in it."[325] This hideous, but descriptive

image of “The Rump” had, however, got forward before, for the collector of “the Rump Songs”[326] tells us, “If you ask who named it *Rump*, know ’twas so styled in an honest sheet of prayer, called ‘The Bloody Rump,’ written *before the trial* of our late sovereign; but the word obtained not *universal notice*, till it flew from the mouth of Major-General Brown, at a public assembly in the days of Richard Cromwell.” Thus it happens that a stinging nickname has been frequently applied to render a faction eternally odious; and the chance expression of a wit, when adopted on some public occasion, circulates among a whole people. The present nickname originated in derision on the expulsion of the majority of the Long Parliament by the usurping minority. It probably slept; for who would have stirred it through the Protectorate? and finally awakened at Richard’s restored, but fleeting “Rump,” to witness its own ridiculous extinction.

Our Rump passed through three stages in its political progress. Preparatory to the trial of the sovereign, the anti-monarchical party constituted the minority in “the *Long* Parliament:” the very name by which this parliament is recognised seemed a grievance to an impatient people, vacillating with chimerical projects of government, and now accustomed, from a wild indefinite notion of political equality, to pull down all existing institutions. Such was the temper of the times, that an act of the most violent injustice, openly performed, served only as the jest of the day, a jest which has passed into history. The forcible expulsion of two hundred of their brother members, by those who afterwards were saluted as “The Rump,” was called “Pride’s Purge,” from the activity of a colonel of that name, a military adventurer, who was only the blind and brutal instrument of his party; for when he stood at the door of the Commons, holding a paper with the names of the members, he did not personally know one! And his “Purge” might have operated a quite opposite effect, administered by his own unskilful hand, had not Lord Grey of Groby, and the door-keeper,—worthy dispersers of the British senate!—pointed out the obnoxious

members, on whom our colonel laid his hand, and sent off by his men to be detained, if a bold member, or to be deterred from sitting in the house, if a frightened one. This colonel had been a drayman; and the contemptible knot of the Commons, reduced to fifty or sixty confederates, which assembled after his “Purge,” were called “Colonel Pride’s Dray-Horses.”

It was this Rump which voted the death of the sovereign, and abolished the regal office, and the House of Peers—as “unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous!” Every office in parliament seemed “dangerous,” but that of the “Custodes libertatis Angliæ,” the keepers of the liberties of England! or rather “the gaolers!” “The legislative half-quarter of the House of Commons!” indignantly exclaims Clement Walker—the “Montagne” of the French revolutionists!

The “Red-coats” as the military were nicknamed, soon taught their masters, “the Rumpers,” silence and obedience: the latter having raised one colossal man for their own purpose, were annihilated by him at a single blow. Cromwell, five years after, turned them out of their house, and put the keys into his pocket. Their last public appearance was in the fleeting days of Richard Cromwell, when the comi-tragedy of “the Rump” concluded by a catastrophe as ludicrous as that of Tom Thumb’s tragedy!

How such a faction used their instruments to gather in the common spoil, and how their instruments at length converted the hands which held them into instruments themselves, appears in their history. When “the Long Parliament” opposed the designs of Cromwell and Ireton, these chiefs cried up “the liberty of the people,” and denied “the authority of parliament:” but when they had effectuated their famous “purge,” and formed a House of Commons of themselves, they abolished the House of Lords, crying up the supreme authority of the House of Commons, and crying down the liberty of the people. Such is the history of political factions, as well as of statesmen! Charles the Fifth alternately made use of the Pope’s authority to

subdue the rising spirit of the Protestants of Germany, or raised an army of Protestants to imprison the Pope! who branded his German allies by the novel and odious name of Lutherans. A chain of similar facts may be framed out of modern history.

The "Rump," as they were called by every one but their own party, became a whetstone for the wits to sharpen themselves on; and we have two large collections of "Rump Songs," curious chronicles of popular feeling![327] Without this evidence we should not have been so well informed respecting the phases of this portentous phenomenon. "The Rump" was celebrated in verse, till at length it became "the Rump of a Rump of a Rump!" as Foulis traces them to their dwindled and grotesque appearance. It is pourtrayed by a wit of the times—

> The Rump's an old story, if well understood,
> 'Tis a thing dress'd up in a parliament's hood,
> And like it—but the tail stands where the head shou'd!
> 'Twould make a man scratch where it does not itch!
> They say 'tis good luck when a body rises
> With the rump upwards; but he that advises
> To live in that posture, is none of the wisest.

Cromwell's hunting them out of the House by military force is alluded to —

> Our politic doctors do us teach,
> That a blood-sucking red-coat's as good as a leech
> To relieve the head, if applied to the breech.

In the opening scene of the Restoration, Mrs. Hutchinson, an honest republican, paints with dismay a scene otherwise very ludicrous. "When the

town of Nottingham, as almost all the rest of the island, began to grow mad, and declared themselves in their desires of the king;" or, as another of the opposite party writes, "When the soldiery, who had hitherto made *clubs trumps*, resolved now to turn up the *king of hearts* in their affections," the rabble in town and country vied with each other in burning the "Rump;" and the literal emblem was hung by chains on gallowses, with a bonfire underneath, while the cries of "Let us burn the Rump! Let us roast the Rump!" were echoed everywhere. The suddenness of this universal change, which was said to have maddened the wise, and to have sobered the mad, must be ascribed to the joy at escaping from the yoke of a military despotism; perhaps, too, it marked the rapid transition of hope to a restoration which might be supposed to have implanted gratitude even in a royal breast! The feelings of the people expected to find an echo from the throne!

"The Rump," besides their general resemblance to the French anarchists, had also some minuter features of ugliness, which Englishmen have often exulted have not marked an English revolution—sanguinary proscriptions![328] We had thought that we had no revolutionary tribunals! no Septembrisers! no noyades! no moveable guillotines awaiting for carts loaded with human victims! no infuriated republican urging, in a committee of public safety, the necessity of a salutary massacre!

But if it be true that the same motives and the same principles were at work in both nations, and that the like characters were performing in England the parts which they did afterwards in France, by an argument *à priori* we might be sure that the same revolting crimes and chimerical projects were alike suggested at London as at Paris. Human nature, even in transactions which appear unparalleled, will be found to preserve a regularity of resemblance not always suspected.

The first great tragic act was closely copied by the French: and if the popular page of our history appears unstained by their revolutionary axe, this depended only on a slight accident; for it became a question of "yea" and "nay!" and was only carried in the negative by *two voices* in the council! It was debated among "the bloody Rump," as it was hideously designated, "whether to massacre and to put to the sword *all the king's party*!"[329] Cromwell himself listened to the suggestion; and it was only put down by the coolness of political calculation—the dread that the massacre would be *too general*! Some of the Rump not obtaining the blessedness of a massacre, still clung to the happiness of an immolation; and many petitions were presented, that "*two or three principal gentlemen* of the royal party in EACH COUNTY might be sacrificed to justice, whereby the land might be saved from *blood-guiltiness*!" Sir Arthur Haslerigg, whose "passionate fondness of liberty" has been commended,[330] was one of the committee of safety in 1647—I too would commend "a passionate lover of liberty," whenever I do not discover that this lover is much more intent on the dower than on the bride. Haslerigg, "an absurd, bold man," as Clarendon, at a single stroke, reveals his character, was resolved not to be troubled with king or bishop, or with any power in the state superior to "the Rump's." We may safely suspect the patriot who can cool his vehemence in spoliation. Haslerigg would have no bishops, but this was not from any want of reverence for church lands, for he heaped for himself such wealth as to have been nicknamed "the Bishop of Durham!" He is here noticed for a political crime different from that of plunder. When, in 1647, this venerable radical found the parliament resisting his views, he declared that "Some heads must fly off!" adding, "the parliament cannot save England; we must look another way;"—threatening, what afterwards was done, to bring in the army! It was this "passionate lover of liberty" who, when Dorislaus, the parliamentary agent, was assassinated by some Scotchmen in Holland, moved in the house, that "six royalists of the best quality" should be

immediately executed! When some northern counties petitioned the Commons for relief against a famine in the land, our Maratist observed, that "this *want of food* would best defend those counties from Scottish invasion!"[331] The slaughter of Drogheda by Cromwell, and his frightening all London by what Walker calls "a butchery of apprentices," when he cried out to his soldiers, "to kill man, woman, and child, and fire the city!"[332] may be placed among those crimes which are committed to open a reign of terror—but Hugh Peters's solemn thanksgiving to Heaven that "none were spared!" was the true expression of the true feeling of these political demoniacs. Cromwell was cruel from politics, others from constitution. Some were willing to be cruel without "blood-guiltiness." One Alexander Rigby, a radical lawyer, twice moved in the Long Parliament, that those *lords and gentlemen* who were "malignants," should be *sold as slaves to the Dey of Algiers*, or sent off to the new plantations in the West Indies. He had all things prepared; for it is added that he had contracted with two merchants to ship them off.[333] There was a most bloody-minded "maker of washing-balls," as one John Durant is described, appointed a lecturer by the House of Commons, who always left out of the Lord's Prayer, "As we forgive them that trespass against us," and substituted, "Lord, since thou hast now drawn out thy sword, let it not be sheathed again till it be glutted in the blood of the malignants." I find too many enormities of this kind. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently, and keepeth back his sword from blood!" was the cry of the wretch, who, when a celebrated actor and royalist sued for quarter, gave no other reply than that of "fitting the action to the word."[334] Their treatment of the Irish may possibly be admired by a true Machiavelist: "they permitted forty thousand of the Irish to enlist in the service of the kings of Spain and France"—in other words, they expelled them at once, which, considering that our Rumpers affected such an abhorrence of tyranny, may be considered as an act of mercy! satisfying themselves only with dividing the forfeited lands of

the aforesaid forty thousand among their own party, by lot and other means. An universal confiscation, after all, is a bloodless massacre. They used the Scotch soldiers, after the battles of Dunbar and Worcester, a little differently —but equally efficaciously—for they sold their Scotch prisoners for slaves to the American planters.[335]

The Robespierres and the Marats were as extraordinary beings, and in some respects the Frenchmen were working on a more enlarged scheme. These discovered that ”the generation which had witnessed the preceding one would always regret it; and for the security of the Revolution, it was necessary that every person who was thirty years old in 1788 should perish on the scaffold!” The anarchists were intent on reducing the French people to eight millions, and on destroying the great cities of France.[336]

Such monstrous persons and events are not credible—but this is no proof that they have not occurred. Many incredible things will happen!

Another disorganising feature in the English *Rumpers* was also observed in the French *Sans-culottes*—their hatred of literature and the arts. Hebert was one day directing his satellites towards the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, to put an end to all that human knowledge had collected for centuries on centuries—in one day! alleging, of course, some good reason. This hero was only diverted from the enterprise by being persuaded to postpone it for a day or two, when luckily the guillotine intervened; the same circumstance occurred here. The burning of the records in the Tower was certainly proposed; a speech of Selden’s, which I cannot immediately turn to, put a stop to these incendiaries. It was debated in the Rump parliament, when Cromwell was general, whether they should *dissolve the universities*? They concluded that no university was necessary; that there were no ancient examples of such education, and that scholars in other countries did study at *their own cost and charges*, and therefore they looked on them as unnecessary, and thought them fitting *to be taken away for the public use*!

—How these venerable asylums escaped from being sold with the king's pictures, as stone and timber, and why their rich endowments were not shared among such inveterate ignorance and remorseless spoliation, might claim some inquiry.

The Abbé Morellet, a great political economist, imagined that the source of all the crimes of the French Revolution was their violation of the sacred rights of property. The perpetual invectives of the *Sans-culottes* of France *against proprietors and against property* proceeded from demoralised beings who formed panegyrics on all crimes; crimes, to explain whose revolutionary terms, a new dictionary was required. But even these anarchists, in their mad expressions against property, and in their wildest notions of their "égalité," have not gone beyond the daring of our own "Rumpers!"

Of those revolutionary journals of the parliament of 1649, which in spirit so strongly resemble the diurnal or hebdomadal effusions of the redoubtable French Hebert, Marat, and others of that stamp, one of the most remarkable is, "The Moderate, impartially communicating Martial Affairs to the *Kingdom* of England;" the monarchical title our commonwealth men had not yet had time enough to obliterate from their colloquial style. This writer called himself, in his barbarous English, *The Moderate*! It would be hard to conceive the meanness and illiteracy to which the English language was reduced under the pens of the rabble-writers of these days, had we not witnessed in the present time a parallel to their compositions. "The Moderate!" was a title assumed on the principle on which Marat denominated himself "l'Ami du Peuple." It is curious that the most ferocious politicians usually assert their moderation. Robespierre, in his justification, declares that Marat "m'a souvent accusé de *Modérantisme*." The same actors, playing the same parts, may be always paralleled in their language and their deeds. This "Moderate" steadily pursued one great

principle—the overthrow of all property. Assuming that *property* was the original cause of *sin*! an exhortation to the people for this purpose is the subject of the present paper:337 the illustration of his principle is as striking as the principle itself.

It is an apology for, or rather a defence of, robbery! Some moss-troopers had been condemned to be hanged for practising their venerable custom of gratuitously supplying themselves from the flocks and herds of their weaker neighbours: our "Moderate" ingeniously discovers that the loss of these men's lives is to be attributed to nothing but *property*. They are necessitated to offend the laws in order to obtain a livelihood!

On this he descants; and the extract is a political curiosity in the French style! "*Property* is the original cause of any *sin* between party and party as to civil transactions. And since the *tyrant* is taken off, and the government altered *in nomine*, so ought it really to redound to the good of the people *in specie*; which, though they cannot expect it in few years, by reason of *the multiplicity of the gentlemen in authority*, command, &c. who drive on all designs for support of the old government, and consequently their own interest and the *people's slavery*, yet they doubt not but *in time* the people will herein discern their own blindness and folly."

In September, he advanced with more depth of thought. "*Wars* have ever been clothed with the most gracious pretences—viz., reformation of religion, the laws of the land, the liberty of the subject, &c.; though the effects thereof have proved most destructive to every nation; making the sword, and not *the people*, the original of all authorities for many hundred years together, taking away *each man's birthright*, and *settling upon a few* A CURSED PROPRIETY; the ground of all civil offences, and the greatest cause of most sins against the heavenly Deity. *This tyranny and oppression* running through the veins of many of our predecessors, and being too long maintained by the sword upon a royal foundation, at last became so

customary, as *to the vulgar it seemed most natural*—the only reason why the *people* of this time are so *ignorant of their birthright*, their only freedom," &c.

"The birthright" of citoyen *Egalité* to "*a cursed propriety settled on a few*," was not, even among the French Jacobins, urged with more amazing force. Had things proceeded according to our "Moderate's" plan, "the people's slavery" had been something worse. In a short time the nation would have had more proprietors than property. We have a curious list of the spoliations of those members of the House of Commons, who, after their famous *self-denying ordinances*, appropriated among themselves sums of money, offices, and lands, for services "done or to be done."

The most innocent of this new government of "the Majesty of the People," were those whose talents had been limited by Nature to peddle and purloin; puny mechanics, who had suddenly dropped their needles, their hammers, and their lasts, and slunk out from behind their shop-counters; those who had never aspired beyond the constable of the parish, were now seated in the council of state; where, as Milton describes them, "they fell to huckster the commonwealth:" there they met a more rabid race of obscure lawyers, and discontented men of family, of blasted reputations; adventurers, who were to command the militia and navy of England,—governors of the three kingdoms! whose votes and ordinances resounded with nothing else but new impositions, new taxes, excises, yearly, monthly, weekly sequestrations, compositions, and universal robbery!

Baxter vents one deep groan of indignation, and presciently announces one future consequence of *Reform*! "In all this appeared the severity of God, the mutability of worldly things, and the fruits of error, pride, and selfishness, *to be charged hereafter upon reformation and religion*." As a statesman, the sagacity of this honest prophet was narrowed by the horizon of his religious views; for he ascribes the whole as "prepared by Satan to

the injury of the Protestant cause, and the advantage of the Papists!" But dropping his particular application to the devil and the Papists, honest Richard Baxter is perfectly right in his general principle concerning "Rumpers,"—"Sans-culottes," and "Radicals."

325 History of Independency, Part II. p. 32.

326 First collected and published in 1661, and afterwards reprinted in two small vols. 1731.

327 The first collection ever formed of these political satires was printed in 1660, with the quaint title of "Ratts rhimed to Death; or, the Rump-parliament hang'd up in the Shambles."

328 In one of the popular political songs of the day, "The Rump" is aptly compared to

> "The foxes of Samson, that carried a brand
> In their tails, to destroy and to burn up the land."

329 Clement Walker's History of Independency, part II. p. 130. Confirmed by Barwick in his Life, p. 163.

330 The Rev. Mark Noble's Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell, i. 405.

331 Clement Walker's History of Independency, Part II. 173.

332 Ib., Part I. 160.

333 Mercurius Rusticus, xii. 115. Barwick's Life, p. 42.

334 This actor was a comedian named Robinson, of the Blackfriars Theatre; the performers there being termed "the king's servants." In the civil wars most of the young actors, deprived of living by their profession, all theatres being closed by order of the Parliament, went into the king's army. Robinson was fighting at the siege of Basing House, in Hampshire, October, 1645, when after an obstinate defence his party was defeated, he laid down his arms, suing for quarter, but was shot through the head by Colonel Harrison, as he repeated the words quoted above.

335 The following account is drawn from Sir William Dugdale's interleaved Pocket-book for 1648.—"Aug. 17. The Scotch army, under the command of Duke Hamilton, defeated at Preston in Lancashire. 24th. The Moorlanders rose upon the Scots and stript some of them. The Scotch prisoners miserably used; exposed to eat cabbage-leaves in Ridgley (Staffordshire), and carrot-tops in Coleshill (Warwickshire). The soldiers who guarded them sold the victuals which were brought in for them from the country."

336 Desodoard's Histoire Philosophique de la Révolution de France, iv. 5. When Lyons was captured in 1793, the revolutionary army nearly reduced this fine city to a heap of ruins, in obedience to the decree of the Montagne, who had ordered its name to be effaced, that it should henceforth be termed, "Commune affranchie," and upon its ruins a column erected and inscribed, "Lyon fit la guerre à la liberté; Lyon n'est plus."

337 The *Moderate*, from Tuesday, July 31, to August 7, 1649.

LIFE AND HABITS OF A LITERARY ANTIQUARY.—OLDYS AND HIS MANUSCRIPTS.

SUCH a picture may be furnished by some unexpected materials which my inquiries have obtained of Oldys. This is a sort of personage little known to the wits, who write more than they read, and to their volatile votaries, who only read what the wits write. It is time to vindicate the honours of the few whose laborious days enrich the stores of national literature, not by the duplicates but the supplements of knowledge. A literary antiquary is that

idler whose life is passed in a perpetual *voyage autour de ma chambre*; fervent in sagacious diligence, instinct with the enthusiasm of curious inquiry, critical as well as erudite; he has to arbitrate between contending opinions, to resolve the doubtful, to clear up the obscure, and to grasp at the remote; so busied with other times, and so interested for other persons than those about him, that he becomes the inhabitant of the visionary world of books. He counts only his days by his acquisitions, and may be said by his original discoveries to be the CREATOR OF FACTS; often exciting the gratitude of the literary world, while the very name of the benefactor has not always descended with the inestimable labours.

Such is the man whom we often find leaving, when he dies, his favourite volumes only an incomplete project! and few of this class of literary men have escaped the fate reserved for most of their brothers. Voluminous works have been usually left unfinished by the death of the authors; and it is with them as with the planting of trees, of which Johnson has forcibly observed, "There is a frightful interval between the seed and timber." And he admirably remarks, what I cannot forbear applying to the labours I am now to describe: "He that calculates the growth of trees has the remembrance of the shortness of life driven hard upon him. He knows that he is doing what will never benefit himself; and where he rejoices to see the stem rise, is disposed to repine that another shall cut it down." The days of the patriotic Count Mazzuchelli were freely given to his national literature; and six invaluable folios attest the gigantic force of his immense erudition; yet these only carry us through the letters A and B: and though Mazzuchelli had finished for the press other volumes, the torpor of his descendants has defrauded Europe of her claims.338 The Abbé Goujet, who had designed a classified history of his national literature, in the eighteen volumes we possess, could only conclude that of the translators, and commence that of the poets; two other volumes in manuscript have perished. That great enterprise of the Benedictines, the "Histoire Litéraire de la France," now

consists of twelve large quartos, and the industry of its successive writers has only been able to carry it to the twelfth century. David Clement designed the most extensive bibliography which had ever appeared; but the diligent life of the writer could only proceed as far as H. The alphabetical order, which so many writers of this class have adopted, has proved a mortifying memento of human life! Tiraboschi was so fortunate as to complete his great national history of Italian literature. But, unhappily for us, Thomas Warton, after feeling his way through the darker ages of our poetry, in planning the map of the beautiful land, of which he had only a Pisgah-sight, expired amidst his volumes. The most precious portion of Warton's history is but the fragment of a fragment.

Oldys, among this brotherhood, has met perhaps with a harder fate; his published works, and the numerous ones to which he contributed, are now highly appreciated by the lovers of books; but the larger portion of his literary labours have met with the sad fortune of dispersed, and probably of wasted manuscripts. Oldys's manuscripts, or O. M. as they are sometimes designated, are constantly referred to by every distinguished writer on our literary history. I believe that not one of them could have given us any positive account of the manuscripts themselves! They have indeed long served as the solitary sources of information—but like the well at the wayside, too many have drawn their waters in silence.

Oldys is chiefly known by the caricature of the facetious Grose; a great humourist, both with pencil and with pen: it is in a posthumous scrap-book, where Grose deposited his odds and ends, and where there is perhaps not a single story which is not satirical. Our lively antiquary, who cared more for rusty armour than for rusty volumes, would turn over these flams and quips to some confidential friend, to enjoy together a secret laugh at their literary intimates. His eager executor, who happened to be his bookseller, served up the poignant hash to the public as "Grose's Olio!"[339] The delineation of

Oldys is sufficiently overcharged for “the nonce.” One prevalent infirmity of honest Oldys, his love of companionship over too social a glass, sends him down to posterity in a grotesque attitude; and Mr. Alexander Chalmers, who has given us the fullest account of Oldys, has inflicted on him something like a sermon, on “a state of intoxication.”

Alas! Oldys was an outcast of fortune,[340] and the utter simplicity of his heart was guileless as a child’s—ever open to the designing. The noble spirit of a Duke of Norfolk once rescued the long-lost historian of Rawleigh from the confinement of the Fleet, where he had existed, probably forgotten by the world, for six years. It was by an act of grace that the duke safely placed Oldys in the Heralds’ College as Norroy King of Arms.[341] But Oldys, like all shy and retired men, had contracted peculiar habits and close attachments for a few; both these he could indulge at no distance. He liked his old associates in the purlieus of the Fleet, whom he facetiously dignified as “his Rulers,” and there, as I have heard, with the grotesque whim of a herald, established “The Dragon Club.” Companionship yields the poor man unpurchased pleasures. Oldys, busied every morning among the departed wits and the learned of our country, reflected some image from them of their wit and learning to his companions: a secret history as yet untold, and ancient wit, which, cleared of the rust, seemed to him brilliant as the modern!

It is hard, however, for a literary antiquary to be caricatured, and for a herald to be ridiculed about an “unseemly reeling with the coronet of the Princess Caroline, which looked unsteady on the cushion, to the great scandal of his brethren,”—a circumstance which could never have occurred at the burial of a prince or princess, as the coronet is carried by Clarencieux, and not by Norroy. Oldys’s deep potations of ale, however, give me an opportunity of bestowing on him the honour of being the author of a

popular Anacreontic song. Mr. Taylor informs me that "Oldys always asserted that he was the author of the well-known song—

Busy, curious, thirsty fly!

and as he was a rigid lover of truth, I doubt not that he wrote it." My own researches confirm it: I have traced this popular song through a dozen of collections since the year 1740, the first in which I find it. In the later collections an original inscription has been dropped, which the accurate Ritson has restored, without, however, being able to discover the writer. In 1740 it is said to have been "made extempore by a gentleman, occasioned by a *fly* drinking out of his *cup of ale*;"—the accustomed potion of poor Oldys![342]

Grose, however, though a great joker on the peculiarities of Oldys, was far from insensible to the extraordinary acquisitions of the man. "His knowledge of English books has hardly been exceeded." Grose, too, was struck by the delicacy of honour, and the unswerving veracity which so strongly characterised Oldys, of which he gives a remarkable instance.[343] We are concerned in ascertaining the moral integrity of the writer, whose main business is with history.

At a time when our literary history, excepting in the solitary labour of Anthony Wood, was a forest, with neither road nor pathway, Oldys, fortunately placed in the library of the Earl of Oxford, yielded up his entire days to researches concerning the books and the men of the preceding age. His labours were then valueless, their very nature not yet ascertained, and when he opened the treasures of our ancient lore in "The British Librarian," it was closed for want of public encouragement. Our writers, then struggling to create an age of genius of their own, forgot that they had had any progenitors; or while they were acquiring new modes of excellence,

that they were losing others, to which their posterity or the national genius might return. (To know, and to admire only, the literature and the tastes of our own age, is a species of elegant barbarism.)[344] Spenser was considered nearly as obsolete as Chaucer; Milton was veiled by oblivion, and Shakspeare's dramas were so imperfectly known, that in looking over the play-bills of 1711, and much later, I find that whenever it chanced that they were acted, they were always announced to have been "written by Shakspeare." Massinger was unknown; and Jonson, though called "immortal" in the old play-bills, lay entombed in his two folios. The poetical era of Elizabeth, the eloquent age of James the First, and the age of wit of Charles the Second, were blanks in our literary history. Bysshe, compiling an Art of Poetry in 1718, passed by in his collection "*Spenser and the poets of his age*, because their language is now become so obsolete that most readers of our age have no ear for them, and therefore *Shakspeare* himself is so *rarely cited* in my collection." The *best* English poets were considered to be the *modern*; a taste which is always obstinate!

All this was nothing to Oldys; his literary curiosity anticipated by half a century the fervour of the present day. This energetic direction of all his thoughts was sustained by that life of discovery which in literary researches is starting novelties among old and unremembered things; contemplating some ancient tract as precious as a manuscript, or revelling in the volume of a poet whose passport of fame was yet delayed in its way; or disinterring the treasure of some secluded manuscript, whence he drew a virgin extract; or raising up a sort of domestic intimacy with the eminent in arms, in politics, and in literature in this visionary life, life itself with Oldys was insensibly gliding away—its cares almost unfelt!

The life of a literary antiquary partakes of the nature of those who, having no concerns of their own, busy themselves with those of others. Oldys lived in the back ages of England; he had crept among the dark

passages of Time, till, like an old gentleman usher, he seemed to be reporting the secret history of the courts which he had lived in. He had been charmed among their masques and revels, had eyed with astonishment their cumbrous magnificence, when knights and ladies carried on their mantles and their cloth of gold ten thousand pounds' worth of ropes of pearls, and buttons of diamonds; or, descending to the gay court of the second Charles, he tattled merry tales, as in that of the first he had painfully watched, like a patriot or a loyalist, a distempered era. He had lived so constantly with these people of another age, and had so deeply interested himself in their affairs, and so loved the wit and the learning which are often bright under the rust of antiquity, that his own uncourtly style is embrowned with the tint of a century old. But it was this taste and curiosity which alone could have produced the extraordinary volume of Sir Walter Rawleigh's life—a work richly inlaid with the most curious facts and the juxtaposition of the most remote knowledge; to judge by its fulness of narrative, it would seem rather to have been the work of a contemporary.[345]

It was an advantage in this primæval era of literary curiosity, that those volumes which are now not even to be found in our national library, where certainly they are perpetually wanted, and which are now so excessively appreciated, were exposed on stalls, through the reigns of Anne and the two Georges.[346] Oldys encountered no competitor, cased in the invulnerable mail of his purse, to dispute his possession of the rarest volume. On the other hand, our early collector did not possess our advantages; he could not fly for instant aid to a "Biographia Britannica," he had no history of our poetry, nor even of our drama. Oldys could tread in no man's path, for every soil about him was unbroken ground. He had to create everything for his own purposes. We gather fruit from trees which others have planted, and too often we but "pluck and eat."

Nulla dies sine linea, was his sole hope while he was accumulating masses of notes; and as Oldys never used his pen from the weak passion of scribbling, but from the urgency of preserving some substantial knowledge, or planning some future inquiry, he amassed nothing but what he wished to remember. Even the minuter pleasures of settling a date, or classifying a title-page, were enjoyments to his incessant pen. Everything was acquisition. This never-ending business of research appears to have absorbed his powers, and sometimes to have dulled his conceptions. No one more aptly exercised the *tact* of discovery; he knew where to feel in the dark: but he was not of the race—that race indeed had not yet appeared among us—who could melt into their Corinthian brass the mingled treasures of Research, Imagination, and Philosophy!

We may be curious to inquire where our literary antiquary deposited the discoveries and curiosities which he was so incessantly acquiring. They were dispersed, on many a fly-leaf, in occasional memorandum-books; in ample marginal notes on his authors—they were sometimes thrown into what he calls his "parchment budgets," or "Bags of Biography—of Botany —of Obituary"—of "Books relative to London," and other titles and bags, which he was every day filling.[347] Sometimes his collections seem to have been intended for a series of volumes, for he refers to "My first Volume of Tables of the eminent Persons celebrated by English Poets"—to another of "Poetical Characteristics." Among those manuscripts which I have seen, I find one mentioned, apparently of a wide circuit, under the reference of "My Biographical Institutions. Part third; containing a Catalogue of all the English Lives, with Historical and Critical Observations on them." But will our curious or our whimsical collectors of the present day endure without impatience the loss of a quarto manuscript, which bears this rich condiment for its title—"Of London Libraries; with Anecdotes of Collectors of Books; Remarks on Booksellers; and on the first Publishers of Catalogues?" Oldys left ample annotations on "Fuller's Worthies," and "Winstanley's Lives of

the Poets," and on "Langbaine's Dramatic Poets." The late Mr. Boswell showed me a *Fuller* in the Malone collection, with Steevens's transcriptions of *Oldys's notes*, which Malone purchased for 43*l.* at Steevens's sale; but where is the original copy of Oldys? The "Winstanley," I think, also reposes in the same collection. The "Langbaine" is far-famed, and is preserved in the British Museum, the gift of Dr. Birch; it has been considered so precious, that several of our eminent writers have cheerfully passed through the labour of a minute transcription of its numberless notes. In the history of the fate and fortune of books, that of Oldys's *Langbaine* is too curious to omit. Oldys may tell his own story, which I find in the Museum copy, p. 336, and which copy appears to be a *second* attempt; for of the *first* Langbaine we have this account:—

When I left London in 1724, to reside in *Yorkshire*, I left in the care of the Rev. Mr. Burridge's family, with whom I had several years lodged, among many other books, goods, &c., a copy of this "Langbaine," in which I had wrote several notes and references to further knowledge of these poets. When I returned to London, 1730, I understood my books had been dispersed; and afterwards becoming acquainted with Mr. T. Coxeter, I found that he had bought my "Langbaine" of a bookseller who was a great collector of plays and poetical books: this must have been of service to him, and he has kept it so carefully from my sight, that I never could have the opportunity of transcribing into this I am now writing in the notes I had collected in that.[348]

This *first* Langbaine, with additions by Coxeter, was bought, at the sale of his books, by Theophilus Cibber: on the strength of these notes he prefixed his name to the first collection of the "Lives of our Poets," which appeared in weekly numbers, and now form five volumes, written chiefly by Shiels, an amanuensis of Dr. Johnson. Shiels has been recently castigated by Mr. Gifford.

These literary jobbers nowhere distinguished Coxeter's and Oldys's curious matter from their own. Such was the fate of the *first* copy of Langbaine, with *Oldys's notes;* but the *second* is more important. At an auction of some of Oldys's books and manuscripts, of which I have seen a printed catalogue, Dr. Birch purchased this invaluable copy for three shillings and sixpence.[349] Such was the value attached to these original researches concerning our poets, and of which, to obtain only a transcript, very large sums have since been cheerfully given. The Museum copy of Langbaine is in Oldys's handwriting, not interleaved, but overflowing with notes, written in a very small hand about the margins, and inserted between the lines; nor may the transcriber pass negligently even its corners, otherwise he is here assured that he will lose some useful date, or the hint of some curious reference. The enthusiasm and diligence of Oldys, in undertaking a repetition of his first lost labour, proved to be infinitely greater than the sense of his unrequited labours. Such is the history of the escapes, the changes, and the fate of a volume which forms the groundwork

of the most curious information concerning our elder poets, and to which we must still frequently refer.

In this variety of literary arrangements, which we must consider as single works in a progressive state, or as portions of one great work on our modern literary history, it may, perhaps, be justly suspected that Oldys, in the delight of perpetual acquisition, impeded the happier labour of unity of design and completeness of purpose. He was not a Tiraboschi—nor even a Niceron! He was sometimes chilled by neglect, and by "vanity and vexation of spirit," else we should not now have to count over a barren list of manuscript works; masses of literary history, of which the existence is even doubtful.

In Kippis's Biographia Britannica we find frequent references to O. M., Oldys's Manuscripts. Mr. John Taylor, the son of the friend and executor of Oldys, has greatly obliged me with all his recollections of this man of letters; whose pursuits, however, were in no manner analogous to his, and whom he could only have known in youth. By him I learn, that on the death of Oldys, Dr. Kippis, editor of the Biographia Britannica, looked over these manuscripts at Mr. Taylor's house. He had been directed to this discovery by the late Bishop of Dromore, whose active zeal was very remarkable in every enterprise to enlarge our literary history. Kippis was one who, in some degree, might have estimated their literary value; but, employed by commercial men, and negotiating with persons who neither comprehended their nature, nor affixed any value to them, the editor of the Biographia found Oldys's manuscripts an easy purchase for his employer, the late Mr. Cadell; and the twenty guineas, perhaps, served to bury their writer! Mr. Taylor says—"The manuscripts of Oldys were not so many as might be expected from so indefatigable a writer. They consisted chiefly of short extracts from books, and minutes of dates, and were *thought worth purchasing* by the doctor. I remember the manuscripts well; though Oldys

was not the author, but rather recorder." Such is the statement and the opinion of a writer whose effusions are of a gayer sort. But the researches of Oldys must not be estimated by this standard; with him a single line was the result of many a day of research, and a leaf of scattered hints would supply more *original knowledge* than some octavos fashioned out by the hasty gilders and varnishers of modern literature. These *discoveries* occupy small space to the eye; but large works are composed out of them. This very lot of Oldys's manuscripts was, indeed, so considerable in the judgment of Kippis, that he has described them as "*a large and useful body of biographical materials, left by Mr. Oldys*." Were these the "Biographical Institutes" Oldys refers to among his manuscripts? "The late Mr. Malone," continues Mr. Taylor, "told me that he had seen *all Oldys's manuscripts*; so I presume they are in the hands of Cadell and Davies." Have they met with the fate of sucked oranges?—and how much of Malone may we owe to Oldys?

This information enabled me to trace the manuscripts of Oldys to Dr. Kippis; but it cast me among the booksellers, who do not value manuscripts which no one can print. I discovered, by the late Mr. Davies, that the direction of that hapless work in our literary history, with its whole treasure of manuscripts, had been consigned by Mr. Cadell to the late George Robinson, and that the successor of Dr. Kippis had been the late Dr. George Gregory. Again I repeat, the history of voluminous works is a melancholy office; every one concerned with them no longer can be found! The esteemed relict of Dr. Gregory, with a friendly promptitude, gratified my anxious inquiries, and informed me, that "she perfectly recollects a mass of papers, such as I described, being returned, on the death of Dr. Gregory, to the house of Wilkie and Robinson, in the early part of the year 1809." I applied to this house, who, after some time, referred me to Mr. John Robinson, the representative of his late father, and with whom all the papers of the former partnership were deposited. But Mr. John Robinson has

terminated my inquiries, by his civility in promising to comply with them, and his pertinacity in not doing so. He may have injured his own interest in not trading with my curiosity.[350] It was fortunate for the nation that George Vertue's mass of manuscripts escaped the fate of Oldys's; had the possessor proved as indolent, Horace Walpole would not have been the writer of his most valuable work, and we should have lost the "Anecdotes of Painting," of which Vertue had collected the materials.

Of a life consumed in such literary activity we should have known more had the *Diaries* of Oldys escaped destruction. "One habit of my father's old friend, William Oldys," says Mr. Taylor, "was that of keeping a diary, and recording in it every day all the events that occurred, and all his engagements, and the employment of his time. I have seen piles of these books, but know not what became of them." The existence of such *diaries* is confirmed by a sale catalogue of Thomas Davies, the literary bookseller, who sold many of the books and *some manuscripts of Oldys*, which appear to have been dispersed in various libraries. I find Lot "3627, Mr. Oldys's Diary, containing several observations relating to books, characters, &c.;" a single volume, which appears to have separated from the "piles" which Mr. Taylor once witnessed. The literary diary of Oldys could have exhibited the mode of his pursuits, and the results of his discoveries. One of these volumes I have fortunately discovered, and a singularity in this writer's feelings throws a new interest over such diurnal records. Oldys was apt to give utterance with his pen to his most secret emotions. Querulous or indignant, his honest simplicity confided to the paper before him such extemporaneous soliloquies, and I have found him hiding in the very corners of his manuscripts his "secret sorrows."

A few of these slight memorials of his feelings will exhibit a sort of *Silhouette* likeness traced by his own hand, when at times the pensive man seems to have contemplated his own shadow. Oldys would throw down in

verses, whose humility or quaintness indicates their origin, or by some pithy adage, or apt quotation, or recording anecdote, his self-advice, or his self-regrets!

Oppressed by a sense of tasks so unprofitable to himself, while his days were often passed in trouble and in prison, he breathes a self-reproach in one of these profound reflections of melancholy which so often startle the man of study, who truly discovers that life is too limited to acquire real knowledge, with the ambition of dispensing it to the world:—

I say, who too long in these cobwebs lurks,
Is always whetting tools, but never works.

In one of the corners of his note-books I find this curious but sad reflection:—

Alas! this is but the apron of a fig-leaf—but the curtain of a cobweb.

Sometimes he seems to have anticipated the fate of that obscure diligence which was pursuing discoveries reserved for others to use:—

He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

Fond treasurer of these stores, behold thy fate
In Psalm the thirty-ninth, 6, 7, and 8.

Sometimes he checks the eager ardour of his pen, and reminds himself of its repose, in Latin, Italian, and English.

————Non vi, sed sæpe cadendo.

Assai presto si fa quel che si fa bene.

Some respite best recovers what we need,
Discreetly baiting gives the journey speed.

There was a thoughtless kindness in honest Oldys; and his simplicity of character, as I have observed, was practised on by the artful or the ungenerous. We regret to find the following entry concerning the famous collector, James West:—

I gave above threescore letters of Dr. Davenant to his son, who was envoy at Frankfort in 1703 to 1708, to Mr. James West,[351] with one hundred and fifty more, about Christmas, 1746: but the same fate they found as grain that is sown in barren ground.

Such is the plaintive record by which Oldys relieved himself of a groan! We may smile at the simplicity of the following narrative, where poor Oldys received manuscripts in lieu of money:—

Old Counsellor Fane, of Colchester, who, *in formâ pauperis*, deceived me of a good sum of money which he owed me, and not long after set up his chariot, gave me a parcel of manuscripts, and promised me others, which he never gave me, nor anything else, besides a barrel of oysters, and a manuscript copy of Randolph's poems, an original, as he said, with many additions, being devolved to him as the author's relation.

There was no end to his aids and contributions to every author or bookseller who applied to him; yet he had reason to complain of both while they were using his invaluable but not valued knowledge. Here is one of these diurnal entries:—

I lent the tragical lives and deaths of the famous pirates, Ward and Dansiker, 4to, London, 1612, by Robt. Daborn, alias Dabourne, to Mr. T. Lediard, when he was writing his Naval History, and he

never returned it. See Howell's Letters of them.

In another, when his friend T. Hayward was collecting, for his "British Muse," the most exquisite commonplaces of our old English dramatists, a compilation which must not be confounded with ordinary ones, Oldys not only assisted in the labour, but drew up a curious introduction with a knowledge and love of the subject which none but himself possessed. But so little were these researches then understood, that we find Oldys, in a moment of vexatious recollection, and in a corner of one of the margins of his Langbaine, accidentally preserving an extraordinary circumstance attending this curious dissertation. Oldys having completed this elaborate introduction, "the penurious publisher insisted on leaving out one third part, which happened to be the best matter in it, because he would have it contracted into *one sheet*!" Poor Oldys never could forget the fate of this elaborate Dissertation on all the collections of English poetry; I am confident that I have seen some volume which was formerly Oldys's, and afterwards Thomas Warton's, in the possession of my intelligent friend Mr. Douce, in the fly-leaf of which Oldys has expressed himself in these words: —"In my historical and critical review of all the collections of this kind, it would have made a sheet and a half or two sheets; but they for sordid gain, and to save a little expense in print and paper, got Mr. John Campbell *to cross it and cramp it, and play the devil with it, till they squeezed it into less compass than a sheet*." This is a loss which we may never recover. The curious book-knowledge of this singular man of letters, those stores of which he was the fond treasurer, as he says with such tenderness for his pursuits, were always ready to be cast into the forms of a dissertation or an introduction; and when Morgan published his Collection of Rare Tracts, the friendly hand of Oldys furnished "A Dissertation upon Pamphlets, in a Letter to a Nobleman;" probably the Earl of Oxford, a great literary curiosity; and in the Harleian Collection he has given a *Catalogue raisonné*

of six hundred. When Mrs. Cooper attempted “The Muse’s Library,” the first essay which influenced the national taste to return to our deserted poets in our most poetical age, it was Oldys who only could have enabled this lady to perform that task so well.[352] When Curll, the publisher, to help out one of his hasty compilations, a “History of the Stage,” repaired, like all the world, to Oldys, whose kindness could not resist the importunity of this busy publisher, he gave him a life of Nell Gwynn; while at the same moment Oldys could not avoid noticing, in one of his usual entries, an intended work on the stage, which we seem never to have had, “*Dick Leveridge’s History of the Stage and Actors in his own Time*, for these forty or fifty years past, as he told me he had composed, is likely to prove, whenever it shall appear, a more perfect work.” I might proceed with many similar gratuitous contributions with which he assisted his contemporaries. Oldys should have been constituted the reader for the nation. His *Comptes Rendus* of books and manuscripts are still held precious; but his useful and curious talent had sought the public patronage in vain! From one of his “Diaries,” which has escaped destruction, I transcribe some interesting passages *ad verbum*.

The reader is here presented with a minute picture of those invisible occupations which pass in the study of a man of letters. There are those who may be surprised, as well as amused, in discovering how all the business, even to the very disappointments and pleasures of active life, can be transferred to the silent chamber of a recluse student; but there are others who will not read without emotion the secret thoughts of him who, loving literature with its purest passion, scarcely repines at being defrauded of his just fame, and leaves his stores for the after-age of his more gifted heirs. Thus we open one of Oldys’s literary days:—

I was informed that day by Mr. Tho. Odell’s daughter, that her father, who was Deputy-Inspector and Licenser of the Plays, died 24 May, 1749, at his house in Chappel-street, Westminster, aged 58

years. He was writing a history of the characters he had observed, and conferences he had had with many eminent persons he knew in his time. He was a great observator of everything curious in the conversations of his acquaintance, and his own conversation was a living chronicle of the remarkable intrigues, adventures, sayings, stories, writings, &c., of many of the quality, poets, and other authors, players, booksellers, &c., who flourished especially in the present century. He had been a popular man at elections, and sometime master of the playhouse in Goodman's Fields, but latterly was forced to live reserved and retired by reason of his debts. He published two or three dramatic pieces, one was the *Patron*, on the story of Lord Romney.

Q. of his da. to restore me Eustace Budgell's papers, and to get a sight of her father's.

Have got the one, and seen the other.

July 31.—Was at Mrs. Odell's; she returned me Mr. Budgell's papers. Saw some of her husband's papers, mostly poems in favour of the ministry, and against Mr. Pope. One of them, printed by the late Sir Robert Walpole's encouragement, who gave him ten guineas for writing and as much for the expense of printing it; but through his advice it was never published, because it might hurt his interest with Lord Chesterfield, and some other noblemen who favoured Mr. Pope for his fine genius. The tract I liked best of his writings was the history of his playhouse in Goodman's Fields. (Remember that which was published against that playhouse, which I have entered in my London Catalogue. Letter to Sir Ric. Brocas, Lord Mayor, &c., 8vo, 1730.)

Saw nothing of the history of his conversations with ingenious men; his characters, tales, jests, and intrigues of them, of which no man was better furnished with them. She thinks she has some papers of these, and promises to look them out, and also to inquire after Mr. Griffin, of the Lord Chamberlain's office, that I may get a search made about *Spenser*.

So intent was Oldys on these literary researches that we see, by the last words of this entry, how in hunting after one sort of game, his undivided zeal kept his eye on another. One of his favourite subjects was the realising of original discoveries respecting Spenser and Shakspeare; of whom, perhaps, to our shame, as it is to our vexation, it may be said that two of our master-poets are those of whom we know the least! Oldys once flattered himself that he should be able to have given the world a Life of Shakspeare. Mr. John Taylor informs me, that "Oldys had contracted to supply ten years of the life of Shakspeare *unknown to the biographers*, with one Walker, a bookseller in the Strand; and as Oldys did not live to fulfil the engagement, my father was obliged to return to Walker twenty guineas which he had

advanced on the work." *That interesting narrative is now hopeless for us.* Yet, by the solemn contract into which Oldys had entered, and from his strict integrity, it might induce one to suspect that he had made positive discoveries which are now irrecoverable.

We may observe the manner of his anxious inquiries about *Spenser*:—

Ask Sir Peter Thompson if it were improper to try if Lord Effingham Howard would procure the pedigrees in the Herald's office, to be seen for Edmund Spenser's parentage or family? or how he was related to Sir John Spenser of Althorpe, in Northamptonshire? to three of whose daughters, who all married nobility, Spenser dedicates three of his poems.

Of Mr. Vertue, to examine Stowe's memorandum-book. Look more carefully for the year when Spenser's monument was raised, or between which years the entry stands—1623 and 1626.

Sir Clement Cottrell's book about Spenser.

Captain Power, to know if he has heard from Capt. Spenser about my letter of inquiries relating to Edward Spenser.

Of Whiston, to examine if my remarks on Spenser are complete as to the press—Yes.

Remember, when I see Mr. W. Thompson, to inquire whether he has printed in any of his works any other character of our old poets than those of Spenser and Shakspeare;[353] and to get the liberty of a visit at Kentish Town, to see his *Collection of Robert Greene's Works*, in about *four large volumes quarto*. He commonly published a pamphlet every term, as his acquaintance Tom Nash informs us.

Two or three other memorials may excite a smile at his peculiar habits of study, and unceasing vigilance to draw from original sources of information.

Dryden's Dream, at Lord Exeter's, at Burleigh, while he was translating Virgil, as Signior Verrio, then painting there, related it to the Yorkshire painter, of whom I had it, lies in *the parchment book in quarto*, designed for his life.

At a subsequent period Oldys inserts, "Now entered therein." Malone quotes this very memorandum, which he discovered in *Oldys's Langbaine*,

to show Dryden had some confidence in Oneirocriticism, and supposed that future events were sometimes prognosticated by dreams. Malone adds, "Where either the *loose* prophetic *leaf* or the *parchment book* now is, I know not."[354]

Unquestionably we have incurred a great loss in Oldys's collections for Dryden's Life, which are very extensive; such a mass of literary history cannot have perished unless by accident; and I suspect that many of *Oldys's manuscripts* are in the possession of individuals who are not acquainted with his hand-writing, which may be easily verified.

To search the old papers in one of my large deal boxes for Dryden's letter of thanks to my father, for some communication relating to Plutarch, while they and others were publishing a translation of Plutarch's Lives, in five volumes 8vo. 1683. It is copied in *the yellow book for Dryden's Life*, in which there are about 150 transcriptions, in prose and verse, relating to the life, character, and writings of Dryden.—Is England's Remembrancer extracted out of my *obit.* (obituary) into my remarks on him in the *poetical bag*?

My extracts in the *parchment budget* about Denham's seat and family in Surrey.

My *white vellum pocket-book*, bordered with gold, for the extract from "Groans of Great Britain" about Butler.

See my account of the great yews in Tankersley's park, while Sir R. Fanshaw was prisoner in the lodge there; especially Talbot's yew, which a man on horseback might turn about in, in my *botanical budget*.

This Donald Lupton I have mentioned in my *catalogue* of all the books and pamphlets relative to London in folio, begun anno 1740, and in which I have now, 1740, entered between 300 and 400 articles, besides remarks, &c. Now, in June, 1748, between 400 and 500 articles. Now, in October, 1750, six hundred and thirty-six.[355]

There remains to be told an anecdote which shows that Pope greatly regarded our literary antiquary. "Oldys," says my friend, "was one of the librarians of the Earl of Oxford, and he used to tell a story of the credit which he obtained as a scholar, by setting Pope right in a Latin quotation which he made at the earl's table. He did not, however, as I remember, boast

of having been admitted as a guest at the table, but as happening to be in the room." Why might not Oldys, however, have been seated, at least below the salt? It would do no honour to either party to suppose that Oldys stood among the menials. The truth is, there appears to have existed a confidential intercourse between Pope and Oldys; of this I shall give a remarkable proof. In those fragments of Oldys, preserved as "additional anecdotes of Shakspeare," in Steevens's and Malone's editions, Oldys mentions a story of Davenant, which, he adds, "Mr. Pope told me at the Earl of Oxford's table!" And further relates a conversation which passed between them. Nor is this all; for in Oldys's Langbaine he put down this memorandum in the article of *Shakspeare*—"Remember what I observed to my Lord Oxford for Mr. Pope's use out of Cowley's preface." Malone appears to have discovered this observation of Cowley's, which is curious enough, and very ungrateful to that commentator's ideas: it is "to prune and lop away the old withered branches" in the new editions of Shakspeare and other ancient poets! "Pope adopted," says Malone, "this very unwarrantable idea; Oldys was the person who suggested to Pope the singular course he pursued in his edition of Shakspeare." Without touching on the felicity or the danger of this new system of republishing Shakspeare, one may say that if many passages were struck out, Shakspeare would not be injured, for many of them were never composed by that great bard! There not only existed a literary intimacy between Oldys and Pope, but our poet adopting his suggestions on so important an occasion, evinces how highly he esteemed his judgment; and unquestionably Pope had often been delighted by Oldys with the history of his predecessors, and the curiosities of English poetry.

I have now introduced the reader to Oldys sitting amidst his "poetical bags," his "parchment biographical budgets," his "catalogues," and his "diaries," often venting a solitary groan, or active in some fresh inquiry. Such is the *Silhouette* of this prodigy of literary curiosity!

The very existence of Oldys's manuscripts continues to be of an ambiguous nature; referred to, quoted, and transcribed, we can but seldom turn to the originals. These masses of curious knowledge, dispersed or lost, have enriched an after-race, who have often picked up the spoil and claimed the victory, but it was Oldys who had fought the battle!

Oldys affords one more example how life is often closed amidst discoveries and acquisitions. The literary antiquary, when he has attempted to embody his multiplied inquiries, and to finish his scattered designs, has found that the LABOR ABSQUE LABORE, "the labour void of labour," as the inscription on the library of Florence finely describes the researches of literature, has dissolved his days in the voluptuousness of his curiosity; and that too often, like the hunter in the heat of the chase, while he disdained the prey which lay before him, he was still stretching onwards to catch the fugitive!

Transvolat in medio posita, et fugientia captat.

At the close of every century, in this growing world of books, may an Oldys be the reader for the nation! Should he be endowed with a philosophical spirit, and combine the genius of his own times with that of the preceding, he will hold in his hand the chain of human thoughts, and, like another Bayle, become the historian of the human mind!

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338 His intention was to publish a general classified biography of all the Italian authors.

339 He says in his advertisement, "It will be difficult to ascertain whether he meant to give them to the public, or only to reserve them for his own amusement and the entertainment of his friends." Many of these anecdotes are evidently mere loose scandal.

340 Grose narrates his early history thus:—"His parents dying when he was very young, he soon squandered away his small patrimony, when he became, at first an attendant in Lord

Oxford's library, and afterwards librarian; at whose death he was obliged to write for the booksellers for a subsistence."

341 Mr. John Taylor, the son of Oldys's intimate friend, has furnished me with this interesting anecdote. "Oldys, as my father informed me, was many years in quiet obscurity in the Fleet prison, but at last was spirited up to make his situation known to the Duke of Norfolk of that time, who received Oldys's letter while he was at dinner with some friends. The duke immediately communicated the contents to the company, observing that he had long been anxious to know what had become of an old, though an humble friend, and was happy by that letter to find that he was alive. He then called for his *gentleman* (a kind of humble friend whom noblemen used to retain under that name in those days), and desired him to go immediately to the Fleet, to take money for the immediate need of Oldys, to procure an account of his debts, and discharge them. Oldys was soon after, either by the duke's gift or interest, appointed Norroy King of Arms; and I remember that his official regalia came into my father's hands at his death."

In the "Life of Oldys," by Mr. A. Chalmers, the date of this promotion is not found. My accomplished friend, the Rev. J. Dallaway, has obligingly examined the records of the college, by which it appears that Oldys had been *Norfolk herald extraordinary*, but not belonging to the college, was appointed *per saltum* Norroy King of Arms by patent, May 5th, 1755.

Grose says—"The patronage of the duke occasioned a suspicion of his being a papist, though I think really without reason; this for a while retarded his appointment: it was underhand propagated by the heralds, who were vexed at having a stranger put in upon them."

342 The beautiful simplicity of this Anacreontic has met the unusual fate of entirely losing its character, by an additional and incongruous stanza in the modern editions, by a gentleman who has put into practice the unallowable liberty of *altering* the poetical and dramatic compositions of acknowledged genius to his own notion of what he deems "morality;" but in works of genius whatever is dull ceases to be moral. "The Fly" of Oldys may stand by "The Fly" of Gray for melancholy tenderness of thought; it consisted only of these two stanzas:

Busy, curious, thirsty fly!
Drink with me, and drink as I!

Freely welcome to my cup,
Couldst thou sip and sip it up:
Make the most of life you may;
Life is short and wears away!

Both alike are mine and thine,
Hastening quick to their decline!
Thine's a summer, mine no more,
Though repeated to threescore!
Threescore summers when they're gone,
Will appear as short as one!

343 This anecdote should be given in justice to both parties, and in Grose's words, who says: —"He was a man of great good-nature, honour, and integrity, particularly in his character of an historian. Nothing, I firmly believe, would ever have biassed him to insert any fact in his writings he did not believe, or to suppress any he did. Of this delicacy he gave an instance at a time when he was in great distress. After his publication of the 'Life of Sir Walter Raleigh,' some booksellers thinking his name would sell a piece they were publishing, offered him a considerable sum to father it, which he rejected with the greatest indignation."

344 We have been taught to enjoy the two ages of Genius and of Taste. The literary public are deeply indebted to the editorial care, the taste, and the enthusiasm of Mr. Singer, for exquisite reprints of some valuable writers.

345 Gibbon once meditated a life of Rawleigh, and for that purpose began some researches in that "memorable era of our English annals." After reading Oldys's, he relinquished his design, from a conviction that "he could add nothing new to the subject, except the uncertain merit of style and sentiment."

346 The British Museum is extremely deficient in our National Literature. The gift of George the Third's library has, however, probably supplied many deficiencies. [The recent bequest of the Grenville collection, and the constant search made of late years for these relics of

early literature by the officers of our great national library, has greatly altered the state of the collection since the above was written *s—Ed.*]

347 Grose says—"His mode of composing was somewhat singular: he had a number of small parchment bags, inscribed with the names of the persons whose lives he intended to write; into these bags he put every circumstance and anecdote he could collect, and from thence drew up his history."

348 At the Bodleian Library, I learnt by a letter with which I am favoured by the Rev. Dr. Bliss, that there is an interleaved "Gildon's Lives and Characters of the Dramatic Poets," with corrections, which once belonged to Coxeter, who appears to have intended a new edition. Whether Coxeter transcribed into his Gildon the notes of Oldys's *first* "Langbaine," is worth inquiry. Coxeter's conduct, though he had purchased Oldys's first "Langbaine," was that of an ungenerous miser, who will quarrel with a brother rather than share in any acquisition he can get into his own hands. To Coxeter we also owe much; he suggested Dodsley's Collection of Old Plays, and the first tolerable edition of Massinger.

Oldys could not have been employed in Lord Oxford's library, as Mr. Chalmers conjectures, about 1726; for here he mentions that he was in *Yorkshire* from 1724 to 1730. This period is a remarkable blank in Oldys's life. My learned friend, the Rev. Joseph Hunter, has supplied me with a note in the copy of Fuller in the Malone collection preserved at the Bodleian. Those years were passed apparently in the household of the first Earl of Malton, who built Wentworth House. There all the collections of the antiquary Gascoigne, with "seven great chests of manuscripts," some as ancient as the time of the Conquest, were condemned in one solemn sacrifice to Vulcan; the ruthless earl being impenetrable to the prayers and remonstrances of our votary to English History. Oldys left the earl with little satisfaction, as appears by some severe strictures from his gentle pen.

349 This copy was lent by Dr. Birch to the late Bishop of Dromore, who with his own hand carefully transcribed the notes into an interleaved copy of "Langbaine," divided into four volumes, which, as I am informed, narrowly escaped the flames, and was injured by the water, at a fire at Northumberland House. His lordship, when he went to Ireland, left this copy with Mr. Nichols, for the use of the projected editions of the *Tatler*, the *Spectator*, and the *Guardian*, with

notes and illustrations; of which I think the *Tatler* only has appeared, and to which his lordship contributed some valuable communications.

350 I know that not only this lot of *Oldys's manuscripts*, but a great quantity of *original contributions* of whole lives, intended for the "Biographia Britannica," must lie together, unless they have been destroyed as waste paper. These biographical and literary curiosities were often supplied by the families or friends of eminent persons. Some may, perhaps, have been reclaimed by their owners. I am informed there was among them an interesting collection of the correspondence of Locke; and I could mention several lives which were prepared.

351 This collection, and probably the other letters, have come down to us, no doubt, with the manuscripts of this collector, purchased for the British Museum. The correspondence of Dr. Davenant, the political writer, with his son, the envoy, turns on one perpetual topic, his son's and his own advancement in the state.

352 It is a stout octavo volume of 400 pages, containing a good selection of specimens from the earliest era, concluding with Sam. Daniel, in the reign of James I. Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper was the wife of an auctioneer, who had been a chum of Oldys's in the Fleet Prison, where he died a debtor; and it was to aid his widow that Oldys edited this book.

353 William Thompson, the poet of "Sickness," and other poems; a warm lover of our elder bards, and no vulgar imitator of Spenser. He was the revivor of Bishop Hall's Satires, in 1753, by an edition which had been more fortunate if conducted by his friend Oldys, for the text is unfaithful, though the edition followed was one borrowed from Lord Oxford's library, probably by the aid of Oldys.

354 Malone's Life of Dryden, p. 420.

355 This is one of *Oldys's Manuscripts*; a thick folio of titles, which has been made to do its duty, with small thanks from those who did not care to praise the service which they derived from it. It passed from Dr. Berkenhout to George Steevens, who lent it to Gough. It was sold for five guineas. The useful work of ten years of attention given to it! The antiquary Gough alludes to it with his usual discernment. "Among these titles of books and pamphlets about London are many *purely historical*, and many of *too low a kind* to rank under the head of topography and

history.” Thus the design of Oldys, in forming this elaborate collection, is condemned by trying it by the limited object of the topographer’s view. This catalogue remains a desideratum, were it printed entire as collected by Oldys, not merely for the topography of the metropolis, but for its relation to its manners, domestic annals, events, and persons connected with its history.

INDEX.

ABELARD, ranks among the heretics, i. 145; book condemned as his written by another, ib.; absolution granted to, 146; wrote and *sung* finely, 147; raises the school of the Paraclete, ib.

ABRAM-MEN, ii. 312, and note, ib.

ABRIDGERS, objections to, and recommendations of, i. 397; Bayle’s advice to, 398; now slightly regarded, 399; instructions to, quoted from the Book of Maccabees, ib.

ABSENCE of mind, anecdotes of, i. 206.

ABSOLUTE monarchy, search for precedents to maintain, iii. 510, note.

ABSTRACTION of mind, instances of, amongst great men, ii. 59-60; sonnet on, by Metastasio, 61.

ACADEMY, the French, some account of, i. 413-417; visit of Christina Queen of Sweden to, 414; of Literature, designed in the reign of Queen Anne, ii. 407; abortive attempts to establish various, ib.; disadvantages of, ib.; arguments of the advocates for, ib.; should be designed by individuals, 408; French origin of, 408-410; origin of the Royal Society, 410-412; ridiculous titles of Italian, 479; some account of the Arcadian, and its service to literature, 482; derivation of its title, ib.; of the Colombaria, 483; indications of, in England, 484; early rise of among the Italians, 485; establishment of the "Academy," 486; suppressed, and its members persecuted, ib.; of the "Oziosi," 488; suppression of many, at Florence and Sienna, ib.; considerations of the reason of the Italian fantastical titles of, &c., 489.

ACAJOU and Zirphile, a whimsical fairy tale, ii. 308-311.

ACCADEMIA of Bologna originated with Lodovico Caracci, ii. 399.

ACCIDENT, instances of the pursuits of great men directed by, i. 85.

ACEPHALI, iii. 193, and note, ib.

ACHES, formerly a dissyllable; examples from Swift, Hudibras, and Shakespeare; John Kemble's use of the word, i. 81, note.

ACROSTICS, i. 295-296.

ACTORS, tragic, i. 248; who have died martyrs to their tragic characters, 249; should be nursed in the laps of queens, 250; anecdotes of, 250-251.

ADDISON, silent among strangers, i. 104.

ADRIANI, his continuation of Guicciardini's History, iii. 180.

ADVICE, good, of a literary sinner, i. 350.

AGATES, presenting representations of natural forms, i. 244.

AGOBARD, Archbishop of Lyons, i. 21, and note.

AGREDA, Maria, wrote the Life of the Virgin Mary, i. 367.

ALBERICO, vision of, ii. 422.

ALBERTUS MAGNUS, his opinion concerning books of magic, iii. 281; his brazen man, 282; his entertainment of the Earl of Holland, 290.

ALCHYMISTS, results of their operations, iii. 284; their cautious secresy, 285; discoveries by, ib.

ALCHYMY, anecdotes of professors of, i. 283-284; Henry VI. endeavoured to recruit his coffers by,

284; professors of, called multipliers, 285; books of, pious frauds, ib.; Elias Ashmole rather the historian of, than an adept in, 286; opinions of modern chemists on, 287.

ALEXANDRIA, library of, i. 1; Demetrius Phalereus, its industrious and skilful librarian, ib.; original manuscripts of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides procured for, ib.: destruction of, 47-57.

AMBASSADORS, anecdotes of frivolous points of etiquette insisted on by, ii. 195-206.

AMICABLE ceremonies in various nations, ii. 12.

AMILCAR, the author of the Second Punic War, iii. 143.

AMPHIGOURIES, i. 298.

AMUSEMENT, periodical, during study, a standing rule among the Jesuits, i. 31; various, practised by different celebrated men, 38-41.

ANAGRAMS, i. 298, ii. 229; are classed among the Hebrews with the cabalistic sciences, 230; Platonic notions of, ib.; specimens of Greek, ib.; several examples of curious, 231-233; amusing anecdotes concerning, 234.

ANCILLON and his library, i. 10, and note.

ANDREINI, an actor and author of irregular Italian comedies, ii. 141; a drama of his gave the first idea to Milton of his “Paradise Lost,” ib.

ANECDOTES of European Manners, ii. 30-39; of Abstraction of Mind, 59-62; literary, their importance, 300; Dr. Johnson's defence of, 301; the absurdity of many transmitted by biographers, ib.; general remarks on, 303.

ANGLESEA, Earl of, his MSS. suppressed, ii. 447.

ANIMALS, influence of music on, i. 272-4.

ANNIUS of Viterbo published seventeen books of pretended antiquities, iii. 305; and afterwards a commentary, ib.; caused a literary war, 306.

ANTEDILUVIAN researches, i. 301-303.

ANTI, a favourite prefix to books of controversy, i. 318.

ANTIQUARIES, Society of, inquiry into its origin and progress, ii. 413-415.

ANTONY, Marc, anecdote of, ii. 10.

APPAREL, excess in, proclamation against, by Elizabeth, iii. 375.

APPLES grafted on mulberry stocks, ii. 157, note.

ARCHESTRATUS, a celebrated culinary philosopher, ii. 246.

ARGUMENTS, invented by a machine, ii. 419.

ARIOSTO, his merits disputed in Italy, i. 386; public preference given to, by the Accademia della

Crusca, 387; his verses sung by the gondoliers, 388.

ARISTOCRAT, a nick-name, iii. 83.

ARISTOTLE, account of criticisms on, i. 25; fate of his library, 53; Arabic commentaries on, 61; rage for, ib.; his opinions on sneezing, 127; letter of Philip of Macedon to, 142; description of the person and manners of, ib.; will of, 143; studied under Plato, ib.; parallel between him and Plato, by Rapin, ib.; anecdote concerning him and Plato, 144; raises a school, ib.; attacked by Xenocrates, ib.; his mode of pointing out a successor, 145; writers against and for, 314; bon-mot on his precepts, 407.

ARMSTRONG, Archibald, jester to Charles I., ii. 236, note.

ARNAULD, one of the most illustrious members of the Port Royal Society, i. 94; anecdotes of, 96; was still the great Arnauld at the age of eighty-two, 97.

ASHMOLE, Elias, his Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum, i. 286; his Diary, ii. 209; his superstition, ib., note.

ASTRÆA, D'Urfé's romance of the, i. 451; sketch of, 452-454.

ASTROLOGERS, faith in, by celebrated characters, i. 278; Lilly consulted by Charles I., ib.; Nostrodamus, by Catherine de Medici, 279;

several have suffered death to verify their skill, ib.; shifts and impostures of, 279-280.

ASTROLOGY, greatly flourished in the time of the Civil Wars, i. 280; attacks on and defences of, 281-282.

ATELLANÆ Fabulæ, Atellan farces, ii. 131, and note, 132.

ATTICUS, employed to collect for Cicero, ii. 397; traded in books and gladiators, 398.

AUBREY, John, extract from his correspondence, iii. 294; his search after gold, ib.; his idea of universal education, 296.

AUDLEY, a lawyer and usurer, ii. 158; his commencement of life, and means of rising in, 159; anecdote of him and a draper, 161; his maxims of political economy, 162; his reply to a borrowing lord, ib.; his manners and opinions, 168-170; his death and general character, 170.

AUTOGRAPHS, indications of character, iii. 163; of English sovereigns, 165-166.

BABINGTON'S conspiracy, some account of its progress, and of the noble youths concerned in it, ii. 171; trial and defences of the conspirators, 173; their execution, 175-176.

BACCHUS, ancient descriptions of, and modern translations of them, ii. 292.

Bacon, Lord, sketch of his life as a philosopher, iii. 320-326; more valued abroad than at home, 327.

Baker, Sir Richard, author of the "Chronicle," died in the Fleet, ii. 452; his papers burnt, ib.

Bales, Peter, a celebrated caligrapher, i. 275; iii. 173-177.

Ballard, the Jesuit, concerned in Babington's conspiracy, ii. 172; expression of his on his trial, 173.

Baptista Porta, founded the Accademie of the Oziosi and Segreti, iii. 290; considered himself a prognosticator, ib.; his magical devices, ib.

Barbier, Louis, anecdote relating to, ii. 11; his superstitious observances, ib., note.

Barnard, Dr., his "Life of Heylin," iii. 217-221.

Barthius, Gaspar, a voluminous author, ii. 536; an infant prodigy, ib.; published a long list of unprinted works, 537; its fate, ib.

Basnage, his Dictionary, iii. 233.

Bayle, publishes his *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, i. 14; account of his death, 391; his conduct to his friend, 392; read much by his fingers, ib.; amusements of, ib.; anecdotes relating to, 393; his "Critical Dictionary," remarks on its character, ii. 382-388; Gibbon's remarks on, 385; publication of, ib.; his originality, how obtained,

386; his errors, 388; his personal traits, 389; his characteristics, 388-396; changes his religion twice, 390; extract from his diary, ib.; his methods of study, 391; appointed to a professorship, ib.; deprived of it, ib.; laments his want of books, 392; anecdotes of the effects of his works, 394; a model of a literary character, 395.

BEAM in the eye of the Pharisee, literally represented in early art, i. 307, and note.

BEARDS, various fashions in, i. 220.

BEAUSSOL, M. Peyraud de, his preface to his condemned tragedy, ii. 304-307.

BEN JONSON, masques by, iii. 12; assisted Rawleigh in his history of the world, 131, and note.

BENEVOLENCES, iii. 218, 219.

BENTLEY, notice of his criticisms on Milton, i. 370-373.

BETHLEHEM Hospital, its original foundation, ii. 311, and note.

BETTERTON, anecdote of, i. 250.

BEZA, Theodore, an imitator of Calvin in abuse, i. 310; effect of his work against toleration, iii. 245.

BIBLE, the prohibition of, ii. 19; various versions of, 20-23; a *family* one, 22; the Olivetan, iii. 155; corrupt state of the English, formerly, 427;

printing of, an article of open trade, 428; shameful practices in the printing of, 428-431, and note; privilege of printing granted to one Bentley, 430; Field's Pearl Bible contained 6000 faults, 431; division of, into chapter and verse, 432.

BIBLIOMANE, iii. 343.

BIBLIOMANIA, i. 9.

BIBLIOGNOSTE, iii. 343.

BIBLIOGRAPHE, iii. 343.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, remarks on its importance, iii. 341.

BIBLIOPHILE, iii. 343.

BIBLIOTAPHE, iii. 343.

BIOGRAPHICAL parallels, iii. 425; a book of, proposed by Hurd, ib.; between Budæus and Erasmus, 426; instances of several, 427.

BIOGRAPHY, painted, a, iii. 137-141; remarks on, 414; sentimental, distinguished from chronological, ib.; of Dante, by Boccacio and Aretino, 415-419; domestic, 420-423; customary among the Romans, 424; comparative, a series of, projected by Elizabeth Hamilton, ib.

BIRCH, Dr., his great services to history, iii. 383.

BIRKENHEAD, Sir John, a newspaper writer and pamphleteer during the great rebellion, i. 159.

Black Cloaks, a political nickname for a party in Naples, iii. 82.

Blenheim, secret history of the building of, iii. 102-111; drawn from MSS., 103, note.

Bonaventure de Perriers, specimen of his stories, i. 128.

Book of Sports, effect of, ii. 148.

Books, collections of, see Libraries; collectors of, see Collectors; reviews of, and criticisms on, see Literary Journals and Sketches of Criticism; destruction of, see Title; lost, i. 47-57; prices of, in early times, 76; treatise on the art of reading printed, 78; curious advertisements of, 157; titles of, 288; various opinions as to the size of, 347; difficulties encountered in publishing many books of merit, 375; works of another description better remunerated, 377; leaves of, origin of their name, ii. 23, note; table-books, 26; derivation of the name "book," 28; description of the form and condition of ancient, ib.; censors and licensers of, 216; catalogue of, condemned at the Council of Trent, ib.; inquisitors of, ib.; see Index; burning of, anecdote of its good effect in promoting their sale, 219; mutilations caused by the censors in Camden's works, Lord Herbert's History of Henry VIII., and the Poems of Lord Brooke, 220; anecdotes of purloiners of, iii. 316-319; predilection of celebrated men to particular,

iii. 340-343; calculations as to their present number, 342; different terms for amateurs of, 343; which have been designed but not completed, 493, 494.

Booksellers, two ruined by one author, ii. 533.

Borrowers, destructive to collections of books, i. 12.

Botanic Garden, Darwin's remarks on, i. 341.

Bourdaloue, i. 257.

Bourgeois, Père, one of the Chinese missionaries, account of his attempt at preaching in Chinese, i. 268.

Bouts Rimes, i. 296.

Brandt, Ship of Fools, i. 7.

Bridgewater, late Duke of, destroyed many family MSS., ii. 451.

Buckingham, Duke of, his familiarity and coarseness with James I., i. 463, note; his conduct in Spain, ii. 4; equally a favourite with James I. and Charles I., 5; Hume's character of, ib. and 355; anecdote of him and the Queen of France, 6; his audacity and "English familiarity," ib.; anecdote of him and Prince Charles, 7; his rise, 10; his magnificent entertainment of Charles I. and the French ambassador, 327; his character, 356-358, and notes; his fears of being supplanted,

357, note; contrast between him and Richelieu, 358; secret history of his expedition to Spain with Prince Charles, 359; prognostics of his death, 364; portrait of, 366, note; determined to succour Rochelle, 367; his death, 371; satires on, 369, 370; possessed the esteem of Charles I., ib.; his extravagance in dress, iii. 407; intrigued with the Puritans, 443; his intercourse with Dr. Preston, a Puritan, 444; discovers Preston's insincerity, and abandons the Puritans, 445; his impeachment, 452; his failure at the Isle of Rhé, 458; offers to resign his offices, 469; hatred of, by the parliament, 470-474.

BUFFON, Vicq d'Azyr's description of his study, iii. 208.

BUILDINGS in the metropolis, opposition to, from the days of Elizabeth to those of Charles II., iii. 363; statutes against, 364; proclamations against, 365.

BURNET, his book against Varillas, i. 132, and note.

BURYING grounds, iii. 231.

BUTLER, the author of "Hudibras," vindicated, ii. 491-495.

CADIZ, expedition to, in the time of Charles I., ii. 366; satirical lines on, 367.

CALAMY, his "History of the Ejected Ministers," iii. 240.

Calumny, political advantages of, iii. 81.

Calvin, less tolerant than Luther in controversy, i. 309.

Camus, his "Médecine de l'Esprit," ii. 469.

Caracci, family of the, ii. 399; Lodovico, character of, ib.; the school of the, 401, note; Agostino and Annibale, their opposite characters, 402; the three opened a school in their own house, 403; Agostino's eminence there, ib.; his sonnet, comprising the laws of painting, 404; Domenichino, Albano, Guido, Guercino, their pupils, 405; disputes between Annibale and Agostino, ib.; their separation, 406.

Cardinal Richelieu, anecdotes of, and considerations on his character, i. 139-142.

Carleton, Sir Dudley, Vice-Chamberlain of Charles I., his speech to the Commons on the imprisonment of two of their members for their impeachment of Buckingham, iii. 455.

Cartoons of Raphael, now at Hampton Court, offered for sale, and bought by Cromwell, ii. 333; nearly sold to France by Charles II., ib., note; the gallery for their reception built by William III., ib.

Catherine de' Medici, her belief in astrology, iii. 347; employs Montluc to intrigue to secure the election of the Duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland, 349.

CATHARINOT, a voluminous writer, ii. 545; his singular mode of publishing his unsaleable works, 546.

CAUSE and Pretext, distinction between, to be observed by historians, iii. 141; anecdotal illustrations, 142-144.

CAXTON, the printer, his earliest works, i. 75, note.

CAYET, Dr., his "Chronologie Novenaire," ii. 7.

CENSERS used to sweeten houses in the reign of Elizabeth, ii. 38, note.

CENSORS of books, designed to counteract the press, ii. 216; originated with the Inquisition, ib.; appointed with the title of Inquisitors of Books, ib.; disagreement among these Inquisitors, 217; in Spain, 218; their treatment of commentators on the "Lusiad," ib.; instances of the injury done to English literature by the appointment of, 220; never recognised by English law, 221; regularly established under Charles I., 223; office of, maintained by the Puritans, ib.; treatment of Milton by, ib.; the office lay dormant under Cromwell, 224; revived and continued under Charles II. and James II., ib.; anecdotes relative to, 226-228.

CENTOS, i. 299.

CEREMONIES, different, among various nations, ii. 12-15.

Cervantes, remark of i. 394; taken prisoner at the battle of Lepanto, ib.

Chamillart, Minister of France, his rise, ii, 11.

Charades, i. 297.

Charles Martel, his combat with, and defeat of, the Mahometans, ii. 430.

Charles the Bald of France, his remarkable vision, ii. 423.

Charles the First, account of his expedition into Spain, ii. 1-4; anecdote of him and Buckingham, 6; history of his diamond seal, 326; his love of the fine arts, 327; the magnificence and taste of his court entertainments, 328; anecdote of, 329; catalogue of his effects, 331-334; an artist and a poet, 334, 335, and note; influence of his wife on, doubted, 336; his dismissal of his wife's French establishment, 345; reply to the French ambassador's remonstrances, 347; his conduct on the death of Buckingham, 371; secret history of him and his first Parliaments, iii. 448; the latter a sullen bride, ib.; his address to his first Parliament, and their ungracious conduct, 449; they abandoned the king, 450; raises money on Privy Seals, ib.; on the failure of the expedition to Cadiz he called his second Parliament, 451; communications between him and his Parliament, ib.; his address to them, noticing the impeachment of Buckingham, 452; his conduct on that occasion

the beginning of his troubles, 453; on the Commons' further remonstrance against Buckingham, he dissolves his second Parliament, 457; his distress for money, ib.; his fresh distresses on the failure of the expedition to the Isle of Rhé, and his expedients to raise money, 458, 459; their ill success, 460, 461; reflections on his situation, 463; rejects the proffered advice of the President of the Rosy-Cross, 464; anonymous letter sent to the Commons, and by them forwarded to the king without perusing, 465; secret measures used by the opposition, 466; speech of the king to Parliament, 467; his emotion on being informed that the Parliament had granted subsidies 468; debates on the king's message, 469; Eliot's speech thereon, 470; Coke's memorable speech, 473; the king grants his assent to the Petition of Right, 475; popular rejoicings, 476; presentation of the Remonstrance, ib.; the king's conduct after the assassination of Buckingham, 477; vow of the Parliament to maintain the Articles of Religion of the 13th Eliz., 478; tumult in the House, and dissolution of the Parliament, 480.

CHARLES the Fifth, his edicts against the Reformed religion, iii. 242; his conduct influenced by political, not religious motives, 243.

CHARLES the Ninth, account of the death of, ii. 7-9; his apology for the massacre of St. Bartholomew, iii. 255-259; his character, 260.

CHERRIES, introduction of, into Great Britain, ii. 156; loss and reintroduction of, in the reign of Henry VIII., ib.

CHESS, clergymen prohibited from playing, ii. 32; Kempelen's Mechanical Chess-player, iii. 284, note.

CHINESE language, i. 267; difficulties of, experienced by P. Bourgeois, 268.

CHOCOLATE, brought from Mexico by the Spaniards, ii. 325; treatise against the use of, ib.; chocolate-houses in London, ib.

CHRISTMAS Prince at the Universities, ii. 268; account of one at Oxford, 1607, ib., note.

CHRISTODINS, iii. 81.

CHRONOGRAMS, i. 295.

CHURCHILL abhorred the correction of his MSS., ii. 85.

CICERO a punster, i. 69; a manufacturer of prefaces, 71; a collector, ii. 396; his projected library, ib.; employs Atticus to procure books and statues, 397; discovered the tomb of Archimedes, iii. 409.

CITIES, Free, shook off the yoke of feudal tyranny, i. 184.

CLAIRON, Mademoiselle, anecdote of, i. 251.

CLARENDON House, history of its erection, iii. 189-191; popularly called Dunkirk House, or Tangier Hall, 189; satire on the building of, 190; existing remains of, 191, note.

CLASSICAL learning, ii. 332.

CLOVIS, his reasons for adopting Christianity, ii. 433, 434, and note.

COACHES, introduction of, into England, ii. 36; use of, in France, ib.

COCKERAM, H., his English Dictionary and its new words, iii. 24.

COCK-FIGHTING in Ceylon, i. 188.

COFFEE, introduction of, into Europe, ii, 320; made fashionable at Paris by the Turkish ambassador, 321; invectives and poetical satires against, 322-324; advantages of its use, 325.

COFFEE-HOUSES, the first opened at Paris, ii. 321; improvements in, ib.; the first in England, 322; shut up by proclamation, ib.; and iii. 379, note.

COKE, or Cook, Sir Edward, his most pleasing book, his Manual, or *Vade Mecum*, ii. 519; his MSS. seized on his death, ib.; yet to be recovered, ib., note; his character, 520; his matrimonial alliances, ib.; his disgrace, 521; disputes between him and his wife, Lady Hatton, concerning the marriage of his daughter, 523; curious letter of advice to Lady

Hatton, for her defence before the Council, 524; his daughter married to Lord Villiers, and Coke reinstated, 529; his daughter's bad conduct, ib.; his death, 530; his vituperative style, ib.; his conduct to Rawleigh, 531; his abjectness in disgrace, 532; pricked as sheriff, to exclude him from Parliament, iii. 446; eludes the appointment by excepting to the oath, 448.

COKE, Mr. Clement, a violent opposition leader in the second Parliament of Charles I., iii. 498, 499.

COLERIDGE, method pursued by him in his remarkable political predictions, iii. 268.

COLLECTIONS of books, see LIBRARIES; of engravings, see ENGRAVINGS.

COLLECTOR of books, i. 1-8; defence of himself, as one of the body, by Ancillon, 10; Aristotle first saluted as a, 53.

COLLECTORS, their propensity to plunder, iii. 316-319.

COLLINS, Anthony, a great lover of books, iii. 16; a free-thinker, ib.; the friend of Locke, 18; fate of his MSS., 19-23.

COMEDIES, extemporal, ii. 130; opinion of northern critics on, 131; the amusement of Italy, ib.; practised by the Romans, ib.; Salvator Rosa's prologue to one, 133; opinions and descriptions of, by Riccoboni and Gherardi, 134, 135; anecdote of

the excellence of, 137; when first introduced in England, 138.

Comfits universally used under Henry III. of France, i. 221.

Comines, notice of, i. 263.

Composition, various modes of literary, ii. 85; correction in, necessary, ib.; but by some authors impossible, ib.; illustrative anecdotes, 86; use of models in, 88; various modes of, used by celebrated authors, 90-92; passion for, exhibited by some authors, 533-546.

Conde, great Prince of, expert in physiognomy, i. 150.

Confreres de la Passion, i. 353.

Confusion of words by writers, iii. 65; by the Nominalists and Realists, 66; in modern philosophy, ib.; between the Antinomians and their opposers, and the Jansenists and Jesuits, 68; between Abelard and St. Bernard, ib; other instances, 69; in jurisprudence and politics, 70; historical instances, 71-73; arising from a change of meaning in the course of time, 74; serious consequences of, 77; among political economists, 78; illustrative anecdote of Caramuel, a Spanish bishop, 79.

Constantine, motives of his acknowledgment of Christianity, ii. 433.

Controversial writings, acrimony infused into by scholars, i. 153, and 317.

Controversy, literary, that of the Nominalists and Realists, i. 312; between Benedetto Aletino and Constantino Grimaldi, 314; abuse lavished on each other by learned men in, 308-320; challenges sent on occasion of, 317.

Cookery and cooks of the ancients, ii. 245; Epic composed in praise of, 246; illustrative translations from Athenæus,247-252; the dexterity of the cooks, 253; writers on, 254; anecdotes, 255.

Corneille, Peter, died in poverty, i. 32; deficient in conversation, 104; sketch of his life, 428-432.

Corneille, Thomas, impromptu written under his portrait, i. 432.

Cornelius Agrippa, accused of magic, i. 27; his dog supposed to be a demon, 28; his belief in demons, iii. 282.

Cornhert, Theodore, a great advocate for toleration, iii. 253, and note.

Corpus Christi plays at Chester, i. 353; at Kendal, iii. 442, and note.

Cosmetics, use of, by the ladies of the Elizabethan age, i. 227.

Cotton, Sir Robert, his manuscript collections, iii. 316; his character of Charles I., 456, 457.

COUNTRY gentlemen, their former habits commended, ii. 214; Lord Clarendon's mention of his grandfather's conduct as one of the body, ib.; their conduct created a national character, ib.

COUNTRY residence, opinion of Justice Best upon, iii. 363; James I. recommendation of, 364; proclamations to compel a, ib.; and proceedings in the Star Chamber against the disobedient, 365-368; Ode upon, by Sir Richard Fanshaw, 369.

COURT of Wards and Liveries, ii. 158, note.

CRANMER, Jansenist character of, i. 373.

CREATION of the World, precise date of, i. 303.

CREBILLON, his creditors attached the proceeds of his tragedy of Catiline, i. 405; decree of Louis XV. thereupon, 406.

CRITICS may possess the art of judging without the power of execution, i. 407; Abbé d'Aubignac and Chapelaine quoted as instances, ib.

CRITICISM, Periodical, see LITERARY JOURNALS, i. 12-17; sketches of amongst the ancients, 24-27; effect of, upon authors, 409.

CROMWELL, his great political error, ii. 435; prediction of his future eminence, iii. 269; reasons for his delay in naming a successor, 328, 329.

CRUIKSHANK, George, curious error concerning, i. 321, note.

CYRE, the Abbé, an envoy of the Emperor's in Poland, iii. 350; seized and imprisoned, 360.

D'AGUESSEAU, the Chancellor, his advice to his son on the study of history, iii. 179.

DANCE of Death, iii. 211-215.

DANTE, origin of his Inferno, disputes on, ii. 421; the entire work Gothic, ib.; Vision of Alberico supposed to be borrowed, 422; and probably read by Dante, ib.; his originality vindicated, 423; the true origin of the Inferno, 427, and note.

DAY-FATALITY, i. 279; lucky and unlucky days, ib., note.

DEATH, anecdotes relating to the death of many distinguished persons, i. 417-421; book containing the accounts of the deaths of remarkable persons, compiled by Montaigne, iii. 200; reflections on death, ib.; anecdotes of the death of some celebrated persons, 201, 202; effect of the continual consideration of, 203; Lady Gethin's ideas on, 204; conversations of Johnson and Boswell on, ib.; singular preparations for, by Moncriff, 205; opinions of the ancients on, 207; personifications of, among the ancients, 208, and note; Gothic representations of, 209.

DEDICATIONS, curious anecdotes concerning, i. 337-341; price for the dedication of a play, 338; one to himself, composed by a patron, ib.; practice of

Elkanah Settle with regard to, 339; of the Polyglot Bible to Cromwell, ib.; altered at the Restoration, ib.; to Cardinal Richelieu, 340; Dryden's, ib.; ingenious one by Sir Simon Degge, 341.

De Foe, his honour questioned as to the publication of Robinson Crusoe, ii. 274; probably struck by Steele's observations on Selkirk's narration, 276; wrote Robinson Crusoe in comparative solitude, ib.; vindication of his character, ib.

De la Chambre, secret correspondence of, with Louis XIV. on physiognomy, i. 148.

Deliquents, a convenient revolutionary phrase, iii. 86.

Descares, persecuted for his opinions, i. 29; silent in mixed company, 104; his description of his life in Amsterdam, 113.

Descriptions, local, when prolonged tedious, iii. 1; Boileau's criticisms on, 1, 2; inefficiency of, instanced by a passage from Pliny, 2; example of elegant, in a sonnet by Francesca de Castello, 3.

Descriptive Poems, general remarks on, i. 341; race of, confined to one object, ib.; titles of, and notices on several of these, 342, 343.

Des Maizeaux, a French refugee, iii. 13; his Life of Bayle, 14; notices of his literary life, 15-18; Anthony Collins bequeaths his MSS. to, 19;

relinquishes them to Collins's widow, 20; correspondence concerning, 19-22.

Desmarets, his comedy of the "Visionnaires," ii. 48.

De Serres, introduced the cultivation of the mulberry tree and silk-worm into France, ii. 152; opposition to his schemes, ib.; supported by Henry IV., ib.; medal struck in honour of his memory, 153.

Destruction of books and MSS. by the monks, i. 18, 50; account of, at Constantinople, by the Christians, suppressed, 47; burning of Talmuds, 48; of Irish and Mexican, ib.; anecdotes regarding, 49; of Korans, ib.; of the classics, 50; of Bohemian, ib.; in England under Henry VIII., 51; at Stationers' Hall in 1599, 53; of many of Lady Mary Wortley Montague's letters, 54; of Anglo-Saxon MSS., 55; anecdotes concerning the, ib., note; by fire and shipwreck, 56, 57.

D'Ewes, Sir Symonds, a sober antiquary, but a visionary, iii. 433; extracts from his Diary, 434, 435.

Diary, of a Master of the Ceremonies, ii. 194-206; Shaftesbury's definition of a, ib.; Colonel Harwood's, 206; kept by Titus, ib.; Alfred's, 207; Prince Henry's, ib.; Edward VI.'s, ib.; kept by James II., 208; usually kept by heads of families, 209; kept by Swift and Horace Walpole, ib.; recommended by Sir Thomas Bodley to Sir

Francis Bacon, ib.; Coke's, ib.; Camden's, 210; of Sir Symonds D'Ewes, ib.; Baxter's, 211; the thoughtful disposition giving rise to the keeping of a diary, partaken even by women, ib.; Whitelocke's, 212; Laud's, 213; Lord Clarendon's, 214; practice of keeping one recommended, 215.

DIARIES, Religious, iii. 435.

DICTIONARY of Trevoux, account of its origin and progress, iii. 229; of Basnage, 230; of Dr. Johnson, 233.

DIGGES, Sir Dudley, a violent opposition leader in Charles I.'s second parliament, iii. 451; opened the impeachment of Buckingham, 452; committed to the tower, 454.

DILAPIDATIONS of MSS.—See MANUSCRIPTS.

DINNER hour, variations of, in different times, ii. 34, 35.

DINNER parties, Roman limitation of the number of guests at, ii. 246.

DISCOVERIES in literature and science, aptitude in, obtained by studious men, iii. 408; illustrative anecdotes, 409-413.

DIVINITY, scholastic, i. 60, 61; curious accounts and specimens of, 63-65.

DODD's Church History of England, iii. 239.

Dragons, origin of the old stories of, ii. 311.

Drama, anecdotes of the early, ii. 40-43; Mexican, ib.; account of a curious drama, entitled Technotamia, or the Marriage of the Arts, 43-46; account of one written by a madman, 48.

Dramatic works made the vehicle of political feeling, ii. 277; by the Catholics at the Reformation, ib.; such conduct caused a proclamation by Edward VI. against English interludes, &c., ib.; those on the side of the Reformation allowed, and specimens of one, 279-281; proceedings against in the Star Chamber, ib.

Dramatic Annals.—See Dramatic Works. Suppression of the drama during the civil wars of Charles I., ii. 281; opposite conduct of actors at that time, and at the period of the French revolution, 282; writers against the stage, 283; custom of boys personating females, 284; introduction of actresses, 285; Histriomastix, ib.; all theatres suppressed in 1642, ib.; ordinance against theatres, 286; plays enacted secretly during their suppression, ib.; Cox's "drolleries," 287; petitions against the drama, 289; the player's petition in favour of, ib.; secretly acted at Holland House, 291; the suppression of the drama caused the publication of many MS. plays, ib.

Dress, costliness of, in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., iii. 405-408.

Drinking, hard, a borrowed custom among the English, ii. 293; learnt by them in the Netherlands, ib.; statutes against, ib., note; terms of, 294, note, 295-298; anecdotes of, 300.

Drunkards, their different characteristics, ii. 299; "A Delicate Diet for," ib., note; toasts of, 300, and note.

Du Clos, origin of his fairy tale of Acajou and Zirphile, and account of his satirical preface to it, ii. 308-310.

Dutch literature, remarks and strictures on, i. 403-405; satirical medals, iii. 156-160.

Echo verses, specimen of, ii. 236.

Eclectic School of Art founded by the Caracci, ii. 401, note.

Edward the Fourth, to what he owed his crown, i. 261.

Eglishaw, Dr., his political libels, ii. 357, note; is murdered in Holland, ib.

Elizabeth, queen, i. 264; her amours, 265; wished to be thought beautiful by all the world, ib.; her habits studious, but not of the gentlest kind, 266; her writing, 267; her education severely classical, ib.; various anecdotes concerning, 264-267; her able management of her parliaments, ii. 179-186; her conduct regarding the succession, iii. 328; her

treatment of James I., 332; her proclamation against excess in apparel, 375.

ELIOT, Sir John, a violent opposition leader in Charles I.'s second Parliament, iii. 452; his speech on the impeachment of Buckingham, 453; committed to the Tower, 454; violent against Buckingham in Parliament, 469-471; his collection of satires against him, ib.; a leader in the last Parliament of Charles I., 474-479.

ELOISA, solicited and obtained Abelard's absolution, i. 146; buried with Abelard, ib.; a fine lady, 147; Pope's reprehensible lines found in original letters of, 148.

ENCHANTERS, origin of the old stories of, ii. 31.

ENGLISH Poetry, scarcely known in France in 1610, iii. 233; ignorance of, displayed by Quadrio in his History of Poetry published in 1750, 236.

ENGRAVING, early origin among the Egyptians, i. 43, note.

ENGRAVINGS, first collection of, under Louis XIV., by Colbert, i. 7; collecting of engraved portraits originated the work of Granger, 45.

EPITAPH on Cardinal Richelieu, by his protégé, Benserade, i. 84; by celebrated persons on themselves, 417; on Philip I., 471; on Butler, the author of Hudibras, ii. 548.

ERRATA, remarkable anecdotes concerning, i, 78-82.

ERRONEOUS proper names, given in foreign authors, i. 327, and note.

ETIQUETTE, Court, reflections on its rise and progress, ii. 194; forms of, observed between the English ambassadors and Cardinal Richelieu, 195; creation of a master of the ceremonies, 196; absurd punctilios of, illustrated from the Diary of Sir John Finett, 196-204.

EVELYN, his mode of composition, ii. 88; praise due to him for his Sylva, 152; his design for arms of Royal Society, 411, and note.

EVENTS which have not happened, ii. 428-438.

EXCOMMUNICATION, by the Popes, dreadful consequences of, ii. 84.

FAIRFAX Papers, curious discovery of, i. 24, note.

FAIRFAX, Sir Thomas, anecdotes of him and his family, ii. 461-474.

FAME, contemned, 66.

FAMILIAR spirits, intercourse with, believed, i. 27, 28, 280.

FANSHAW, Sir Richard, his Ode on the king's commanding the gentry to reside on their estates, iii. 369-371.

FARCES, ancient, reprehensible, but their pleasantry and humour not contemptible, i. 358; customary among the Romans after a serious piece, ii. 131.

FASHIONS.—See LITERARY FASHIONS. Anecdotes of their origin, changes and extravagances, i. 216-230; introduction of French, 227, 228; chronicled by Stowe, 225; French, prevailed in the reign of Charles II., 228; notice of modern, 229; lines condemning the acts of, 230; expensive in the reigns of Henry VII. and VIII., ii. 36.

FEAST of Fools, ii. 31.

FEAST of Asses, ii. 31.

FELTON, John, the assassin of the Duke of Buckingham, his motives for the act, ii. 371; his passage to London in triumph, 372; anagram on his name, 373; his remorse, ib.; his character, 374; his family, ib., and note; propositions found in his trunk, 375; history of the remarkable written paper found in his hat, ib., note; answer to a threat of torture, 376; poem addressed to, 378.

FEMALE beauty and ornaments, opinions and practices of various nations concerning, i. 211.

FENELON, Jansenist character of, i. 373; his admiration of Homer, iii. 339.

FEUDAL customs and rights, the barbarous, the first attempts at organizing society, i. 183; servitude of the land, 184; maiden rights, ib.; wardship, 185;

German lords privileged to rob on the highway, ib.; anecdote of Geoffrey, Lord of Coventry, ib.; anecdotes of the abuse of feudal rights and power, 186, 187.

FILBERT, origin of the name, ii. 157, and note.

FILCHERS, literary, iii. 316-319.

FILICAJA, a sonnet of, iii. 197, translated, ib.

FINETT, Sir John, master of the ceremonies to Charles I.—See ETIQUETTE.

FIRE, in primæval ages, a signal of respect, ii. 16; worshipped as a divinity, ib.; a symbol of majesty, ib.; ancient observances regarding, ib.

FIRE-WORKS, not known to antiquity, ii. 15; their epoch, 17; originated with the Florentines and Siennese, ib.; their use passes to Rome, ib.; exhibition of at Paris, 18.

FLAP-DRAGONS, ii. 298.

FLEA, collection of poems on, i. 304.

FLORAL gifts, withheld by the Capitouls of Toulouse from Maynard, a French poet, i. 437.

FLOGGING, a discussion on, occasioned Roger Ascham to write his Schoolmaster, i. 87.

FLOWERS and Fruits, praise of the introducers of exotic, ii. 151; Peirese and Evelyn, ib.; Hartlib,

153; enthusiasm evinced by the transplanters of, ib.; notice of many introduced by particular persons, 154; origin of, distinguished by their names, 155; worthy pride of introducers of, 156, 157.

FORGERIES and fictions, political and religious, iii. 144; historical instances, 145-150; literary, iii. 304-319.

FORMOSA, Psalmanazar's pretended history of, i. 136, note.

FOSCOLO, Ugo, his opinion on the titles of Italian Academies, ii. 490.

FOURMONT, the Oriental scholar, anecdote of, iii. 396.

FOX's Acts and Monuments, iii. 239.

FRIENDSHIPS of literary men, interesting anecdotes of, ii. 55-59.

FRANKLIN, Dr., experiments with lightning, ii. 413.

FRENCH REVOLUTION a commentary on the English, iii. 489.

FRONDEURS, organized by Cardinal de Retz, iii. 83.

FUGGERS, a wealthy family of merchants, i. 6, and note.

FUNERAL honours paid to their kings by the Goths and Huns, i. 196.

GALILEO, condemned to disavow his own opinions, i. 28; his annotations on Tasso, ii. 444.

GAMESTERS, memoirs of celebrated, i. 190.

GAMING, a universal passion, i. 187; treatises on, ib.; among the nations of the East, 188, 189; the ancients, ib.; picture of a gambling-house in 1731, ib.

GARDENS, mediæval, ii. 154, note; gradual introduction of fruits and flowers, 151-157.

GAS, origin of the word, iii. 282.

GAYTON, Edmund, his pleasant notes upon Don Quixote and other works, i. 139, note.

GEMARA.—See TALMUD.

GENIUS, inequalities of, i. 88; men of, deficient in conversation, 103; modern persecution of, 197.

GERBIER, Sir Balthazar, a confidential agent of the Duke of Buckingham, ii. 358; notices of his Memoirs, 359-369; his account of the preparations for the siege of Rochelle, 368.

GESTURES significant, used by the ancients and by modern Neapolitans, ii. 119, note.

GETHIN, Lady Grace, her statue in Westminster Abbey, ii. 270; her papers collected and published, under the title of Reliquiæ Gethinianæ, 271; character of the book, ib.; Congreve's laudatory lines on, ib.; its authenticity doubted, 272; her considerations on the choice of a husband, 273.

GHOSTS, theory of, iii. 287, 288.

GIANNONE, his History of Naples, iii. 184; threatened by the Inquisition, 185; died in the citadel of Turin, ib.

GIBBON, his mode of study useful to students, ii. 89.

GILL, Alexander, committed by the Star Chamber, ii. 373.

GLOVES, supposed to be mentioned in the 108th Psalm, i. 235; account of, by Xenophon, ib.; mentioned by several ancient writers, ib.; use of, universal in the 9th century, 236; regulations concerning, ib.; employed on great and solemn occasions, such as investitures, ib.; Abbots forbidden to use, ib.; blessing of, 237; deprivation of, a mark of degradation, ib.; challenging by, ib.; used for secret correspondence, ib., note; use of, in carrying the hawk, 238; formerly forbidden to judges, ib.; singular anecdote concerning, ib.; ancient, in the Denny family, 239.

GLOVE-MONEY, i. 238.

GOFF, Thomas, a tragic poet, specimens of his works, ii. 42.

GONDOLIERS of Venice, description of their chanting the verses of Tasso and Ariosto, i. 388.

GOUGH, the antiquary, anecdote of, iii. 319.

GRAY, loss of his MSS., ii. 451.

GROTIUS, account of his life and studies, i. 129, 130.

GRUB-STREET Journal, extract from, ii. 492; its authors, ib., note.

GUELPHS and Ghibellines, iii. 89.

GUEUX, iii. 81.

GUIBERT, foretold the French Revolution, iii. 300.

GUICCIARDINI, his history posthumous, iii. 180; first editions of his works castrated, ib.; continuation of his history by Adriani, ib.

GUILT, trials and modes of proof of, in superstitious ages, i. 161-166.

GULLIVER's Travels, account of the first edition, i. 320, note.

HAIR, early taste in the colour of, ii. 33, and note.

HALIFAX, Marquis of, his MS. memoirs suppressed, ii. 447.

HALL, Bishop, his belief in witches, iii. 293, and note.

HALLEY, anecdote of his perseverance and sagacity, iii. 411.

HAMILTON, Elizabeth, her projected series of comparative biography, iii. 424.

HANS CARVEL, origin of Prior's story of, i. 111.

HARDI, a French tragic author, ii. 41.

HARLEQUIN, his Italian origin, ii. 117; turned into a magician by the English, ib.; the character essentially Italian, 118; treatises written on it, 121; a Roman mime, ib. and note; his classical origin, 123, note; his degeneration, 125; his renovation under the hand of Goldoni, ib.; improved into a wit in France, ib.

HARTLIBB, Samuel, a collector and publisher of manuscripts on horticulture and agriculture, ii. 153.

HARVEY, his discovery of the circulation of the blood, iii. 412.

HAZLERIGG, Sir Arthur, "an absurd bold man," a violent leader of the Rump Parliament, iii. 487.

HEART of a lover, story of, i. 233, 234.

HEAVY hours of literary men, i. 392.

HELL, Purgatory, and Heaven, topographical descriptions of, i. 202; treatises on, 204, 205.

HEMON DE LA FOSSE, a modern Polytheist, executed in 1503, i. 216.

HENRIETTA, queen of Charles I., her character, ii. 337; anecdote illustrative of, ib.; after the Restoration, 338; various descriptions of her person, ib.; her contract with the Pope, 339; account of her journey to England on her marriage, 340; her French establishment, 341; anecdote of her confessor's conduct, 342; the dismissal of her French attendants, 345; the amount of her supposed influence over her husband, 348.

HENRY the Seventh, anecdote of, ii. 10.

HENRY the Eighth, anecdote of, ii. 10; his proclamation against reading the Bible in English, iii. 373, note.

HENRY, prince, son of James I., anecdote of, iii. 186-194.

HENRY, the English historian, loose and general in his references, ii. 418.

HERETICS, a classification of, i. 350.

HERMIPPUS REDIVIVUS, a curious jeu-d'-esprit, i. 320.

HEYLIN, a popular writer, died in 1662, iii. 215; his rival biographers, 216-221; his History of the

Puritans and Presbyterians, 239.

High Sheriff's Oath, exceptions taken to, by Sir Edward Coke, iii. 446.

History, of events which have not happened, a good title for a curious book, ii. 428; speculative history of the battle of Worcester, had it terminated differently, 429; a history of this kind in Livy, ib.; subjects for, 430-438.

History of New Words.—See Neology. Of suppressed opinion, iii. 150-163; of writing masters, 167-177.

Historians, remarks on the infidelities of, i. 191; Italian, commended, iii. 177; notices of the most celebrated, 180-186; wrote for posterity, 182, 183; fate of Giannone, who published in his life-time, 185; observations on, 186.

Holyday, Barton, author of the comedy "The Marriage of the Arts," ii. 43.

Home, the author of the tragedy of "Douglas," persecuted for composing it, i. 197.

Homer, notice of his detractors, i. 24; profound knowledge of history, geography, arts, sciences, and surgery ascribed to, 303.

Hudibras, attacks upon Butler, the author of, ii. 491; various accounts of the original of the character, 492; indecency avoided in, 493; epitaph on the

author of, ib.; attacks on Butler's character, 494; and vindication of, 495.

HUGH of Lincoln, legend of, iii. 145, note.

HUGUENOT, origin of the term, iii. 82.

HUME, his carelessness in research, iii. 368.

HUMPHREY, Duke, origin of the phrase "dining with," ii. 169, note.

HURD, Bishop, his proposed book of parallels, iii. 425.

HYMNS set to popular tunes, ii. 149, note.

IDLENESS punished among the ancients, i. 199, 200.

IKON BASILIKE; its probable effects had it appeared a week sooner, ii. 435.

ILIAD, in a nut-shell, i. 275.

IMAGE-BREAKERS, proclamation by Elizabeth against, iii. 375, 376.

IMITATORS, masterly, i. 258, 261.

IMITATIONS, of Cicero, i. 67; Le Brun's religious Virgil and Ovid, ib.; Sannazarius's poem *de Partu Virginis*, 68; Arruntius an ancient imitator of Sallust, ib.; modern, ib.; Arabian anecdote, 69.

IMITATIONS and Similarities, Poetical, various and curious instances of, ii. 92-110.

INDEPENDENTS, their intolerance, iii. 85.

INDEX, of prohibited books, ii. 216; Expurgatory, ib.; Congregation of the, ib.; reprinted by the heretics with annotations, 217; effect of, in raising the sale of books, 219.

INDEXES, Fuller's observations on, i. 72.

INFLUENCE of a name, ii. 65-75.

INGHIRAMI, and forged Etruscan antiques, iii. 307.

INIGO JONES, his excellent machinery for exhibiting masques, iii. 12, 13.

INK, inferiority of modern, ii. 29; various kinds anciently used, 30.

INQUISITION, establishment of, at Toulouse, i. 166; in Spain, 167; first proceeding of, ib.; taciturnity of the Spaniards attributed to, ib.; anecdotes concerning, 168-170; history of, by Orobio, 167.

INTEMPERANCE in study, i. 8.

INTRODUCERS of exotic flowers, fruits, &c., ii. 151, 157.

IRELAND, W. H., his Shakesperian forgeries, i. 137, note.

ISABELLA-COLOUR, origin of term, i. 217.

ITALIANS, their national genius dramatic, ii. 118.

ITALIAN HISTORIANS, iii. 177-186.

ITALIC letter, introduction of, i. 77; formerly called the Aldine, 78.

JACQUERIE, iii. 82.

JAMES the First gave credit to physiognomy, i. 149; injustice done to his character for wit, 156; distinguished as Queen James, 462; his ambassador's speech, 463; *cleanliness* of his court, ib.; his effeminacy, ib.; his general character, ib.; his imbecility in his amusements, 464; his pedantry, 465; account of his death, 466; results of the author's further inquiry into the character of, 467; his conduct regarding his son's expedition into Spain, ii. 2; his objections to Laud's promotion, iii. 297; his character vilified, 333; his attention to the education of his children, ib.; his conduct towards his wife, 334-337.

JAMES the Second, kept a diary, ii. 214.

JAMET L'AÎNÉ, proposes to edit a new edition of the Dictionary of Trevoux, iii. 232.

JANSENISTS, the Methodists of France, i. 373; cause a Biographical Dictionary to be compiled, devoted to their cause, in opposition to that of L'Avocat, ib.; specimens of this dictionary, 373, 374; their curses never "lapsed legacies," 375.

JERUSALEM, Arabic chronicle of, only valuable from the time of Mahomet, i. 191; several portions

translated by Longuerue, ib.

Jesuits, a senate of, sent by Sigismund, King of Sweden, to represent him at Stockholm, destroyed by stratagem, i. 231-233.

Jesuit's snuff poisoned, ii. 442, note.

Jews of York, history of their self-destruction, ii. 75-79.

Jocular Preachers, i. 251-258.

Jodelle, Etienne, the first author of French tragedy, ii. 40.

Johnson, Dr., his original Memorandum of Hints for the Life of Pope, ii. 380-382.

Jonson, Ben, Fuller's character of, i. 380; his arrogance, 381; his Ode on the ill reception of his play of "The New Inn" quoted, 382; Owen Feltham's Ode in reply, 383; Randolph's Consolatory Ode to, 385; his poem on translation, ii. 501; employed on court masques, iii. 6-8, 12.

Joseph Vella, pretended to have recovered seventeen of the lost books of Livy, i. 135; patronized by the king of Naples, ib.; discovered and imprisoned, 136.

Journals.—See Literary Journals.

Journalist, Public, indispensable acquirements of a, i. 16.

JUDICIAL Combats, anecdotes of, i. 162, 163.

KINGS, remark of St. Chrysostom on, i. 173; willing to be aided, but not surpassed, 174; anecdotes of, ib.; observations of the Duke of Alva and of Dr. Johnson on, 176; divine honours bestowed on, 179; dethroned, 181; anecdotes of, and their families, in misfortune, 181, 182; descendants of, found among the dregs of the populace in conquered countries, 183; funeral honours paid to, by the Goths and Huns, 196.

KIRK, Colonel, original of the horrid tale of, related by Hume, iii. 148.

KISSING hands, customary among the ancients as an act of adoration, ii. 81; used by the primeval bishops, ib.; declined with Paganism, ib.; prevailed at Rome, 82; an essential duty under the emperors, ib.; practised in every known country, ib.

KNOX, John, his Machiavelian politics, iii. 242; his opinions on toleration, 251; his predictions, 277, 278.

LAMBE, Dr., a magician, murdered in the streets of London, ii. 364; fine and assessment on City companies in consequence, ib., note.

LA MOTHE LE VAYER, a great quoter, ii. 417.

LAMPS, Perpetual, i. 243; possibility of, ib.; Rosicrucians, ib.

La Rue, i. 257.

Latimer, Bishop, curious sermons by, i. 256, and note; his youthful history, ii. 39, note.

Latour du Chatel, a neglected contributor to the Dictionary of Trevoux, procures the mediation of the French government, iii. 231.

Lauder, William, pretended discovery of plagiarisms of Milton, i. 137, and note.

Laureats, sketch of the history of, i. 454; ancient, ib.; Petrarch the first modern, ib.; degrees granted to, ib.; formula employed in granting the degree of, 455; their honours disgraced in Italy, ib.; Querno crowned in a joke, ib.; honours lavished on, by Maximilian I., 456; honours still conferred on, in Germany, ib.; unknown among the French, ib.; appointment of, in Spain, ib.; in England never solemnly crowned, 457; salary of, in England, ib.

Lazzaroni, iii. 82.

Lazzi, dramatic side-play, ii. 128.

League, the, its pretext and its cause, iii. 142, 143.

Learned men, persecution of, i. 27; poverty of, 29; imprisonment of, 35; amusements of, 38.

Le Clerc, antagonist of Bayle, and author of three Bibliothèques, the Universelle et Historique, Choisie, and Ancienne et Moderne, i. 15.

Le Fevre, Nicholas, edition of his works by Lenglet du Fresnoy, iii. 249, and note.

Legends, origin of, i. 89; Golden, 90; of the Seven Sleepers, 91; account of several, 92, 93; Golden, abounds in religious indecencies, 366; of St. Mary the Egyptian, ib.

Leibnetz, his admiration of Barclay's Argenis, iii. 339; anecdote of, iii. 455.

Lenglet du Fresnoy, his "Méthode pour étudier l'Histoire," iii. 221; his peculiar character, ib.; history of his Méthode, 222, 224, and note, ib.; his literary history, 224; a believer in alchymy, 225; his political adventures, 227.

Le Kain, anecdote of, i. 251.

Leo the Tenth, motive of his projected alliance against the Turks, iii. 142.

L'Estrange, Sir Roger, a strong party writer for Charles II., i. 159; his *Æsop's Fables*, 160.

Lettres de Cachet, invented by Father Joseph, confessor to Richelieu, iii. 196.

Libel, singular means used to discover the author of a, ii. 314.

Libels on the Duke of Buckingham, ii. 365-370.

Liberty of the Press, restrictions on, ii. 216-227; its freedom did not commence till 1694, 227;

reflections on, 228.—See Censors.

Libraries, i. 1; celebrated Egyptian and Roman, 1-3; public, in Italy and England, 3, 4; in France and Germany, 6, 7; use of lights in, 7; that of the Palatine Apollo destroyed by Pope Gregory VIII., 50; in Bohemia, destroyed by the Jesuits, ib.; destruction of, under Henry VIII. ib.; astronomical, in the ark of Noah, 303; Irish, before the Flood, ib.; Adams's, ib.; modern opinion on their utility, iii. 345.

Licensers of the Press.—See Censors.

Lights, in public libraries, ordered in France by Charles V., i. 6; objection to, 7.

Lilly, the astrologer, notices of, i. 280-283; his great work, 282; an exquisite rogue, ib.

Lipogrammatic works, i. 293.

Lipsius, Justus, his opinions on toleration, iii. 253.

Literary Blunders, a pair of lexicographical, i. 305; instances of curious, 320-327.

Literary Composition, ii. 85-92.

Literary Controversy, specimens of Luther's mode of managing, i. 308; Calvin's conduct of, 309; Beza imitates Calvin's style in, 310; opinion of Bishop Bedell on, ib.; conduct of the fathers in, ib.; grossness used in, 311; of the Nominalists and Realists, 312.

LITERARY Fashions, ii. 113; applause given to a work supposed to be written by a celebrated man, ib.; notices of various, ib.; love all the fashion, 114; Spenser's Faerie Queen became one, ib.; the translation of Greek tragedies, a, ib.; of the seventeenth century, 115; of the time of Charles I., ib.; of Charles II., and of more modern times, ib.

LITERARY Follies, instances of various in the fantastical composition of verses, i. 293-307; strange researches made in antediluvian times to be classed with, 301-303; anecdote of a malicious one, ib.; various anecdotes concerning, 301-307.

LITERARY Forgeries, by Dr. Berkenhout, a letter from Peele to Marlow, i. 380; by George Steevens, iii. 297; history of one, 299, 300; by Horace Walpole, 302; anecdote of Steevens and Gough, 303, 304, and notes; by De Grassis, ib.; by Annius of Viterbo, 305, and mischievous consequences of, ib.; Sanchoniathon, 306; of Etruscan antiquities, ib.; the false Decretals of Isidore, 308; in the prayer-book of Columbus, ib.; in the Virgil of Petrarch, ib.; by the Duke de la Vallière, 309; by Lauder, 310; by Psalmanazar, 311.

LITERARY Friendships, ii. 55-58.

LITERARY Impositions, curious anecdotes of, i. 260, 261.

LITERARY Impostures, i. 132; by Varillas, the French historian, ib.; supposed by Gemelli Carreri, but

afterwards discovered to be fact, ib.; Du Halde's account of China compiled, 133; Damberger's Travels, ib.; titles of works announced by the historiographer Paschal, his works at his death amounting to six pages, ib.; by Gregorio Leti, ib.; forgeries of Testaments Politiques, ib.; pretended translations, 134; Travels of Rabbi Benjamin, ib.; by Annius Viterbo, ib.; by Joseph Vella, who pretended to have recovered seventeen of the lost books of Livy, 135; by Medina Condé, 136; by George Psalmanazar, ib.; Lauder's, 137; Ireland's, ib.; by a learned Hindu, ib.; anecdotes concerning, 138.

Literary Journals, i. 12; originated with the Journal de Sçavans, by Denis de Sallo, counsellor in the Parliament of Paris, 13; Nouvelles de la République des Lettres, published by Bayle in 1684—continued by Bernard, and afterwards by Basnage in his Histoire des Ouvrages de Sçavans, 15; Le Clerc's Bibliothèques Universelle et Historique, Choisie, and Ancienne et Moderne, ib.; Apostolo Zeno's Giornale de Litterati d'Italia, ib.; Bibliothèque Germanique, 16; Bibliothèque Britannique, ib.; Journal Britannique by Dr. Maty, ib.; Review conducted by Maty, jun., 16; Mémoire des Trévoux, ib.; Journal Littéraire, ib.; Memoirs of Literature and Present State of the Republic of Letters, the best early English, ib.; monthly, ib.

Lollards, oath against them enforced upon sheriffs until reign of Charles I., iii. 447; repealed by the political feeling of Coke, ib.

Longolius, or Longueil, composed a biographical parallel between Budæus and Erasmus, iii. 425.

Lorenzo de' Medici, effect of his death, ii. 436.

Louis the Eighth, singular anecdote of the cause of his death, ii. 32.

Louis the Eleventh, anecdote of, ii. 10, 11.

Louis the Twelfth, cause of his death, ii. 34.

Louis the Fourteenth, chose his courtiers by the rules of physiognomy, i. 148; some remarks on his real character, ii, 449; passages suppressed in his instruction to the Dauphin, 450.

Louis L'Abé, the Aspasia of Lyons, i. 362; wrote the morality of "Love and Folly," ib.

Loups-garoux, iii. 293.

Lucullus, description of the library of, i. 3.

Luke, Sir Samuel, the true prototype of Hudibras, ii. 491, and note.

Lunsford, Colonel, imputed a cannibal, iii. 149, note.

Luther, Martin, remarks on, and extracts from, his controversial writings, i. 308, 309; caricatures on,

309, note; Jansenist character of, 374; anecdote of, from Guicciardini, ii. 479, 480; his political conduct, iii. 144.

LUYNES, Duc de, his origin, ii. 11.

LUXURY, in dress, an old dramatist's opinion on, iii. 400; doctrines of political economy concerning, 401; excessive amongst our ancestors, ib.; the Pas de Sandricourt, 402-405; ruinous in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., 405.

MABBE, James, translator of "Guzman" and "Celestina," Spanish plays, ii. 501; Ben Jonson's verses in praise of, ib.

MACHIAVEL discovered the secret of comparative history, iii. 179.

MACKENZIE, Sir George, notice of his Treatise on Solitude, ii. 50.

MAD-SONG, specimen of an ancient, ii. 315.

MAGIC, instances of many learned men accused of, i. 27-29; Solomon accounted an adept in, 122.

MAGIUS, Charles, a noble Venetian, iii. 136; his travels and adventures contained in a volume of paintings, ib.; detailed description of, 137-141.

MAGLIABECHI, Anthony, celebrated for his great knowledge of books, i. 394; description of him and his mode of life, 394-397.

Maii, the discoverer of Cicero's treatise *de Republica*, i. 18, and note.

Maillard, Oliver, a famous cordelier and preacher, i. 252.

Maine, Duc de, instituted the Journal de Trévoux, iii. 230; and the Dictionary of Trévoux, ib.

Maintenon, Madame de, marries Scarron, i. 424; corrects his style, ib.

Malherbe, his love of Horace, iii. 340.

Malignants, iii. 86.

Man of one book, iii. 337-340.

Mandrake, i. 246.

Manners, anecdotes of European, ii. 30-39; domestic, among the English, 42-44.

Manuscripts, more valued by the Romans than vases of gold, i. 2; two thousand collected by Trithemius, abbot of Spanheim, who died 1516, 7; recovery of, 17-24; of the classics, disregarded and mutilated by the monks, 18; researches for, at the restoration of letters, 19; great numbers imported from Asia, 20; of Quintilian discovered by Poggio under a heap of rubbish, ib.; of Tacitus found in a Westphalian monastery, ib.; of Justinian's code found in a city of Calabria, ib.; loss of, ib.; unfair use made of by learned men, 22; anecdotes concerning, 22-25; of Galileo, partly

destroyed by his wife's confessor, 28; ancient, frequently adorned with portraits of the authors, 42; destruction of, at the Reformation, 51; of Lord Mansfield destroyed in the riots of 1780, and of Dr. Priestley by the mob at Birmingham, 53; loss of many of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's letters, 54; loss of letters addressed to Peiresc, ib.; of Leonardo da Vinci, ib.; anecdotes of manuscripts of several celebrated works, 375-377; description of the ancient adornments of, ii. 28; of Pope's versions of the Iliad and Odyssey, 110; of Sir Matthew Hale, bequeathed to Lincoln's Inn, to avoid their mutilation by the licensers of the press, 220; slaves employed to copy, 398; of the Vision of Alberico, preserved in the king's library at Paris, 422: of Galileo's annotations on Tasso, 444; destruction of Hugh Broughton's, by Speed, 445; destruction of Leland's, by Polydore Vergil, ib.; dilapidation of the Harleian, 446; suppression of one relating to Sixtus IV. by Fabroni, ib.; of the Marquis of Halifax suppressed, 447; Earl of Pulteney's and Earl of Anglesea's MS. Memoirs suppressed, ib.; anecdotes of the suppression of various, 448-452; mutilators of, 448; of Oldys's, iii. 493.

MARANA, John Paul, author of the Turkish Spy, i. 377-379.

MARBLES, presenting representations of natural forms, i. 244-247.

MARE CLAUSUM, written by Selden in answer to the Mare Liberum of Grotius, ii. 80; copies preserved in the chest of the Exchequer and in the Court of Admiralty, ib.

MARIONETTES, improved by the English, iii. 238.

MARLBOROUGH, the great Duke of (See BLENHEIM), account of his wealth, iii. 108.

MAROLLES, Abbé de, a most egregious scribbler, i. 350; wrote his own memoirs, 351; good advice in the postscript to the epistle dedicatory of that work, ib.; his memoirs, ii. 538; anecdote of him and De L'Etang, a critic, 539; notices of his voluminous works, ib.; his magnificent collection of prints, 541.

MAROT, Clement, his character, ii. 474; his translation of the Psalms, ib.; sung to the airs of popular ballads, 476; his Psalms the fashion, 477; edition published by Theodore Beza, set to music, ib.; his Psalms declared Lutheran, and himself forced to fly to Geneva, ib.

MAR-PRELATE, the book suppressed, ii. 453.

MASKS, worn by Italian actors, ii. 124.

MASSINGER a student of the Italian drama, ii. 138.

MASQUES, notices of magnificent, in the time of Charles I., ii. 327; the farewell masque of the Duke of Buckingham, 369; mistaken notions of

commentators regarding, iii. 5; their real nature, 7, 8, 9; description of the masque of Night and the Hours, 10; their ultimate ruin, by their splendour, at the court of Louis XIV., 13, note.

Massillon, i. 250.

Master of the Ceremonies, created by James the First, ii. 196.

Masterly Imitators, i. 258-261.

Matrimony, its suitableness to learned men considered, i. 332-334; opinions of Sir Thomas Browne upon, 335; not borne out by his practice, ib.

Maximilian the First, founds a poetical college at Vienna, i. 456.

Meals, hours of, ii. 315.

Medal, struck by the Catholics to commemorate the massacre of the Huguenots, iii. 249.

Medals, satiric, used as money in the Saturnalia, iii. 151; modern applications of, 158-160.

Medicine and Morals, considerations on their connection, ii. 464-469; connection of the mind with the body, 470.

Medina Conde, forges deeds and inscriptions to benefit the Church, i. 136; sold a bracelet to the Morocco ambassador, as part of the treasure of the

last Moorish king, yet in fact fabricated by himself, ib.

Memoirs, remarks on their interest as compared with history, i. 462.

Mendelssohn, anecdote of, i. 392.

Mendicity, punished among the Jews and nations of antiquity, i. 199, 200; first made a trade of by liberated Christian slaves, 201; punishment of in China, 202.

Menot, Michael, a celebrated preacher, specimen of his sermons, i. 256.

Mental Disorders, singular mode of cure of, ii. 466; remarkable anecdotes of, 468-470.

Metempsychosis, doctrines of, advocated in the present age, i. 192; notion long extant in Greece before the time of Pythagoras, ib.; taught by the Egyptians, ib.; entertained by many Eastern nations and by the Druids, ib.; Welsh system of, explained by Sharon Turner, 193; believed in Mexico, 194; Plutarch's description of, ib.

Michael Angelo, anecdote of, i. 258.

Mignard, a celebrated painter, curious anecdote concerning, i. 258, 259.

Milton, his controversy with Salmasius and Morus conducted with mutual revilings, i. 152, 153; absurdly criticised by Bentley, 370-373; indebted

to Andreini for the first idea of Paradise Lost, ii. 141; his works suffered at the hands of both Royalist and Republican licensers, 223; his Areopagitica, 225; a passage in his History of England suppressed, but preserved in a pamphlet, 448; his Comus escaped the destruction of the Bridgewater papers, 451; the story of him and the Italian lady, probably an invention of George Steevens, iii. 299; copied from a French story purporting to be of the 15th century, 300.

Milliners' bills, ancient and modern, ii. 39.

Mimes, Arch-mime followed the body of Vespasian at his funeral, iii. 120.

Mimi, an impudent race of buffoons, ii. 120; harlequin, a Roman mime, 121, and note.

Ministers, origin of the term as applied to the pastors of Christian churches, i. 128; palaces built by, notices of several, iii. 186-192; Sir Robert Walpole's remarks on the imprudence of their erecting such, 193; yet builds one himself, ib.

Minstrels, ancient and modern, pickpockets, ii. 146, note.

Mishna, see Talmud.

Missals, gross adornments of, i. 366.

Modern stories and plots, many derived from the East, i. 111, 112.

MODES of salutation in various nations, ii. 12.

MONK, General, anecdote of him and his wife, i. 468; his conduct towards Charles II. at his landing, iii. 389.

MONTAGU, Lady Mary Wortley, suppression of her MSS., ii. 450.

MONTFLEURY, a French actor, death of, i. 248.

MONTLUC, Bishop of Valence, his negotiations for the election of the Duke of Anjou as King of Poland, iii. 349-362.

MORALIITIES, see MYSTERIES and MORALITIES.

MORALITY of "Every Man," referred by Percy to the class of tragedy, ii. 278.

MORE, Doctor, his extravagant Platonic opinions, i. 216.

MORUS, controversy of Salmasius with Milton, continued by, with mutual abuse, i. 153.

MUSIC, use of, in discovering indispositions by the voice, i. 151; influence of, in the cure of diseases, 269-271; effect of, on animals, 272-274.

MUTILATIONS commonly practised in the middle ages, ii. 311.

MYSTERIES, ANCIENT, bibliographical note of such as are printed, i. 352, note; one still performed in

Bavaria, i. 360, note.

Mysteries and Moralities introduced by pilgrims, i. 352; subsequently distinguished characters actors in, 353; performed in open plains, ib.; indulgence granted to frequenters of, ib.; at Chester, ib.; singular anecdotes concerning a mystery, 354; specimens from French mysteries, 355; observations of Bayle and Warton on, 357; distinguished from each other, ib.; specimen of a morality, 358; moralities allegorical dramas, ib.; passion of René d'Anjou for, 360; triple stage used for representation of, 361; anecdote relating to an English mystery, ib.; morality of "Love and Folly," 362; at Kendal, Yorkshire, iii. 442; usually performed in the festival of Corpus Christi, ib., note.

Names, anecdotes relating to, and to their effect on mankind, ii. 65-75; orthography of proper, ii. 237-239; names of our streets, 239-243.

Names, significance of Roman, ii. 75, note.

Nardi, his history of Florence, iii. 181.

Natural Productions resembling artificial compositions, i. 244-246.

Neal, his account of the Nonconformists, iii. 240.

Needham, Marchmont, the great patriarch of newspaper writers, i. 158; short account of, ib.

NEOLOGY, or the novelty of new words and phrases, remarks on, iii. 23; Neological Dictionary proposed by Lord Chesterfield, 26; not always to be condemned, 27; examples of the introduction of various new words in French and English, 28-32; the term "fatherland" introduced by the author, 31; picturesque words, 32.

NERLI, Philip, his "*Commentarj de Fatti Civili*," iii. 182.

NEWCASTLE, Margaret, Duchess of, celebrated among literary wives, i. 327-337; her account of her husband's mode of life, ii. 38, 39.

NEWSPAPERS, forged, and used unsuspectingly by historians, i. 156, note.

NEWSPAPERS, originated in Italy, i. 155; called Gazettas, ib.; first a Venetian, published monthly, ib.; circulated in manuscript, ib.; prohibited by Gregory XIII., ib.; first English, 156; much used by the English during the Civil Wars of Cromwell, and notices of these, 157-159; origin of, in France, 160; first daily one after the Restoration, ib.; only one daily, in the reign of Queen Anne, ib.; union between them and literary periodicals, opinions expressed on, ib.

NEWTON, remarks on, iii. 413.

NICCOLI, Nicholas, founded the first public library in Italy, i. 4.

NICKNAMES, use of, practised by political parties, iii. 80; instances of many, 81-89; serve to heat the minds of the people, 83; of various Parliaments, 85; effect of, on ministers, 89.

NOBILITY, conduct of kings towards, ii. 11, 12.

NOBLEMEN turned critics, pair of anecdotes concerning, i. 131.

NOMINALISTS and Realists, i. 312.

NOSTRODAMUS, consulted by Catherine de' Medici, i. 279.

NOVELS, the successors of romances, i. 450; Adam Smith's favourable opinion of, ib.

NUMERICAL Figures, of Indian origin, i. 276; introduction of Arabic, 277; Roman, ib.; origin of Roman, ib.; falsification of Arabic, 278.

OBSCURITY, in style, taught by a professor, i. 401; Lycophron possessed this taste, 402; defence of, by Thomas Anglus, ib.; Gravina's observations on, ib.

OLD AGE, progress of, in new studies, i. 98; remark of Adam Smith, on resumption of former studies in, ib.

OLDYS, a literary antiquary, iii. 493; caricature of, by Grose, 495; released from the fleet by the Duke of Norfolk, and made Norroy King at Arms, ib., and note; author of the anacreontic, "Busy, curious,

thirsty fly," 496; placed in the library of the Earl of Oxford, 497; his integrity, ib., and note; his literary labours, 497-499; his life of Rawleigh, 499; history of his two annotated copies of Langbaine, 502; fate of his MSS., 503; his diaries, 504; his readiness to aid others with his knowledge, 506; his Dissertation on English Poetry curtailed by the bookseller, 507; extracts from his diaries, 508-511; his intended Life of Shakspeare, 509; anecdote of him and Pope, 511.

OLIVETAN Bible, iii. 155.

OPINIONS, suppressed, modes of expressing them in ancient and modern times, iii. 150; in the Saturnalia, ib.; by carvings and illuminations, 152; preceding the Reformation, 153; instance of the Olivetan Bible, 155; by medals and prints, 156.

ORCHIS, Bee and Fly, i. 245.

ORDEALS, i. 161-166.

ORDINARIES, the "Hells" of the 17th century, ii. 165; description of the arts practised at, 165-167.

OROBIO, his description of his imprisonment in the Inquisition, i. 167.

ORTHOGRAPHY of proper names, ii. 261; of the name of Shakespeare, ii. 238, note; of Sir Walter Raleigh, iii. 111.

OSMAN, Sultan, promotes his gardener, ii. 10.

Oxford, Edward Vere, Earl of, his secret history, ii. 243-245.

Palaces built by ministers, iii. 186-192.

Palingenesis.—See Regeneration.

Palmer, the actor, his death, i. 249.

Pamphlets, sketch of Myles Davis's history of, i. 343; origin and rise of, 344; one pretended to have been composed by Jesus Christ, ib.; Alexander Pope denounced as a plotter in a, 345; etymologies of the word, 345-347.

Pantomime, French verses in praise of, and translation of, ii. 116; Cervantes and Bayle's delight in, 116, 117; harlequin, 119; of the lower Italians in their gestures, ib.; treatises on, 121; transmitted from the Romans, 123; improvement of, by Ruzzante, 124; the history of a people traced in, 125; description of the various characters in Italian, 126.

Pantomimi, tragic actors usually mute, ii. 120; Seneca's taste for, ib.; their influence over the Roman people, 121.

Pantomimical Characters. See Pantomime; Massinger and Molière indebted to, ii. 138; remarks on Shakspeare's "Pantaloon," 139.

Paper, among the ancients, ii. 27, 28; introduction into England, 29; various sorts of modern, ib.

PARACELSUS, his receipt for making a fairy, iii. 286, 287.

PARADISE LOST, prose and verse versions of, i. 305.

PARISIAN Massacre, apology for, iii. 255-260, 352.

PARK, Mungo, his book interpolated and altered by his editor, Bryan Edwards, ii. 453.

PARKER, Bishop of Oxford, iii. 279, note.

PARODIES, anecdote relating to, ii. 453; resembles mimicry, 454; not made in derision, ib.; practised by the ancients, 455; ancient, of Homer, ib.; modern, 456; dramatic, anecdotes of modern, 458-460; legitimate use of, ib.

PARPAILLOTS, or Parpirolles, iii. 82.

PARTICULAR Providence, various opinions on, ii. 428-431; the granting a free-conduct to Luther, by Charles V., possibly one, 432.

PASQUIN and Marforio, account of, i. 208.

PASQUINADES, origin of, and instances of several, i. 208.

PATRONS, their treatment of authors, i. 82; anecdotes regarding, 83, 84; opinion of Dr. Johnson upon, 83.

PAULUS JOVIUS, description of the country-house and collections of statues, books, and portraits

belonging to, i. 45; description of the villa built by, iii. 397.

Pazzi, Cavaliero, founder of the Accademia Colombaria, ii. 483.

Peg-tankards, ii. 296, and note.

Peiresc, a man of incessant literary occupations, and an enthusiast in the importation of exotic plants, ii. 151; anecdotes of, iii. 409.

Pembroke, Anne, Countess of, designed a history of her family, iii. 421.

Perfumery and costly washes, introduced into England by the Earl of Oxford, i. 225.

Petitions, to Parliament against the Drama, ii. 289; mock, ib.

Petitioners and Abhorrers, iii. 87.

Petrach, formula used at his coronation with the Laurel Crown, i. 455; his passion for literary composition, ii. 592; his Laura, iii. 309.

Pictorial Biography.—See Magius.

Pisistratus, the first projector amongst the Greeks of a collection of the works of the learned, i. 2.

Philip the First of Spain, i. 469; his marriage with Mary of England, ib.; sought Queen Elizabeth in marriage, 470; offered himself to three different

sisters-in-law, ib.; his advice to his son, ib.; his death-bed, ib.; his epitaph, 471.

PHILOSOPHY, dreams at the dawn of, iii. 280-290; mechanical fancies, 291, 292; inquiries after prodigies, 293; further anecdotes of, 294-296.

PHYSIOGNOMY, credited by Louis XIV. and James I., i. 148, 149.

PICART, his *impostures innocentes*, i. 259.

PICTURES belonging to Charles I., ii. 332, 333.

PINAMONTI, his book on the eternal punishments, i. 204, note.

PINELLI, his great library, and its partial destruction, i. 57, and note.

PLAGIARISM, in printed sermons, i. 400; a professor of, ib.

PLANTS, presenting representations of natural forms, i. 245.

PLANTYN the printer, and his office at Antwerp, i. 77, note.

PLATINA, his account of his persecution and tortures, for having been a member of the "Academy" at Rome, ii. 486.

PLATO, Aristotle studied under, i. 143; parallel between him and Aristotle, ib.; contest between

him and Aristotle, 144; the model of the moderns who profess to be anti-poetical, 433; a true poet himself, ib.

PLATONISM, modern, originated among the Italians, i. 213; system of, by Gemisthus Pletho, ib.; professed by a Mr. Thomas Taylor, 215; by a scholar in the reign of Louis XII., 216; by Dr. More, ib.

PLETHO, or Gemisthus, a remarkable modern professor of Platonism, i. 213.

PLATTS or Plots, theatrical discovery of curious ones at Dulwich College, and remarks upon, ii. 138-140; see SCENARIO.

PLOTT, Dr., his project of a tour, iii. 292.

PLUNDER, etymology of, iii. 87, and note.

POETS, Plato's description of the feelings of, in the Phædon, i. 433; opinions of various learned men on the works of, 433; remarks on the habits of, 434, 435; behaviour of Frederic King of Prussia (father of the Great Frederic) to, 436; different conduct of other kings towards, 437; honours paid to, in the early stage of poetry, ib.; anecdote of Margaret of Scotland and Alain the poet, 438; opinions of the pious on the works of, ib.; too frequently merely poets, 439; hints to young, 440; to veteran, ib.; mistresses of, 441; change their opinions of their productions, ib.; antiquity of the

custom of crowning, 454; abolished in the reign of Theodosius, ib.; regal, 457; condemned, ii. 303-308; laureat, see LAUREATS.

POETICAL GARLAND, i. 247.

POETICAL imitations and similarities, ii. 92-113.

POINT-DEVICE, etymology of, iii. 188, and note.

POLAND, history of the election of the Duke of Anjou as King of, iii. 346-363.

POLICHINELLO.—See PUNCH.

POLITIAN, Angelo, a polished Italian writer of the 15th century, i. 457; his dedicatory epistle, prefixed to his epistles, 458.

POLITICAL Nicknames, iii. 80-90.

POLITICAL Reports, false maxim on the efficacy of, ii. 438; ancient instances, ib.; of the battle of Lutzen, 439; on the battle of the Boyne, ib.; other anecdotes, modern and ancient, of the effect of, 440-443.

POLITICAL Religionism, illustrations of its effects, iii. 238-244.

POLITICAL Prognostics.—See PREDICTIONS. Dugdale hastened his labours in anticipation of the disorders of the Rebellion, iii. 261.

POLITICAL Parallels, iii. 267.

POLYDORE VERGIL, a destroyer of MSS., ii. 445.

POMPONIUS LÆTUS, in the 15th century raised altars to Romulus, ii. 485; chief of the "Academy" at Rome, 486.

POPE, his manuscripts, ii. 110; passage from, with the various alterations, 111, 112; Dr. Johnson's memorandum of hints for the life of, 381; anecdote of, iii. 397.

POPE, project of the, for placing a cardinal on the throne of England, ii. 505; favoured by Henry IV., ib.

POPES, their early humility and subsequent arrogance, ii. 83; Celestine kicks off the crown of the Emperor Henry the Sixth, ib.; their infallibility first asserted, ib.; protest of the University of Vienna against, 84; their excommunications, ib.

PORTA, John Baptiste and John Vincent, found the academy "Degli Oziosi," ii. 488; Baptiste's mechanical genius, iii. 290.

PORTRAITS, of authors, of celebrated men, i. 42-47; of the Fugger family, 6; commonly prefixed to ancient manuscripts, 42; collections of, amongst the ancients, 43; query upon the mode of their transmission and their correctness, ib.; use of, ib.; anecdotes relative to the effect of, 45; objections of ingenious men to sit for, reprobated, 46; Granger's illustrations of, 45; Perrault's "Eloges"

confined to French, ib.; collection by Paulus Jovius, ib.; doubts as to authenticity of several, ib.; literary, of himself, by St. Evremond, 102; in minute writing, 275.

Port Royal Society, the, i. 94; their Logic, or The Art of Thinking, an admirable work, ib.; account of its rise and progress, 95; many families of rank erected houses there, ib.; persecuted and destroyed by the Jesuits, 96; their writings fixed the French language, ib.

Posies on rings, iii. 39, note.

Poverty, abridgment of history of, by Morin, i. 198; regulations regarding, among the Jews, ib.; among the Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians, 199; uncommon among the ancients, 201; introduction of hospitals for the relief of, ib.

Prayer-books, gross illustrations of, i. 366.

Preachers, jocular, i. 251-258.

Prediction, political and moral, determined by certain prognostics, iii. 260; of the Reformation by Cardinal Julian, Sir Thomas More, and Erasmus, 262; by Sir Walter Rawleigh, 263; of Tacitus, ib.; of Solon, 264; of Charlemagne, ib.; Cicero's art of, ib.; faculty of, possessed by Du Vair, 265; principles of, revealed by Aristotle, 266; by Mr. Coleridge, 268; of the French Revolution, 269, 270; frequently false, 272; anecdotes, 273; of the

end of the world, ib., note; of the destruction of London in 1750, ib., note; of American independence, 274; sometimes condemned as false when really verified, 275; caution to be observed in, 276; instances of, by Knox, 277; of the death of Henry IV., ib.; reflections on, 278, 279.

PREFACES, frequently superior to the work, i. 71; a volume of, always kept ready by Cicero, ib.; ought to be dated, 72; anecdote of Du Clos' to a fairy tale, ii. 340.

PREFERMENT, anecdotes of, ii. 12.

PRESBYTERIANS, their conduct under Charles II., iii. 240; their intolerance, 254.

PRESS-MONEY, proposition that those who refused it should be tried by martial law, iii. 462, and note.

PRICE, Robert, a Welsh lawyer, incidents in his life, iii. 422.

PRIMERO, a game at cards described, ii. 166, note.

PRINCE HENRY, son of James I., resembled Henry V. in his features, ii. 186; Dr. Birch's life of, 187; anecdotes concerning, 187-194; his diary, 207.

PRINTING, art of, possessed by the Romans without being aware of it, i. 43, and note; probably originated in China, ib., and note; general account of early, 73-78.

PRINTERS, mention of early, i. 75.

PRINTS, satiric, iii. 160.

PROCLAMATIONS, against long swords and deep ruffs, i. 222; royal, against buildings in London, iii. 365; to enforce a country residence, 367; never possessed the force of laws, 366; of Henry VIII., 372; of Mary, 373; of Edward VI., 374; of Elizabeth, 375; of James I., 376; of Charles I., 377; of Charles II. against vicious, debauched, and profane persons, ib.; others by Charles II., 379.

PROFESSION, the choice of one and its influence on the mind, with some illustrative anecdotes, ii. 461-463.

PROPER names, orthography of, the uncertainty of, ii. 237; anecdotes and instances of, 237-243.

PROTESTANTISM, once existed in Spain, ii. 434.

PROVERBS, use of, derided by Lord Chesterfield, iii. 33; records of the populace, 34; existed before books, ib.; abound in the most ancient writers, ib.; "the dark sayings of the wise," 35; introduced into the Greek drama, 36; definition of, 38; influence of, over a whole people, ib.; collection of, by Franklin, ib.; inscribed on furniture, ib.; English, collected by Heywood, 39; a speech of, 40; an era of, amongst the English, 41; long favourites in France, ib.; comedy of, ib.; family, 42; ancient examples of the use of, 43; some, connected with

the characters of eminent men, 44; use of, by poets, ib.; Eastern origin of many, 45; collection of, by Polydore Vergil and Erasmus, of Spanish by Fernandez Nunes, of Italian and French, English and Scotch, 46, 47; study of, 48; illustrative of national character, 48-56; anecdotes of the origin of certain, 56-61; historical, 61; remarks on the arrangement of collections of, 63.

PRYNNE, his method of composition, ii. 534; his extraordinary perseverance, ib.; title of the catalogue of his writings, 535; copy of his works bequeathed to Sion College, ib.; the pretended retractation of his Histriomastix, iii. 315, note.

PSALM-SINGING, remarks on, ii. 472; first introduction of, ib.; T. Warton's criticism of, 473; history of, 473-478; practised at lord mayor's feasts, 479.

PSALMANAZAR, his extraordinary literary forgery, i. 137, note; iii. 311; some account of, 312-314.

PUCK, the Commentator.—See STEEVENS.

PULTENEY, Earl of Bath, MS. Memoirs of, suppressed, ii. 447.

PUNCH, his ancient origin, ii. 122, and note; origin of his name, ib., note.

PUNCHINELLO.—See PUNCH.

PUNNING, in a dictionary, i. 305.

PUNS, Cicero's, i. 69.

PUPPET-SHOWS in England, iii. 238.

PURGATORY, Cardinal Bellarmin's treatise on, i. 204.

PURITANS, turn bacchanalian songs into spiritual ones, ii. 148.

PURITANS and Precisians, party nicknames at the Reformation, iii. 84, 85.

PYROTECHNICS.—See FIREWORKS.

QUADRIO, his Universal History of Poetry, iii. 233; his ignorance of English poetry, 234-236; his opinion of English comedy, 236; praises our puppet-shows, 238.

QUEEN MARY the First, her marriage with Philip of Spain, i. 469; her letter of instructions, ib.

QUEEN ELIZABETH, letter of, to her brother, Edward VI., i. 461; her exhibition of youthfulness to the ambassador of the Scottish king, 463; remarkable period in her annals, ii. 179; her maiden state, ib.; real cause of her repugnance to change it, ib., and note; her artifices to conceal her resolution, 180; debates of the Commons on the succession to, 181; address to, by the Duke of Norfolk, and her answer, ib.; despatch of the French ambassador on this occasion, 181-186; her judicious conduct, ib.; her conduct towards printers and authors, 221,

222; her dislike to the appointment of a successor, iii. 331; account of her death-bed, 331, 332.

QUEEN ANNE BULLEN, anecdote relative to her execution, i. 462.

QUERNO, made laureat for the joke's sake, i. 455.

QUEVEDO, his love for Don Quixote, iii. 339.

QUINCE, origin of, ii. 157, note.

QUODLIBETS, or Scholastic Disquisitions, i. 60.

QUOTATION, remarks on the use of, ii. 416; Selden's precept for, violated by himself, 417; Bayle's remarks on the use of, 418; when used by an eminent author often appropriated by an inferior, 419; value of the proper application of, 420.

RABBINICAL Stories, specimens of, i. 120-126; scripture quoted to support, 126.

RANTZAU, founder of the great library at Copenhagen, stanzas by, i. 5.

RANZ DES VACHES, effect of, i. 274.

RAWLEIGH, Sir Walter, composed his History of the World in prison, i. 36; assisted in that work by several eminent persons, ib.; variations in orthography of his name, iii. 111, note; author's account of his character, 112; Gibbon's and Hume's observations on, 113; cunning practised by, ib.; anecdotes of, 114; account of his return

from Guiana, 115, 116; his attempt to escape, 118; betrayed by Sir Lewis Stucley, 119; narrative of his last hours, 124-129; his History of the World, the labour of several persons, 131; note on Mr. Tytler's remarks on the author's account of, 135, note; his extravagance in dress, 407; notice of Oldys's life of, 499.

RAYNAUD, Theophilus, his works fill twenty folios, and ruined his bookseller, 542; notice of, 543; his curious treatises, ib.

REALISTS, a sect of Scholars, i. 312.

REFORMATION, origin of, iii. 142.

REFUTATION, a Catholic's, i. 349.

REGENERATION of material bodies, iii. 286, 287.

RELICS of Saints, bought, sold, and stolen, i, 239; treatise on, by Gilbert de Nogent, ib.; of St. Lewin, ib.; of St. Indalece, 240; of St. Majean, ib.; of St. Augustin's arm, ib.; flogging of, ib.; miracles performed by, ib.; miraculously multiplied, 241; anecdote of a box of, presented by the Pope to Prince Radzivil, ib.; Frederick the Wise, a great collector of, 242; phial of the blood of Christ sent to Henry III., ib.; fall in price of, ib.; deceptive, 243.

RELIGION, state of, during the Civil Wars, iii. 433; illustrative anecdotes of, 434-436; contest between Owen and Baxter on, 437; confusion of, ib.; a colt

baptised in St. Paul's Cathedral, 439, and note; anecdotes, 439-441; noticed by George Wither the Poet, 442; ordinance of the Parliament to rectify the disorders in, 443.

RELIGIONISM distinguished from religion, iii. 239.

RELIGIOUS Nouvellettes, a class of very singular works, i. 363; account of one, 364; notice of one discussing three thousand questions concerning the Virgin Mary, 365; Life of the Virgin, 367; Jesuits usual authors of, 368; one describing what passes in Paradise, ib.; the Spiritual Kalendar, ib.

REPRESENTATION, right of, not fixed in the 10th century, i. 162.

RESIDENCES of literary men, notices of several, iii. 394-399.

REVIEWS.—See LITERARY JOURNALS.

REVOLUTIONS, maxim on, iii. 278.

RHYMES inscribed on *knives*, and alluded to by Shakespeare, iii. 38, note; on *fruit trenchers*, ib.; on *rings*, 39, note.

RICCOBONI, a celebrated actor, his remarks on the Italian extempore comedy, ii. 134; anecdote of, 137; his inscription on the curtain of his theatre, ib.

RICH, a celebrated harlequin, ii. 130, and note.

RICHARDSON, the author of *Sir Charles Grandison*, remarks on him and his works, ii. 62-65.

RICHELIEU, Cardinal de, his general character, ii. 349; his death-bed, ib.; anecdotes of the sinister means practised by, 350; his confessor, Father Joseph, 351-353; projects of assassination of, 354, and note; drives Father Caussin, the king's confessor, into exile, 355.

RIVE, Abbé de, librarian of the Duke de la Vallière, iii. 341; his style of criticism, 342; his collections for works never begun, ib.; his observations on the cause of the errors of literary history, 344.

ROBINSON CRUSOE, remarks on, ii. 274; history of, traced, 275; written by Defoe, after illness, and in comparative solitude, 276; not published till seven years after Selkirk's adventures, 277.

ROC, the, of Arabian tales, a creature of Rabbinical fancy, i. 124.

ROCHEFOUCAULT De la, remarks on him and his maxims, i. 110.

ROCHELLE, expedition to, ii. 367; preparations for, ib.; frustrated by the death of Buckingham, 369.

ROMANCES, the offspring of fiction and love, i. 442; early, ib.; that of Heliodorus denounced in the synod, 443; forbidden in the Koran, ib.; of the Troubadours, 444; modern poets indebted to, ib.; Le Roman de Perceforest, 445; of chivalry,

examples of, 446; Italian, 448; use made of by poets, 449; French, ib.; went out of fashion with square cocked hats, 450; modern novels, ib.; histories of, 451; D'Urfé's Astræa, ib.

ROMNEY the painter, his belief in alchymy, i. 282, and note.

RONSARD, the French bard, and his Bacchanalia, ii. 41.

ROSY-CROSS, the President of, proffers his advice to Charles I., iii. 464.

ROUSSEAU, his prediction of the French Revolution, iii. 271, 272, and note; his favourite authors, iii. 340.

ROYAL Autographs, iii. 165.

ROYAL Promotions, ii. 10.

ROYAL SOCIETY, origin of, ii. 410-413.

ROYAL Society of Literature, ii. 406, note.

RUBENS, his house at Antwerp, iii. 398; his love for collections of art, 399, and note.

RUFFS, extravagances in, i. 222-227.

RUMP, the origin of the term, iii. 482, 483; three stages in its political progress, 484; songs upon, 485; debate of the, whether to massacre all the king's party, 487; parallel between their course of

conduct and that of the leaders in the French Revolution, 489-493.

Sainte Ampoule, ii. 434, note.

Salmasius, his controversy with and abuse of Milton, i. 152-154.

Salvator Rosa, fond of acting in extemporal comedy, ii. 133.

Sandricourt, the Sieur de, ruined himself by one fête, iii. 402-405.

Sans Culottes, iii. 83.

St. Ambrose, writes a treatise on Virgins, i. 412; and another on the Perpetual Virginity of the Mother of God, ib.; his chastisement of an erring nun, ib.

St. Bartholomew, apology for the massacre of, iii. 255-260.

St. Evremond, literary portrait of, by himself, i. 102.

St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins all created out of a blunder, i. 324.

St. Viar, created by an error, i, 323.

Satirical medals, iii. 156-160.

Satirists may dread the cane of the satirised, i. 442.

Saturnalia, institution of among the Romans, derived by Macrobius from the Grecians, ii. 256;

dedicated to Saturn, ib.; latterly prolonged for a week, 257; description of, ib.; crept into the Christian Church, 258, and note; practised in the middle ages, 259; Feast of Asses, ib.; “December liberties,” 260; the boy-bishop, 261; Lord of Misrule, ib.; Abbot of Unreason, 262; description of a grand Christmas held at the Inns of Courts, 263-265, and note; the last memorable, of the Lords of Misrule of the Inns of Court, 266; anecdote of a Lord of Misrule, 267; the Mayor of Garratt, 269; regiment de la Calotte, ib., and note, 270; Republic of Baboonery, ib.; medals used for money in, iii. 150, 151.

SAUNTERING, i. 175.

SAVAGES, various usages of at meals, i. 171-173.

SCALIGER, Julius, his singular manner of composition, ii. 86.

SCARAMOUCHES.—See PANTOMIME. Punch and Zany, prints of, ii. 125; character of, invented by Tiberio Fiurilli, 126; power of a celebrated, ib.

SCARON, account of his life and works, i. 421-428.

SCENERY of the old English stage, iii. 4, and note.

SCENARIE, the plots of extemporal comedies, ii. 130; description of, note; some discovered at Dulwich College, 139, 140, and note.

Scribleraid, the, a poetical jest on pseudo-science, by R. O. Cambridge, i. 295, and note.

Scripture story treated like mediæval romance, i. 163, and note.

Scudery, Mademoiselle, composed ninety romances, i. 106; panegyrics on, ib.; her "Great Cyrus and Map of Tenderness," 107.

Scudery, George, famous for composing romances, i. 107; a votary of vanity, ib.; author of sixteen plays, 108.

Secret History, of authors who have ruined their booksellers, ii. 532-546; of an elective monarchy, iii. 346-363; the supplement of history itself, iii. 380; reply to an attack on the writers of, 382; two species of, positive and relative, ib.; the true sources of to be found in MS collections, 383; neglect of by historians, 384; its utility, 385; of the Restoration, 386; of Mary, the Queen of William III., 389-393.

Sedan chairs, introduced into England by the Duke of Buckingham, ii. 36.

Segni, Bernardo, his History of Florence, iii. 182.

Sentimental biography, iii. 414-424.

Serassi, writes the life of Tasso, ii. 444; finds Galileo's MS. annotations, copies them, and suppresses the original, ib.

SERMONS, printed, Bayle's saying on, i. 345.

SEYMOUR, William, his family and character, ii. 508; enters into a treaty of marriage with the Lady Arabella Stuart, ib.; summoned before the Privy Council, ib.; his marriage, 509; imprisoned in the Tower, ib.; his wife's letter to him, 510; his escape, 515; is permitted to return, 519.

SHAKESPEARE, Fuller's character of, i. 380; orthography of his name, ii. 238, and note; introduces a masque in his "Tempest," and burlesques the characters in court masques, iii. 5, and note; bequest to his wife, 302.

SHENSTONE, the object of his poem of the Schoolmistress misunderstood, ii. 496; his ludicrous index to, 499; his character, his life, and his works, iii. 90-102.

SHOEING-HORNS, ii. 297, note.

SILHOUETTE, a term not to be found in any dictionary, iii. 84; originated in a political nickname, ib.

SILK stockings, pair of, presented to Queen Elizabeth, i. 226.

SILLI, ancient parodies, ii. 455.

SKELTON, his satire on Wolsey, iii. 187.

SNEEZING, the custom of saluting after, i. 126; attributed to St. Gregory, ib.; Rabbinical account

of, ib.; anecdotes concerning, 127.

SNUFF-BOXES, the rage, in the reign of Queen Anne, i. 229; the Jesuits', reported to be poisoned, ii. 442.

SOLITUDE, treatise on, by Sir George Mackenzie, ii. 50; necessary for the pursuits of genius, 52; discomforts of 53, 54.

SOLOMON, accounted an adept in necromancy, i. 122; story of him and the Queen of Sheba, 202.

SONGS among the Grecians, ii. 142; sayings of Fletcher of Saltoun, and Dr. Clerk on, ib.; Greek songs of the trades, 143; of the weavers among the English, ib.; harvest and oar-songs in the Highlands, ib.; of the gondoliers, ib.; Dibdin's, 144; old English, 145; Swiss, 146; Italian, composed at Florence, under the Medici, ib.; French "Chansons de' Vendange," 147; parodied, by Puritans, 148; slang or flash, known to the Greeks, and specimens from Athenæus, 149; ancient practices in, connected with old English customs, 150; political, iii. 179, 180.

SONNAH, the, i. 113.

SOTADES travestied the Iliad, ii. 455.

SOTTIES, more farcical than farce, i. 358; specimen of one, 359-360.

SOVEREIGNTY of the seas, ii. 79-81.

SPANISH Etiquette, instances of its absurdity, i. 194.

Spanish Poetry, i. 100; remarks on and illustrative quotations of, 101; translation of a madrigal found in a newspaper, 102.

Speed, the historian, suspicions of his originality, ii. 445.

Spenser, Fuller's character of, i. 379.

Spiders, influence of music on, i. 272; admired as food, ii. 355, note.

Stanzas to Laura, i. 230.

Starching, origin of, i. 227.

Steevens, George, the Puck of commentators, iii. 296; account of his literary forgeries, 297, 298; the story of Milton and the Italian lady attributed to, 299; his motives for omitting the Poems from his edition of Shakespeare, 301; his trick on the antiquary Gough, 303, 304.

Stephens, Robert, the printer, his family and their works, i. 76, note; divided the Bible into chapter and verse, iii. 433.

Sternhold and Hopkins, their version of the Psalms, ii. 472.

Stones, presenting representations of natural forms, i. 244, 245.

Stosch, Baron, his dishonest collecting, iii. 318.

STREETS of London, origin of many of their names, ii. 239-243.

STUART, Arabella, mistakes of historians regarding, ii. 502; her history, 503-519.

STUCLEY, Sir Lewis, Vice-Admiral of Devon, accepted a surveillance over his kinsman, Sir Walter Rawleigh, iii. 116; his base treachery, 119; universally shunned in consequence, 120; convicted of clipping gold, ib.; his miserable death, 121.

STUDENT in the metropolis, the, description of, by Gibbon, Rogers, and Descartes, i. 112.

STUDY, plans of historical, ii. 90-92.

STUKELEY, Dr., his Imaginary History of the Empress Oriuna, i. 324, note.

STYLE, remarks on, in the composition of works of science, i. 89; strictures on the, of theological writers, ii. 21, 22; on that of Lancelot Addison, 23.

SUGAR-LOAF-COURT, origin of the name, ii. 10.

SUPPRESSION of MSS.—See MANUSCRIPTS.

SYDENHAM, F., his melancholy death occasions the foundation of the Literary Fund, i. 34, and note.

TABLETS, and Table-books, ii. 26.

TALMUD, many copies of, burnt, i. 48; a collection of Jewish traditions orally preserved, 114; comprises *Mishna*, which is the text of the *Gemara*, its commentary, ib.; general account of, ib.; believed apocryphal, even by a few among the Jews, ib.; time of the first appearance of its traditions uncertain, ib.; compiled by Jewish doctors to oppose the Christians, ib.; analysis of, by W. Wotton, 115; two Talmuds, ib.; committed to writing, and arranged by R. Juda, prince of the Rabbins, forming the Mishna, ib.; disputes and opinions of the Rabbins on the form of the Mishna, ib.; God's study of, ib.; curious, from its antiquity, 116; specimens of, from the Mishnic titles, 116-118; and from the Gemara, 119.

TASSO, various opinions on the respective merits of him and Ariosto, i. 386; Boileau's criticism on, 388; his errors national, ib.; his verses sung by the gondoliers, ib.

TAXATION, remarks on the popular feeling on, in ancient and modern times, iii. 193; associated with the idea of tyranny, ib.; illustrative anecdotes, 194; efficacy of using a mitigated term for, 195; gifts, tribute, benevolences, and loans, 195-198; Burleigh's advice on, 199.

TAYLOR, Thomas, a modern professor of Platonism, i. 215.

TEA, opposition to the introduction of, ii. 317; present of, declined by the Russian ambassador, 318; Dutch bargain for, 319; introduction into Europe, ib.; shop-bill of the first vendor of, 320.

TENURES, curious ancient, i. 187, note.

THOMAS AQUINAS, some account of the works of, i. 63-65.

TIMON of Philius, his parodies of Homer, ii. 455.

TICHBOURNE, Chidiock, concerned in Babington's conspiracy, ii. 171; his address to the populace at his execution, 176; his letter to his wife, 177; verses composed by him the night before his execution, 178.

TITLES, origins of, and anecdotes concerning, i. 155; book of, published in Spain, ib.; Selden's *Titles of Honour*, ib.; of books, 288-292.

TOLERATION, practised by the Romans, and inculcated by Mahomet, iii. 245; caution used in publishing works on, ib.; early English advocates of, 246, and note; in Holland, ib.; facts illustrative of the history of, 247, 248; condemned by all parties, 249-253; opinions of an English clergyman on, 252.

TOM O' BEDLAMS, account of, ii. 311-314, and notes; songs of, 315-317.

TORTURE, Felton threatened with, ii. 376; its frequent use in England, ib.

TORQUEMADA, first Spanish inquisitor, in fourteen years persecuted 80,000 individuals, i. 166.

TOWNLEY, Zouch, his poem on Felton, ii. 378; collection of antique marbles formed by his descendant Charles Townley, purchased for the British Museum, ib., note.

TRAITORS, barbarous mode of execution of, in Queen Elizabeth's time, ii. 175, and note.

TREASURES in hills, iii. 295, note.

TREVOUX.—See DICTIONARY.

TROUBADORS, their poems and their loves, i. 444.

TRUSLER, Doctor, first vendor of printed sermons imitating manuscript, i. 400.

TURNER, Doctor, a violent opposition leader in the second Parliament of Charles I., iii. 451; an agent of the opposition in Parliament against the measures of Charles I., 466; a disappointed courtier, 467, note.

TURKISH SPY, the, i. 377; John Paul Marana, the author of, 378.

URBAN the Eighth, instances of his poetic sensibility, i. 456.

USURERS of the 17th century, notice of the practices of, ii. 158-170.

USURY, contrary opinions on, ii. 174, 175.

UTOPIA, Sir Thomas More's, missionaries proposed to be sent to, i. 320.

VACCINATION, strange dread of, ii. 317.

VALLANCEY'S Collectanea, curious error in, i. 326, note.

VANBRUGH, the architect of Blenheim, got a power from Lord Godolphin to contract in the Duke of Marlborough's name, iii. 104; produces the power, 106; his depositions, ib.; attempt of the Duchess of Marlborough to charge the debts of Blenheim on, 108; conduct of the Duchess towards, 109; discovery of his origin, 110, 111.

VARCHI, Benedetto, his "Storie Florentine," iii. 183; remarks of Mr. Merivale on, ib., note.

VARILLAS, his fictitious work on the Reformation, i. 132, note.

VASARI'S History of Artists, not entirely written by himself, iii. 131.

VATICAN, library of, i. 4.

VAUCANSON, his mechanical figures, iii. 284, note.

VAUDEVILLES, origin of the name, ii. 148.

VERSES, follies in the fantastical forms of, i. 295-300; reciprocal, ib.

VICAR OF BRAY, story of the, i. 196; Dr. Kitchen, Bishop of Llandaff, acted the same part, 197; type of, ii. 37.

VIDA, Jerome, from the humblest obscurity attained to the episcopacy, i. 105.

VISION OF ALBERICO, ii. 422; of Charles the Bald, 423.

VIRGIN MARY, images of, frequently portraits of mistresses and queens, i. 366; miraculous letter of, 367; Louis II. conveys Boulogne to, ib.; Life of, by Maria Agreda, ib.; worship paid to, in Spain, 368; system of, in seven folio vols., 369.

VIRGINITY, St. Ambrose's treatise on, i. 412.

WALKER, his account of the clergy of the Church of England who were sequestered, &c., iii. 243.

WALPOLE, Sir Robert, his magnificent building at Houghton, iii. 191.

WALSINGHAM, Sir Francis, died in debt, iii. 192.

WALWORTH, Sir William, his private motive for killing Wat Tyler, iii. 470, note.

WARBURTON, J., by neglect causes the destruction of old manuscript plays, i. 54, note.

Wat Tyler, anecdote of, iii. 470, note.

Westminster elections always turbulent from the days of Charles the First, iii. 461, note.

Whig and Tory, origin of the terms, iii. 88.

Whistlecraft's Poem on King Arthur, ii. 496, note; imitated by Byron in his Beppo, ib.

Whitelocke, his Memorials, ii. 212; his remembrances, a work addressed to his family, lost or concealed, ib.; preface to the Remembrances preserved, ib.; omissions in first edition of his Memorials, ii. 448.

Wife, Literary, i. 327; of Budæus, 328; of Evelyn, who designed the frontispiece to his translation of Lucretius, ib.; of Baron Haller, ib.; Calphurnia, wife of Pliny, ib.; Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, 329; extract from her epistle to her husband, ib.; notices of the wives of various celebrated men, 332-337.

Wigs, custom of using, i. 217-220; Steele's, 229.

Wilkins, Bishop, his museum, iii. 291.

Winkelmann, the plan on which he composed his works, ii. 89.

Wolsey, Cardinal, his magnificent houses, iii. 187.

Women, actors, first introduced on the Italian stage, ii. 140; on the English, 284; Kynaston a favourite

actor of female characters, 285, note.

WOODCUTS, ancient, in the British Museum, i. 74, note.

WORDS, introduction of new.—See NEOLOGY.

WOOD, Anthony, when dying, caused his papers to be destroyed, ii. 243; some, however, preserved, ib.; secret history of the Earl of Oxford drawn from, ib.; compelled to disavow the translation of his book, 453; Gibbon's opinion of his dulness opposed, 538, note.

WRITING, minute, i. 275; ancient modes of, ii. 20-26; materials used for, 27-30.

WRITING-MASTERS, iii. 167; Massey's lives of, 169; anecdote of Tomkins, 171; Peter Bales, a celebrated, 173; account of his contest with David Johnson, 173-177.

XENOCRATES, pupil of Plato, attacked Aristotle, i. 142.

YVERY, notice of the History of the House of, iii. 420, and note.

ZANY, etymology of the word, ii. 123; and notes.

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