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# BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE.

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### PÚSHKIN, THE RUSSIAN POET.

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#### No. I.

**SKETCH OF PÚSHKIN'S LIFE AND WORKS, BY THOMAS B. SHAW, B.A. OF CAMBRIDGE, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE IMPERIAL ALEXANDER LYCEUM, TRANSLATOR OF "THE HERETIC," &c. &c.**

Among the many striking analogies which exist between the physical and intellectual creations, and exhibit the uniform method adopted by Supreme Wisdom in the production of what is most immortal and most precious in the world of thought, as well as of what is most useful and beautiful in the world of matter, there is one which cannot fail to arise before the most actual and commonplace imagination. This is, the great apparent care exhibited by nature in the preparation of the *nidus*—or matrix, if we may so style it—in which the genius of the great man is to be perfected and elaborated. Nature creates nothing in sport; and as much foresight—possibly even more—is displayed in the often complicated and intricate machinery of concurrent causes which prepare the development of great literary genius, as in the elaborate in-foldings which protect from injury the germ of the future oak, or the deep-laid and mysterious bed, and the unimaginable ages of growth and hardening, necessary to the water of the diamond, or to the purity of the gold.

Púshkin is undoubtedly one of that small number of names, which have become incorporated and identified with the literature of their country; at once the type and the expression of that country's nationality—one of that small but illustrious bard, whose writings have become part of the very household language of their native land—whose lightest words may be incessantly heard from the lips of all classes; and whose expressions may be said, like those of Shakspeare, of Molière, and of Cervantes, to have become the natural forms embodying the ideas which they have expressed, and in expressing, consecrated. In a word, Púshkin is undeniably and essentially the great national poet of Russia.

In tracing, therefore, this author's double existence, and in essaying to give some account of his external as well as his interior life—in sketching the poet and the man—we cannot fail to remark a striking exemplification of the principle to which we have alluded; and as we accompany, in respectful admiration, his short but brilliant career, we shall have incessant occasion to remember the laws which regulated its march—laws ever-acting and eternal, and no less apparent to the eye of enlightened criticism, than are the mighty physical influences which guide the planets in their course, to the abstract reason of the astronomer.

Alexander Púshkin was born (as if destiny had intended, in assigning his birth-place—the ancient capital of Russia, and still the dwelling-place of all that is most intense in Russian nationality—to predict all the stuff and groundwork of his character) at Moscow, on the 26th of May 1799. His family, by the paternal side, was one of the most ancient and distinguished in the empire, and was descended from Rátcha, a German—probably a Teutonic knight—who settled in Muscovy in the thirteenth century, and took service under Alexander Névkii, (1252-1262,) and who is the parent root from which spring many of the most illustrious houses in Russia—those of Púshkin, of Buturlín, of Kaménskii, and of Metelóff. Nor was the paternal line of Púshkin's house undistinguished for other triumphs than those recorded in the annals of war; his grandfather, Vassílii Lvóvitch Púshkin, was a poet of considerable reputation, and was honoured, no less than Alexander's father, with the intimacy of the most illustrious literary men of his age—of Dmítrieff, Karamzín, and Jukóvskii.

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But perhaps the most remarkable circumstance connected with Púshkin's origin—a circumstance of peculiar significance to those who, like ourselves, are believers in the influence, on human character, of *race*, or *blood*, is the fact of his having been the grandson, by the mother's side, of an African. The cold blood of the north, transmitted to his veins from the rude warrior of Germany, was thus mingled with that liquid lightning which circles through the fervid bosom of the children of the desert; and this crossing of the race (to use the language of the course) produced an undeniable modification in our poet's character. His maternal grandfather was a negro, brought to Russia when a child by Peter the Great, and whose subsequent career was one of the most romantic that can be imagined. The wonderful Tsar gave his sable protégé, whose name was Annibal, a good education, and admitted him into the marine service of the empire—a

service in which he reached (in the reign of Catharine) the rank of admiral. He took part in the attack upon Navarin under Orlóff, and died after a long and distinguished career of service, having founded, in his new country, the family of Annibáloff, of which Púshkin was the most distinguished ornament, and of whose African origin the poet, both in personal appearance and in mental physiognomy, bore the most unequivocal marks. To the memory of this singular progenitor, Púshkin has consecrated more than one of his smaller works, and has frequently alluded to the African blood which he inherited from the admiral.

In 1811, Púshkin obtained (through the interest of Turgénieff, to whom Russia is thus, in some sort, indebted for her great poet) admission into the Imperial Lyceum of Tsárskoë Seló, where he was to receive the education, and to form the friendships, which so strongly coloured, not only the literary productions of his whole career, but undoubtedly modified, to a considerable extent, the personal character of the poet. This institution, then recently established by the Emperor Alexander, and always honoured by the peculiar favour and protection of its illustrious founder, was modelled on the plan of those *lycées* which France owed to the genius of Napoleon; and was intended to confer upon its pupils the advantage of a complete encyclopedic education, and, not only embracing the preparatory or school course, but also the academic *curriculum* of a university, was calculated to dismiss the students, at the end of their course of training, immediately into active life. The Lyceum must be undoubtedly considered as having nursed in its bosom a greater number of distinguished men than any other educational institution in the country; and our readers may judge of the peculiar privileges enjoyed by this establishment, (the primary object of whose foundation was, that of furnishing to the higher civil departments in the government, and to the ministry of foreign affairs in particular, a supply of able and accomplished *employés*,) from the fact of its having been located by the emperor in a wing of the palace of Tsárskoë Seló—the favourite summer residence of the Tsars of Russia since the time of Catharine II. It is to the last-named sovereign, as is well known to travellers, that this celebrated spot is indebted for its splendid palace and magnificent gardens, forming, perhaps, the most striking object which gratifies the stranger's curiosity in the environs of St Petersburg.

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The students of the Lyceum are almost always youths of the most distinguished families among the Russian nobility, and are themselves selected from among the most promising in point of intellect. The system of education pursued within its walls is of the most complete nature, partaking, as may be concluded from what we have said, of both a scientific and literary character; and a single glance at a list of the first course (of which Púshkin was a member) will suffice to show, that it counted, among its numbers, many names destined to high distinction. Among the comrades and intimate friends of Púshkin at the Lyceum, must be mentioned the elegant poet, the Baron Délvig, whose early death was so irreparable a loss to Russian literature, and must be considered as the severest personal bereavement suffered by Púshkin—"his brother," as he affectionately calls him, in the muse as in their fate. Nor must we forget Admiral Matiúshkin, a distinguished seaman now living, and commanding the Russian squadron in the Black Sea. We could specify a number of other names, all of more or less note in their own country, though the reputation of many of them has not succeeded, for various reasons, in passing the frontiers.

From the system of study, no less than from the peculiar social character, if we may so express it, which has always prevailed in the Lyceum of Tsárskoë Seló, we must deduce the cause of the peculiar intensity and durability of the friendships contracted within its bosom—a circumstance which still continues to distinguish it to a higher degree than can be predicated of any other institution with which we are acquainted; and we allude to this more pointedly from the conviction, that it would be absolutely impossible to form a true idea of Púshkin—not only as man, but even as a poet—were we to leave out of our portrait the immense influence exerted on the whole of his career, both in the world of reality and in the regions of art, by the close and intimate friendships he formed in the Lyceum, particularly that with Délvig. Few portions of poetical biography contain a purer or more touching interest than the chapter describing the school or college friendships of illustrious men; and the innumerable allusions to Lyceum comrades and Lyceum happiness, scattered so profusely over the pages of Púshkin, have an indescribable charm to the imagination, not less delightful than the recital of Byron's almost feminine affection for "little Harness," or the oft-recalled image of the Noble Childe's boyish meditation in the elm-shadowed churchyard of Harrow.

During the six years which Púshkin passed at the Lyceum, (from 1811 to 1817,) the intellect and the affections of the young poet were rapidly and steadily developing themselves. He could not, it is true, be considered as a diligent scholar, by those who looked at the progress made by him in the regular and ostensible occupations of the institution; but it is undeniable, that the activity of his powerful, accurate, and penetrating mind found solid and unremitting occupation in a wide circle of general reading. His own account of the acquirements he had made at this period, and of the various branches of study which he had cultivated with more or less assiduity, proves that, however desultory may have been the nature of his reading, and however unformed or incoherent were his literary projects, he possessed, in ample measure, even at this period, the great elements of future fame; viz. the habit of vigorous industry, and the power of sustained abstraction and contemplation.

His personal appearance, at this time, was a plain index of his character, intellectual as well as moral. The closely-curled and wiry hair, the mobile and irregular features, the darkness of the complexion, all betrayed his African descent; and served as an appropriate outside to a character which was early formed in all its individuality, and which remained unchanged in its principal

features during the whole of the poet's too short existence. Long will the youthful traditions of the Lyceum recall the outlines of Púshkin's character; long will the unbiassed judgment of boyhood do justice to the manliness, the honour, the straightforwardness of the great poet's nature, and hand down, from one young generation to another, numberless traits exemplifying the passionate warmth of his heart, the gaiety of his temper, and the vastness of his memory. In all cases where circumstances come fairly under their observation, the young are the best judges of internal character, as well as the most unerring physiognomists of the outward lineaments of the face. Púshkin was extremely popular among his comrades—the generosity of his character had peculiar charms for the unsophisticated minds of the young; and the vigour of a body never enfeebled in infancy by luxurious indulgence, enabled him to obtain, by sharing in their sports, no less consideration among them than he derived from the play of his penetrating and sarcastic humour. His poetical existence was now already begun: to the Lyceum period of Púshkin's life we must ascribe not only a considerable number of short pieces of verse—those first flutterings of the bird before it has strength to leave the nest—but even the conception of many poetical projects which time and study were hereafter to mature into masterpieces. The short and fugitive essays in poetry to which we have just alluded, appeared in a literary journal at various periods, and under anonymous signatures—a circumstance to be deplored, as it has deprived us of the means of examining how far these slight attempts, composed in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth years of his age, gave promise of future excellence. In themselves, they were probably so crude and *unklicked* as to justify the poet in the indifference which prevented him from claiming these early compositions, and allowing them to be incorporated in the collections of his writings. During his residence at the Lyceum, however, he undoubtedly meditated the plan of his charming romantic poem, "Ruslán and Liudmila," and probably even composed the opening of the work. To this period, too, are to be assigned some stanzas of great merit, entitled "Recollections of Tsárskoë Seló," and an "Epistle to Licinius"—both works exhibiting considerable skill and mastery in versification, but by far too much tinged (as might indeed be expected) with the light reflected from the youthful poet's reading to deserve a place among his original productions. For the amusement of his comrades, also, he wrote a number of ludicrous and humorous pieces, which derived their chief merit from the circumstances which suggested them; and were calculated rather to excite a moment's laughter in the merry circle of schoolfellows, than to be cited as specimens of the author's comic powers, particularly when we reflect, that the broadly humorous was never Púshkin's favourite or even successful manner of writing: in the delicate, subdued, Cervantes tone of humour, however, he was destined to become perhaps the most distinguished writer of his country—but let us not anticipate. One production, connected with the Lyceum, is, however, too important (not perhaps in itself, so much as in the circumstances accompanying it) to be passed over in a biography of our poet. This is a didactic poem entitled "Infidelity," which Púshkin composed and read at the public examination at the Lyceum, at the solemn *Act*, (a ceremony resembling that which bears the same name at Oxford and Cambridge, and which takes place at the conferring of the academical degree.) It was on this occasion that Púshkin was publicly saluted *Poet*, in the presence of the Emperor, by the aged Derjávin—the greatest Russian poet then living, and whose glory was so soon to be eclipsed by the young student whom he prophetically applauded. It is impossible not to be affected by the sight of the sunset of that genius whose brightest splendour is worthily reflected in the sublime ode, "God"—one of the noblest lyrics in the Russian, or, indeed, in any language—thus heralding, as it were, the dawning of a more brilliant and enduring daybreak; even as in the northern summer the vapoury evening glow melts imperceptibly into the dawn, and leaves no night between.

This event, so calculated to impress the vivid and ardent imagination of the young poet, has been most exquisitely described by himself in the literary journal, "Sovreménnik," (The Contemporary,) vol. viii. p. 241.

On quitting the Lyceum, in October 1817, Púshkin entered the civil service, and was immediately attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Young, noble, cultivated, possessed in the highest degree of those talents which are certain to enchant society, he plunged, as might naturally have been expected, with all the ardour of his African blood, into the pleasures and amusements of the capital. His success in society, and the eagerness with which he was welcomed every where, might easily have been foreseen, particularly when we keep in mind the universal hospitality which distinguishes the higher classes of Russian society, and the comparative rarity in this country of literary celebrity, which tends to render merit of that nature certain of a respectful, if not exaggerated appreciation. "The three years," to quote the words of one—himself a personal friend of the poet's—who has succeeded in seizing with admirable fidelity the principal features of Púshkin's intellectual physiognomy, "the three years which he passed in St Petersburg, after quitting the Lyceum, were devoted to the amusements of the fashionable world, and to the irresistible enchantments of society. From the splendid drawing-room of the great noble down to the most unceremonious supper-table of a party of young officers, every where Púshkin was received with exultation, and every where did he become the idol of the young, who gratified both his vanity and their own by the glory which accompanied his every step."

The eagerness with which the young poet plunged into the glittering stream of fashionable life, must not be attributed only to the natural thirst for pleasure in a young man just released from the bonds of a school life, and to the first vivid sense of liberty excited in the mind of a youth, who had been passing six years of his life in a spot which, however beautiful, was still but a beautiful seclusion. We must keep in mind the different constitution of society in Russia, and particularly the fact, that the absence (at least for social purposes) of a middle class in that country, renders the upper ranks the only section of the social system in which intellectual pleasure can be sought, or intellectual supremacy appreciated. Púshkin himself always attached

no inconsiderable importance to his success in the *beau monde*; and it is incontestably to his friction (if we may so style it) with that *beau monde* that he owed some of the more attractive, if not the more solid, qualities of his genius, and much of the refinement and good taste which distinguish his style. Like all men of the higher order of intellect—like Scott, like Cervantes, and Michael Angelo—Púshkin was endowed by nature with a vigorous and mighty organization, bodily as well as mental: and though he may appear to have been losing much valuable time in the elegant frivolities of the drawing-room, he was not less industrious at this period of his career in amassing a store of observation derived from a practical study of human character, than successful in filling up—in the short intervals of ball and festival—the poetical outlines which he had roughly sketched at the Lyceum. He worked in the morning at his poem, and passed the greater part of his nights in society; very short intervals of repose sufficing to repair, in so vigorously constituted a being, the loss of energetic vitality caused by the quick succession of intense intellectual labour, and equally intense social enjoyment. It was at this period that the enchanting creations of Wieland and Ariosto were first presented to his young and glowing imagination. These poets are emphatically and essentially the poets of the young: the "*white soul*" of youth, as yet untinged with the colouring reflected from its own peculiar fantasy, or the results of reading, mirrors faithfully the fairy splendour of their magic style, even as the Alpine snow the rosy light of dawn: and Púshkin, with the natural desire of imitating what he so well knew how to admire, conceived the happy thought of transporting Armida and Oberon to a scenery admirably adapted for their reproduction—to the world of ancient Russia. The popular superstitions of the Slavonic races, though naturally possessing a tone and local colouring of their own, and modified by the nature which they reflect, are neither less graceful nor less fertile in poetry than the delicate mythology so exquisitely embodied by the great German or the yet greater Italian: and the poem of "Ruslán and Liudmíla"—the result of Púshkin's bold and happy experiment—may be said to have been the very first embodiment of Russian fancy, at least the first such embodiment exhibited under a form sufficiently European to enable readers who were not Russians to appreciate and admire. The cantos which compose this charming work were read by Púshkin, as fast as they were completed, at the house of his friend and brother poet, Jukóvkii, where were assembled the most distinguished men of Russian literary society. In 1820 the poem of "Ruslán and Liudmíla" was completed, and its appearance must be considered as giving the finishing blow to the worn-out classicism which characterizes all the poetical language of the eighteenth century. This revolution was begun by Jukóvkii himself, to whom Russian literature owes so much; and he hailed with delight the new and beautiful production of the young poet—the "*conquering scholar*," as Jukóvkii affectionately calls Púshkin—which established for ever the new order of things originating in the good taste of the "*conquered master*," as he designates himself.

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The ever timid spirit of criticism was, as usual, exemplified in the judgments passed by the literary journals upon this elegant innovation. Some were alarmed at the novelty of the language, others shocked at the irregularity of the versification, and others again at the occasional comic passages introduced into the poem: but all forgot, or all dared not confess, that this was the first Russian poetry which had ever been greedily and universally *read*; and that, until the appearance of "Ruslán and Liudmíla," poetry and tiresomeness had been, in Russia, convertible terms.

Immediately on the publication of "Ruslán and Liudmíla," the poet, becoming in all probability somewhat weary of a life of incessant and labouring pleasure, left the capital and retired to Kishenév; he took service in the chancery (or office) of Lieutenant-General Inzóff, substitute in the province of Bessarabia. From this epoch begins the wandering and unsettled period of the poet's life, which occupies a space of five years, and concludes with his return to his father's village of Mikhálovskoë, in the government of Pskoff. The effect upon the character and genius of Púshkin, of this pilgrim-like existence, must be considered as in the highest degree favourable: he stored up, in these wanderings, we may be sure, effects of scenery and traits of human nature—in fact the rough materials of future poetry. Fortunately for him, the theatre of his travels was vast enough to enable him to lay in an ample stock not only of recollections of the external beauties in the physical world, but also a rich supply of the various characteristics of national manners. He traversed the whole south of Russia—a district admirably calculated to strike and to impress the warm and vivid imagination of our poet; and "he took genial tribute from the wandering tribes of Bessarabia, and from the merchant inhabitants of Odessa, and from the classic ruins of the Tauride, and from the dark-blue waves of the Euxine, and from the wild peaks of the Caucasus."

It was at this epoch of Púshkin's career that the mighty star of Byron first rose, like some glittering, but irregular comet, above the literary horizon of Europe. The genius of the Russian poet had far too many points of resemblance, in many of its most characteristic peculiarities, with the Muse of the Noble Childe, for us to be surprised at the circumstance that the new and brilliant productions of Byron should have a powerful influence on so congenial a mind as was that of Púshkin. When we allow, therefore, the existence of this influence, nay more, when we endeavour to appreciate and measure the extent of that influence; when we essay to express the degree of *aberration* (to use the language of the astronomer) produced in the orbit of the great poetic planet of the North by the approach in the literary hemisphere of the yet greater luminary of England—we give the strongest possible denial to a fallacious opinion, useless to the glory of one great man and injurious to the just fame of the other, viz. that Púshkin can be called in any sense an *imitator* of Lord Byron. In many respects, it is true, there was a strange and surprising analogy between the personal character, the peculiar tone of thought, nay, even the nature of the subjects treated by the two poets: and to those who content themselves with a superficial examination of the question—those "who have not attayned," as Sir Thomas Browne quaintly

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phrases it, "to the deuteroscophie or second sight of thinges"—these analogies may appear conclusive; but we trust to be able to show, that between these two great men there exists a difference wide and marked enough to satisfy the most critical stickler for originality.

The next production of Púshkin's pen was a brilliant "Epilogue" to the poem of "Ruslán and Liudmíla"—in which he replies to the strictures which had appeared in the various literary journals. This piece was immediately followed (in 1822) by his "Prisoner of the Caucasus," a romantic poem, which breathes the very freshness of the mountain breeze, and must be considered as the perfect embodiment, in verse, of the sublime region from whence it takes its title. So deep was the impression produced by this splendid and passionate poem, that it was reprinted four times before it was incorporated into the edition of the author's collected works;—the impressions having been exhausted in 1822, 24, 28, and 35. The reader, in order to appreciate the avidity with which the poem was read, must bear in mind the small amount of literary activity in Russia, as compared with England, with Germany, or with France. We shall not attempt to give, in this place, any analysis of this, or the other works of Púshkin, as it is our conviction that short and meagre fragments—all that our space would admit of—are very unsatisfactory and insufficient grounds on which to judge a work of fiction, and particularly a work of poetry in a language absolutely unknown to almost all our readers, many of the chief peculiarities depending too upon the nationality of which that language is the expression and vehicle. It is, however, our intention, should the specimens of lyric poetry presented in the translations accompanying this notice be favourably received in England, to extend the sphere of our humble labours, and to endeavour to Daguerreotype, by faithful versions, portions of the longer poems (and in particular the narrative pieces) of the great writer whose portrait we are attempting to trace. We shall, we trust, by so doing succeed in giving our countrymen a more just idea of the merit and peculiar manner of our poet, than we could hope to do by exhibiting to the reader the bare anatomy—the mere dry bones of his works, to which would be wanting the lively play of versification, the life-blood of fancy, and the ever-varying graces of expression.

Between the first of these two remarkable poems ("Ruslán and Liudmíla") and the second—"The Prisoner of the Caucasus," the mind of Púshkin had undergone a most remarkable transformation; "there is hardly any thing," to use the words of the elegant critic whom we have already quoted, "common to the two poems, except the beauty of the verses." There is not a greater difference between an early and a late picture of Raphael; and what is interesting and curious to remark, is the circumstance, that poet and painter (in their gradual advance towards consummate excellence in their respective arts) seemed to have passed through the same stages of development. In the earlier work all is studied, elaborated, carefully and scientifically composed; worked out from the quarry of memory, chiselled by the imagination, and polished by a studious and somewhat pedantic taste: while the imagery, the passion, and the characters of the later production are modelled immediately from Nature herself. The reader perceives that the young artist has now reached the first phase of his development, and has thrown aside the rule and compass of precedents and books, and feels himself sufficiently strong of hand and steady of eye to look face to face upon the unveiled goddess herself, and with reverent skill to copy her sublime lineaments. We cannot better express our meaning, than by allowing Púshkin himself to give his own opinion of this poem. In the latter part of his life, he writes as follows—"At Lars I found a dirtied and dog's-eared copy of 'The Prisoner of the Caucasus,' and I confess that I read it through with much gratification. All this is weak, boyish, incomplete; but there is much happily guessed at and faithfully expressed."

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The indomitable activity which we have mentioned as forming a marked feature in Púshkin's intellect, though exhibited most strikingly throughout his whole career, was never more forcibly displayed than at the present period. Although the first fervour of his passions was now in sole degree moderated by indulgence, and by that satiety which is the inevitable attendant on such indulgence, it is not to be imagined that the poet, in retiring from the capital, intended by this to seclude himself from the gayer pleasures of society. We know, too, how absorbing of time is the wandering life which he led—and many have learned from experience, how difficult it is for a traveller to find leisure for intellectual pursuits. Some idea, therefore, of Púshkin's activity may be formed from a knowledge of the circumstance, that during this roving period he had not only been storing his memory with images of the beauties of nature, taking tribute of grandeur and loveliness from every scene through which he wandered, but found time to pursue what would appear, even for an otherwise unoccupied student, a very steady and incessant course of labour. During the whole of his life, he made it his practice to read almost every remarkable work which appeared in the various languages he had acquired. That this was no easy task, and that the quantity of intellectual food which he unceasingly consumed, must have required a powerful and rapid digestion to assimilate it, we may conclude from his own statement of his occupations and acquirements. On quitting the Lyceum, he was acquainted with the English, Latin, German, and French languages; to this list he managed to add, during his wanderings, a complete knowledge of the Italian, and a competent proficiency in Spanish.

But let us hear his own account of these studies, extracted from a poem written in Bessarabia—

"In solitude my soul, my wayward inspiration  
I've school'd to quiet toil, to fervent meditation.  
I'm master of my days; order is reason's friend;  
On graver thoughts I've learn'd my spirit's powers to bend;  
I seek to compensate, in freedom's calm embraces,  
For the warm years of youth, its joys and vanish'd graces;

And to keep equal step with an enlighten'd age."

We cannot refrain from quoting in this place a passage from another poem, written at this period; our readers will be pleased, we think, with so graceful a tribute to the glory of the great exile-bard of Rome, whose fate and character had so much in common with those of Púshkin himself—

"Sweet Ovid! Love's own bard! I dwell by that still shore  
Whither thine exiled gods thou broughtest—where of yore  
Thou pour'dst thy plaints in life, and left thine ashes dying;  
With deathless, fruitless tears these places glorifying.

\* \* \* \* \*

Here, with a northern lyre the wilderness awaking,  
I wander'd in those days, when liberty was breaking—  
Roused by the gallant Greek—her sleep, by Danube's tide;  
And not one friend would stand, a brother, by my side;  
And the far hills alone, and woods in silence dreaming,  
And the calm muses then would list with kindly seeming."

The influence exerted upon our poet's mind and productions by the Byronic spirit, to which we alluded a few pages back, may be traced, in very perceptible degree, in the next poem which he gave to the public, "The Fountain of Bakhtchisarái," a work in which is reflected, as vividly as it is in the storied waters of the fount from which it takes its name, all the wealth, the profuse and abounding loveliness, of the luxurious clime of the Tauric Chersonese. The scene of the poem is one of the most romantic spots in that divine land; and the ruined palace and "gardens of delight" which once made the joy and pride of the mighty khans—the rulers of the Golden Horde—is perhaps not inferior, as a source of wild legend and picturesque fairy lore—certainly not inferior in the eyes of a Russian reader—to the painted halls and fretted colonnades of the Alhambra. The success instantly obtained and permanently enjoyed by this exquisite poem must be attributed to something more than the profusion and beauty of the descriptive passages, so thickly and artfully interwoven with the action of the tale—a species of wealth and profusion, it may be remarked, which suits well with the oriental character of the story, and with the abounding loveliness of the scenery amid which that action is supposed to take place. In this poem, too, we may remark the first decided essay made by the poet towards delineating and contrasting, in an artistic manner, the characters of human personages. The dramatic opposition between the two principal characters of the tale, Maria and Zarema, is well conceived and most skilfully executed. This poem first appeared in 1824, and was reprinted in 1827, 1830, 1835. The powers of dramatic delineation which may be seen, as it were, in embryo in this work, were to be still further developed in Púshkin's next production, which was begun in the same year, (1824,) and appeared in 1827. Those powers, too, were destined to be exhibited in their full splendour in a historical tragedy—perhaps the finest which the Russian literature can be said to possess. The work to which we have alluded as being the second trial of his wings in the arduous regions of dramatic creation, was the short but exquisite tale entitled "The Gipsies." This tale, which is esteemed by the Russians a masterpiece of grace and simplicity, is a poem in dialogue; the persons being only four in number, and the action a wild yet simple catastrophe of love, jealousy, and revenge. The *dramatis personæ* are gipsies; and it is difficult to select what is most admirable in this exquisite little work—the completeness and distinctness of the descriptions of external nature—the artful introduction of various allusions, (particularly in one most charming passage, indicating Ovid's exile in the beautiful country which is the scene of the drama,) or the intense interest which the poet has known how to infuse into what would appear at first sight a subject simple even to meagreness. Poets of many nations have endeavoured, with various qualifications, and with no less various degrees of success, to represent the picturesque and striking features of the nomad life and wild superstitions of the gipsy race: none however, it may be safely asserted, have ever produced a picture more true or more poetical than is to be found in the production of Púshkin. He had ample opportunities of studying their peculiar manners in the green oceans of the southern steppes. It is at this period that Púshkin began the composition of his poem entitled "Evgénii Oniégin," a production which has become, it may be said, part of the ordinary language of the poet's countrymen. The first canto appeared in 1825, 1829. This work, in its outline, its plan, in the general tone of thought pervading it, and in certain other *external* circumstances, bears a kind of fallacious resemblance to the imitable production of Lord Byron; a circumstance which leads superficial readers into the error (unjust in the highest degree to Púshkin's originality) of considering it as an imitation of the Don. It is a species of satire upon society, (and Russian fashionable society in particular,) embodied in an easy wandering verse something like that of Byron; and so far, perhaps, the comparison between the two poems holds good. Púshkin's *plot* has the advantage of being (though sufficiently slight in construction, it must be confessed) considerably more compact and interesting than the irregular narration which serves Byron to string together the bitter beads of his satirical rosary; but, at the same time, the aim and scope of the English satirist is infinitely more vast and comprehensive. The Russian has also none of the terrible and deeply-thrilling pictures of passion and of war which so strangely and powerfully contrast with the bitter sneer and gay irony forming the basis of the Don; but, on the other hand, the interest of the reader (scattered, in Byron's work, upon the various, unconnected, and somewhat monotonous outlines of female characters in Julia, Haidée, Gulbeyas, &c.,) is in "Evgénii Oniégin" most powerfully concentrated upon the heroine, Tatiana—one of the most exquisite tributes that poetry has ever paid to the nobility of woman. To show the difficulty of

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judging of this work, we need only mention, that while many compare it to "Don Juan," others consider it as rather resembling "Childe Harold;" while the author himself professed that it was rather to be placed in the category of "Beppo."

On leaving Odessa, (in 1824,) Púshkin, who appears to have loved the sea with all the fervour of Shelley himself, bade farewell to the waves with which he had communed so earnestly, and whose deep voices his verse so nobly echoed, in some grand stanzas "To the Sea," of which a translation will be given in a subsequent part.

It is to this epoch that we must ascribe the first outline of the historical tragedy to which we have alluded; but which did not appear till a much later period. We shall recur to this work when we reach the date of its completion.

As the composition of "Evgénii Oniégin" extended over a considerable space of time, our readers may not be displeased at our reverting occasionally to the progress of this work and to the character of its merits. This production must be considered as the fullest and most complete embodiment that exists in Russian literature, of the nationality of the country. It will be found to be the expression of those apparently discordant elements the union of which composes that hard riddle—the Russian character. A passage of Púshkin's dedication will not incorrectly exhibit the variety of its tone:—

"Accept this heap of motley traits,  
Half gay, half sad, half false, half real,  
Half every-day, yet half ideal,  
The careless fruit of idle days,  
Of sleepless nights; slight inspirations  
Of unripe years, of wasted art—  
The reason's frigid observations,  
And sad conclusions of the heart."

During the most tranquil and laborious portion of Púshkin's life, which passed principally at Mikháilovskoë, and which occupies the period from his leaving Odessa at the end of the year 1824 to 1826, he continued to labour upon his tragedy, and to produce the second and third cantos of "Evgénii Oniégin," in addition to which, our indefatigable poet found means to collect and publish a number of smaller poems, some of which will be found among the translations which we are about to offer; and to aid his friend and brother-poet Délvig in an annual volume of prose and verse (illustrated after the manner of our Keepsakes, &c.) entitled "Northern Flowers." This publication was commenced in 1826, and continued to appear, always enriched with something by Púshkin, till its existence closed at the early and lamented death of the projector and editor.

Púshkin's life at this period was characterized by intense industry, and an uniformity of exertion modified and compensated by variety of occupation. He has left a minute description of the manner in which his time was distributed between labour and repose; and even if we did not possess his letters, it is described with sufficient accuracy in the fourth canto of "Evgénii Oniégin," to enable us to transcribe it here. He was in the habit of rising early, and of devoting the morning and forenoon to those parts of his literary occupation which demanded the exercise of the intellectual or reasoning powers, the memory, &c. &c. Before dinner (whatever was the state of the weather) he took somewhat violent walking exercise; he then dined, (it should be remarked that the dinner-hour is earlier in Russia than is usual in England,) and having passed the evening in society either at home or at some neighbouring country-house, he returned to his poetical labours, which he sometimes continued far into the night.<sup>[1]</sup> He has frequently repeated that he found himself more perfectly disposed to composition in the season of autumn; and that his poetical vein flowed most generously and abundantly on a dark and stormy night. To those who are acquainted with the climate of Russia (particularly of that part of the Empire where Púshkin now resided) this will not be surprising; and the abundance and splendour of the descriptions of the autumnal season introduced into his various works, will show that his mind and imagination had something in harmony with that which is, in our opinion, the most poetical portion of the year. Like many persons of a highly nervous organization, the brilliant sunshine of spring-tide produced in Púshkin's temperament an impression of melancholy, which he explained by a natural tendency to consumption.

In autumn 1826, Púshkin re-entered the government service in his original department, viz., that of the foreign affairs; and in 1827 he printed, besides the third canto of "Evgénii Oniégin," the "Gypsies," a new poem of inferior merit entitled the "Robber-Brothers," and a comic tale, also in verse, which, though slight in construction, is a masterpiece of graceful and elegant satire. It is entitled "Count Nulin," and describes the signal discomfiture of certain designs meditated by the count (a most delightful specimen of a young Russian coxcomb) against the virtue of his hostess, a fair châtelaine, at whose country-house the said count passes a night in consequence of a disabled travelling-carriage.

To this period, too, must be assigned the composition of "Poltáva," a work, the proper title of which would be "Mazépa," but which received its name in order that the public might not confound it with Byron's tale, the hero of both being the same historical personage. It is almost unnecessary to state that there is no resemblance whatever between these two remarkable works. While the production of Byron is rather an admirable development of certain incidents, either entirely invented by the poet, or only slightly suggested by passages of the old Kazak

Hetman's biography, the *Mazépa* of Púshkin is a most spirited and faithful version of the real history of the romantic life of the hero; the actual events adopted by the Russian poet as the groundwork of his tale, being certainly not inferior in strangeness, novelty, and romantic incident, to the short fiery tale, dawning rosily in mutual love, and finishing with the wild gallop on the desert steed, which thrills us so deeply in the pages of Byron.

In 1829 was given to the world an edition of Púshkin's collected works, arranged in chronological order; and the author had another opportunity of visiting the East—those climes whence he had drawn, and was to draw again, so much of his inspiration. He once more crossed the Caucasus, and leaving in his rear his beloved Georgia, he followed the movements of the Russian army in its campaign, and accompanied it as far as Arzerám, receiving, during this journey, the most flattering attentions from Marshal Paskévitch, the commander-in-chief of the expedition. We may judge of the delight with which he seized this opportunity of indulging his taste for travelling, and of the vast store of recollections and images which he garnered up during this pilgrimage—so peculiarly attractive to a poet, as combining the pleasure of travelling with the splendour and picturesque novelties of a military march—by the letters in which he has described his impressions during this interesting period. These letters are models of simplicity, grace, and interest, and have become classical in the Russian language.

In 1830, Baron Délvig commenced the publication of the *Literary Gazette*, an undertaking in which Púshkin took as active and zealous an interest as he had done in the *Northern Flowers*, edited by his friend and schoolfellow. He not only contributed many beautiful poems to this periodical, but also several striking prose tales and other papers, in which, by the elegance and brilliancy of the style, and the acuteness and originality of the thoughts, the public found no difficulty in identifying Púshkin, though they appeared anonymously. He now visited Moscow, in order to superintend the printing of his *Bóris Godunóff*, the tragedy which he had been so long engaged in polishing and completing, and respecting the success of which he appears to have been more anxious than usual, as he determined to write himself the preface to this work. The subject of this tragedy is the well-known episode of Russian history which placed Boris upon the throne of the Tsar; and writers have taken various views of the character of the hero of this scene, Púshkin representing Boris as the assassin of the son of Ivan IV., while the ancient chroniclers, and the modern historians in general, as Ustriáloff, Pogódin, Kraévskii, &c. &c., concur in asserting that that prince was elected by the clergy and the people. Whatever may be the historical truth of the design, Púshkin has given us in this tragedy a dramatic picture full of spirit, of passion, of character, and of life; and some of the personages, particularly those of the pretender Dimitri, and the heroine Marina, are sketched with a vigorous and flowing pencil. The *form* of this play is ostensibly Shakspearian; but it appears to us to resemble less the works of Shakspeare himself, than some of the more successful imitations of the great dramatist's manner—as, for instance, some parts of the *Wallenstein*. As to the language and versification, it is in blank verse, and the style is considered by Russians as admirable for ease and flexibility. At this time Púshkin's life was about to undergo a great change; he was engaged to a young lady whom he afterwards married, and retired, in the spring of this year, to the village of Boldino, in the province of Nijegorod, in order to make preparations for his new existence as a married man, and in this spot he remained, in consequence of the cholera breaking out in Moscow, until the winter. In spite of the engrossing nature of these occupations, he seems never to have been more industriously employed than during this autumn. "I must tell you," he writes, "(but between you and me!) that I have been working at Boldino as I have not done for a long time. Listen then! I brought with me hither the two last cantos of '*Oniégin*', ready for the press, a tale in octaves, (*the Little House in the Kolomora*), number of dramatic scenes—'*The Stingy Knight*', '*Mozart and Salieri*', '*The Feast in the Time of the Plague*', and '*Don Juan*'. Besides this, I have written about thirty small pieces of poetry. I have not done yet; I have written in prose (this is a great secret) five tales," (Ivan Biélkine's Stories.) The year 1831 began afflictively for Púshkin. On the 14th of January Baron Délvig died. All Púshkin's letters in which he makes any allusion to this loss, breathe a sentiment of the most deep and permanent sorrow. The following is extracted from a letter to a friend, dated the 31st of this month:—"I knew him (Délvig) at the Lyceum. I watched the first unnoted unfolding of his poetic mind—the early development of a talent which we then gave not its just value. We read together Deljávin and Jukóvskii; we talked of all *that swelleth the spirit, that melteth the heart*. His life was rich and full—rich, not in romantic adventures, but in the most noble feelings, the most brilliant and the purest intellect, and the fairest hopes."

But the grief caused by this great and irreparable loss—a grief which threw its dark cold shadow over the whole of Púshkin's subsequent existence—was not unrelieved by feelings of a brighter tone: the void caused by friendship was filled up with love. In February of this year he was married, at Moscow, to the lady to whom (as we have mentioned above) he had been some time engaged. Mlle. Gontcháreff was of an ancient Russian family, and a person of singular beauty. "I am married," (writes the poet to one of his friends, in a letter dated February 24.) "I have now but one desire in the world, and that is, that nothing in my present life be changed. This existence is so new to me, that I feel as if I had been born again. The death of Délvig is the only shadow in my bright existence." Púshkin was desirous of editing a volume of the "*Northern Flowers*," in the following year, for the benefit of the family of his departed friend, for which he now began assiduously to collect materials. This labour detained him until the month of May in Moscow; and, before his migration to St Petersburg, the tragedy of *Bóris Godunóff* was printed. Among all the works of Púshkin there is not one which exhibits so high a degree of artistic skill, or so vigorous and powerful a genius, as this drama, in which every word, every dialogue, seems to unite the certainty of study and meditation with the fire and naturalness of a happy improvisation, and in which there is not a character nor an allusion which destroys the truth and

vigour of the composition, viewed as a faithful mirror of Russian nationality, Russian history, and Russian character. The remainder of Púshkin's short, alas! but laborious life, however filled with the silent activity of intellectual occupation, offers but few materials for the biographer: it was passed principally at St Petersburg, varied by occasional journeys to Moscow, and the usual *autumnal* retirements, which we have mentioned as having been so favourable for the execution of the poet's literary tasks. We shall content ourselves with giving a slight account of the principal works in which Púshkin employed his great powers—powers which had now reached their highest point of vigour, retaining all the freshness and vivacity of youth, while they had acquired the maturity and solidity of manhood. The subjects of these works, however, being for the most part historical, are of a nature which renders them less susceptible of analysis in our pages—and indeed their local nature would cause such analysis to be devoid, in a great measure, of interest to the English reader. There is, however, one episode in the poet's life, which must possess peculiar interest to those who delight to watch that fond fidelity with which genius returns to the scenes where it was first developed, and which brought back Shakspeare, loaded with glory, to pass the calm evening of his life amid the native shades of Stratford. On quitting Moscow for St Petersburg, Púshkin passed a winter at Tsárskoë Seló. "This was a most blessed thought," he says, in a letter of 26th March; "I can thus pass my summer and *autumn* in a most enchanting and inspiring seclusion; close to the capital, in the circle of my dearest recollections. I shall be able to see you every week, and Jukóvkii also. Petersburg is within an hour's drive. Living is cheap here. I shall not want an equipage. What can be better?" And, in fact, it is certain that he never was so perfectly happy in his society and his occupations, and in himself, as in these summer and autumn months which he passed, as he says:—

"In those bright days when yet all ignorant of fame,  
And knowing neither care, system, nor art, nor aim,  
Thy tutelary shades, O Tsárskoë! were flinging  
Gay echoes to *his* voice, the praise of Idlesse singing."

The beautiful retirement of Tsárskoë Seló was at this period dignified by the presence of two great poets, each producing works worthy of the imperial groves under whose shade they were meditated. Púshkin and Jukóvkii were not only residing here together, but they were engaged in a friendly rivalry, and each writing so industriously as though determined never to meet without some new poetic novelty. The deep impression produced by Jukóvkii's patriotic stanzas, written at this period, entitled "Russian Glory," was worthily responded to by the noble poems written by Púshkin, "To the Slanderers of Russia!" and "The Anniversary of Borodino,"—all these works being spirited and majestic embodiments of national triumph and exultation.

It is curious and delightful to remark, too, that the poets of Tsárskoë Seló were occupied, at this period, with the composition of two similar works of another and no less national character. These were "tales" or legends in the popular taste of the Russian people, that of Jukóvkii was entitled "The Lay of the Tsar Berendéi," and Púshkin's, "The Lay of the Tsar Saltán."

In this year, too, was printed Púshkin's small collection of prose tales, under the assumed name of Ivan Biélkin, which appeared with a biographical preface, describing the life and character of the supposed author. The tales are of extraordinary merit, remarkable for the simplicity and natural grace of the style, and the preface is a specimen of consummate excellence in point of quiet Addisonian humour.

In the year 1831, Púshkin girded up his loins to enter upon the great historical task; which had so long attracted his imagination, and which, difficult and arduous as was the undertaking, he was probably better calculated than any literary man whom Russia has yet seen, to execute in a manner worthy of the sublime nature of its subject. This was the history of Peter the Great. He now began to set seriously about preparing himself for approaching this gigantic subject, and passed the greater part of his time in the archives, collecting the necessary materials for the work. In his hours of relaxation he produced the third volume of his smaller poems, and superintended the publication of another volume of the "Northern Flowers," which appeared in 1832. But these must be considered as the results rather of his play-moments, than as the serious occupation of his time. His mornings were generally passed among the records preserved in the various departments of the government, from whence, after the labours and researches of the day, he usually returned on foot to his late dinner. He was an active and indefatigable walker, prizing highly, and endeavouring to preserve by constant exercise, the vigorous frame of body with which he was blessed by nature. Even in summer he was accustomed to return on foot from his country residence to his labours in the city, and was in the habit of taking violent corporeal exercise in gymnastics, which he would continue with the patience and enduring vigour of an athlete. These walks (it should be remarked that a taste for walking is much more rare among the Russians than in England, from the severity and extreme changes in the climate of the North, the heat in summer rendering such exercise much more laborious than with us, and the cold in winter necessitating the use of the heavy shubá of fur)—these walks were Púshkin's principal amusement, if we except bathing, an exercise which the poet would frequently continue far into autumn—a season when the weather in Russia is frequently very severe.

In the prosecution of his great historical labour, it was evidently difficult for the lively imagination of Púshkin to escape the temptation of being drawn aside from his chief aim, by the attractive and romantic character of many episodes in Russian history—to wander for a moment from the somewhat formal and arid high-road of history, into some of the "shady spaces," peopled with romantic adventure and picturesque incident. It was under the influence of some such

attraction, that he conceived the idea of working out in a separate production, the detached epoch rendered so remarkable by the rebellion of Pugatchéff. Finding that he had already performed the most serious portion of the drudgery of collecting materials for his principal historical enterprise, he drew, with a wonderfully rapid and lively pencil, the vigorous sketch of the events of that extraordinary conspiracy, and has left us a work which, whatever be its imperfections and slightness, viewed as a work of history, cannot be denied to be a most admirable and striking outline of the picturesque and singular events which form its subject. Convinced of the importance, to an author of history, of a personal knowledge of the scenes in which his events took place, Púshkin, when the history of Pugatchéff's rebellion was already on the verge of completion, determined (before his work was published) to examine with his own eyes that eastern region of European Russia, which had been the theatre of the strange drama of that singular pretender's life, and to enable himself to infuse into a narration founded upon dry records, the life and reality which was to be obtained from questioning the old inhabitants of that country, many of whom might remember the wild adventures of which, in their youth, they had been witnesses or actors. In 1833, Púshkin was enabled to gratify this natural curiosity; and the result of his visit to the scene of the rebellion enabled him to communicate to his already plain, vigorous, and concise narration, a tone of reality, a warmth of colouring, and a liveliness of language, which renders it impossible to leave the book unfinished when once opened, and which no elaborateness of research, and no minuteness of detail, could otherwise have communicated.

During the first two years of its existence, the periodical entitled "The Reading Library" was honoured by the appearance in its pages of that division of Púshkin's smaller poems, afterwards published separately as the fourth volume of his collected works, in the year 1835. In this journal, too, were printed his two prose tales "The Queen of Spades" and "Kirdjáli," the former of which has, we believe, appeared in English, and of the latter a translation has been attempted, together with several others of his smaller prose works, by the author of the present notice. A journey which he made to Orenburg gave him the materials for fresh prose tales. The most remarkable of these, the beautiful and well-known story, "The Captain's Daughter," first appeared in the periodical entitled "The Contemporary," which is justly considered as the chief miscellaneous journal that appears in Russia, and which partakes of the nature of what we in England call the review and magazine. In all his writing, prose or verse, Púshkin is most astonishingly unaffected, rational, and straightforward; but in the last-named story he has attained the highest degree of perfection—it is the simplicity of nature herself.

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This period must be considered as that in which Púshkin had arrived at the summit of his glory. He was now enjoying the universal respect and admiration of his countrymen, a respect and admiration shared by the sovereign himself, who distinguished the great poet by naming him "gentilhomme de la chambre;" he was in the very flower of health, life, and genius; he had completed the laborious part of his great task, in collecting materials for the history of Peter the Great—all seemed to prophesy a future filled with bright certainties of happiness and glory.

But the end was not far off; the dark and melancholy event which was to put a sudden and a fatal conclusion to this glorious and useful career was near at hand. The storm which was to quench this bright and shining light was already rising dimly above the horizon; and the poet's prophetic eye foresaw—like that of the seer in the Scripture—the "little cloud like a man's hand," that was rising heavily over the calm sky; he seems to have had an obscure presentiment of the near approach of death, little suspecting, perhaps, that that death was to be one of violence, of suffering, and of blood. He had, a few months before, lost his mother, and had himself accompanied her last remains to the monastery of Sviatogórsk, and had fixed upon a spot where he wished to be buried by her side; leaving for this purpose a sum of money in the treasury of the monastery.

It is, we believe, generally known, even in England, that Púshkin was mortally wounded in a duel, on Wednesday 27th January, and that he died, after lingering in excruciating<sup>[2]</sup> torment during two days and nights, at half-past two in the afternoon of the 29th of January 1837.

Respecting the causes which led to this melancholy conclusion of a great man's life, and the details which accompanied that sad and deplorable event, it is not our intention to speak. Under any circumstances, to dwell upon so lamentable an affair would serve no good purpose; and would rather minister to a morbid curiosity in our readers, than in any respect illustrate the life and character of Púshkin; but the propriety of avoiding more than an allusion to this sad story will be evident, when we reflect that the poet's dying wish was, that the whole circumstance should if possible be buried in oblivion. Respect, then, to the last desire of a dying man! Respect to the prayer of great genius, whose lips, when quivering in the last agony, murmured the generous words, "Pardon, and Forget!"

The foregoing brief notice is presented to the English reader less in the character of a complete biography of Púshkin, (a character to which it has evidently no pretensions,) than as a kind of necessary introduction to the translated specimens of his poetry, which it is intended to accompany. For a perfect biography, indeed, of the poet, the materials, even in Russia, are not yet assembled; nor, perhaps, has a sufficient period of time been suffered to elapse since his death, to render it possible to attempt a life of Púshkin, with any hope of preserving that *distance* and *proportion*, which is necessary for the successful execution of a portrait, whether traced with the pencil or the pen. The artist may be too near to his original in *time* as well as in *space*.

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The general accuracy of the preceding pages may be depended on; the materials were obtained from various sources, but principally from two persons who were both acquainted—one

intimately so—with Púshkin. We should be indeed ungrateful, were we to let pass the present opportunity afforded us, of expressing our deep obligations to both those gentlemen for the assistance they have given us; and we cannot deny ourselves the gratification of publicly and particularly thanking M. Pletniéff, rector of the Imperial University of St Petersburg, not only for the kind manner in which he facilitated the composition of these pages, by supplying us with a copy of his own elegant and spirited critical sketch of Púshkin's works and character (a short but masterly article, reprinted from the "Sovreménnik," or Contemporary, a literary journal of which M. Pletniéff is the editor,) but for the many delightful and intellectual hours which we have passed in his society.

THOMAS B. SHAW.

St Petersburg, February 5th/17th, 1845.

## THE LAST HOURS OF PÚSHKIN.

LETTER FROM JUKÓVSKII TO SERGEI PÚSHKIN, THE POET'S FATHER.

February 15th/27th, 1837.

I have not till now succeeded in mustering up the courage to write to you, my poor friend, Sergei Lvóvitch. What could I say to you, overwhelmed as I am by the national calamity which has just fallen upon us all, like an avalanche, and crushed us beneath its ruin? Our Púshkin is no more! This terrible fact is unhappily true, but nevertheless it still appears almost incredible. The thought, that he is gone, cannot yet enter into the order of common, evident, every-day ideas; one still continues, by mechanical habit as it were, to seek him; it still seems so natural to expect to see him at certain hours; still amid our conversations seems to resound his voice, still seems to ring his lively childlike laugh of gaiety; and there, where he was wont to be seen in daily life, there nothing is changed, there are hardly even any marks of the melancholy loss we have undergone—all is in its common order, every thing is in its place; but he is gone from us, and for ever. It is hardly conceivable! In one moment has perished that strong and mighty life, full of genius, and glowing with hope. I will not speak of you, his feeble and unhappy father; I will not speak of us, his mourning friends. Russia has lost her beloved, her national poet. She has lost him at the very moment when his powers had reached their maturity, lost him when he had reached that climacteric—that point at which our intellect, bidding farewell to the fervid, and sometimes irregular force of youth agitated by genius, devotes itself to more tranquil, more orderly powers of riper manhood, fresh as the first period, and if less tempestuous, yet certainly more creative. What Russian is there who does not feel as if the death of Púshkin had torn away one of his very heart-strings? The glory of the present reign has lost its poet—a poet who belonged to it, as Derjávin belonged to the glory of Catharine, or Karamzín to that of Alexander.

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The first terrible moments of agony and bereavement are over for you; you can now listen to me and weep. I will describe to you every detail of your son's last hours—details which I either saw myself, or which were related to me by other eyewitnesses. On Wednesday the 27th January/8th February, at ten o'clock in the evening, I called at the house of the Prince Viázemskii, where I was told that both he and the princess were at Púshkin's, and Valuéff, to whom I afterwards went, addressed me on my entrance with the words—"Have you not received the Princess's note? They have sent for you long ago; hurry off to Púshkin's: he is dying." Thunderstruck with this news, I rushed down-stairs. I galloped off to Púshkin's. In his antechamber, before the door of his study, I found Drs Arendt and Spásskii, Prince Viázemskii and Prince Mestchérskii. To the question, "*How is he?*"—Arendt answered me, "He is very bad; he will infallibly die." The following was the account they gave me of what had happened: At six o'clock, after dinner, Púshkin had been brought home in the same desperate condition by Lieutenant-Colonel Danzás, his schoolfellow at the Lyceum. A footman had taken him out of the carriage, and carried him in his arms up-stairs. "*Does it hurt you to carry me?*" asked Púshkin of the man. They carried him into his study; he himself told them to give him clean linen; he changed his dress, and lay down on a sofa. At the moment when they were helping him to lie down, his wife, who knew nothing of what had happened, was about to come into the room; but he cried out in a loud tone—"N'entrez pas; il y a du monde chez moi." He was afraid of frightening her. His wife, however, had already entered by the time that he was laid down completely dressed. They sent for the doctors. Arendt was not at home, but Scholtz and Zadler came. Púshkin ordered everybody to leave the room, (at this moment Danzás and Pletniéff were with him.) "I am very bad," he said, as he shook hands with Scholtz. They examined his wound, and Zadler went away to fetch the needful instruments. Left alone with Scholtz, Púshkin enquired, "*What do you think of my state—speak plainly?*" "I cannot conceal from you the fact, that you are in danger." "Say rather, I am dying." "I hold it my duty not to conceal from you that such is the case. But we will hear the opinion of Arendt and Salomon, who are sent for." "Je vous remercie, vous avez agi en honnête homme envers moi," said Púshkin. Then, after a moment's silence, he rubbed his forehead with his hand, and added, "*Il faut que j'arrange ma maison.*" "Would you not like to see any of your relations?" asked Scholtz. "Farewell, my friends!" cried Púshkin, turning his eyes towards his library. To whom he bade adieu in these words, whether it was to his living or his dead friends, I know not. After waiting a few moments, he asked, "*Then do you think that I shall not live through the hour?*" "Oh no! I merely supposed that it might be agreeable to you to see some of your friends—M. Pletniéff is here." "Yes, but I should like to see Jukóvskii too. Give me some water, I feel sick." Scholtz felt his pulse, and found that the hand was cold, and the pulse weak and quick; he left the room for some drink, and they sent for me. I was not at home at this moment, and I know not how it

happened, but none of their messengers ever reached me. In the meanwhile Zadler and Salomon arrived. Scholtz left the patient, who affectionately shook hands with him, but without speaking a single word. Soon after Arendt made his appearance. He was convinced at the first glance that there was not the slightest hope. They began to apply cold fomentations with ice to the patient's stomach, and to give cooling drinks; a treatment which soon produced the desired effect; he grew more tranquil. Before Arendt's departure, he said to him, "*Beg the Emperor to pardon me.*" Arendt now departed, leaving him to the care of Spásskii, the family physician, who, during that whole night, never quitted the bedside. "*I am very bad,*" said Púshkin, when Spásskii came into the room. Spásskii endeavoured to tranquillize him; but Púshkin waved his hand in a negative manner. From this moment he seemed to have ceased to entertain any anxiety about himself; and all his thoughts were now turned towards his wife. "*Do not give my wife any useless hope;*" he said to Spásskii; "*do not conceal from her what is the matter, she is no pretender to sentiment; you know her well. As for me, do as you please with me; I consent to every thing, and I am ready for every thing.*" At this moment were already assembled the Princess Viázemskii, the Prince, Turgénieff, the Count Vielhórskii, and myself. The princess was with the poor wife, whose condition it is impossible to describe. She from time to time stole, like a ghost, into the room where lay her dying husband; he could not see her, (he was lying on a sofa, with his face turned from the window and the door;) but every time that she entered, or even stopped at the door, he felt her presence. "*My wife is here—is she not?*" he said. "*Take her away.*" He was afraid to admit her, because he did not wish her to perceive the sufferings which he overmastered with astonishing courage. "*What is my wife doing?*" he once enquired of Spásskii. "*Poor thing! she suffers innocently. The world will tear her to pieces.*" In general, from the beginning to the end of his sufferings, (except during two or three hours of the first night, when they exceeded all measure of human endurance,) he was astonishingly firm. "*I have been in thirty battles,*" said Dr Arendt; "*I have seen numbers of dying men; but I have very seldom seen any thing like this.*" And it is peculiarly remarkable that, during these last hours of his life, he seemed, as it were, to have become another person; the tempest, which a few hours back had agitated his soul with uncontrollable passion, was gone, and left not a trace behind; not a word, not a recollection of what had happened. On the previous day he had received an invitation to the funeral of Gretch's son. He remembered this amid his own sufferings. "*If you see Gretch,*" said he to Spásskii, "*give him my compliments, and say that I feel a heartfelt sympathy in his loss.*" He was asked, whether he did not desire to confess and take the sacrament. He willingly consented, and it was determined that the priest should be sent for in the morning. At midnight Dr Arendt returned. Whatever was the subject of the conversation, it was evident that what the dying man had heard from the physician tranquillized, consoled, and fortified him. Fulfilling a desire (of which he was already, aware) on the part of those who had expressed a touching anxiety respecting his eternal welfare, he confessed and took the holy sacrament. Down to five o'clock in the morning, there had not taken place the slightest change in his condition. But about five o'clock the pain in the abdomen became intolerable, and its force mastered the strength of his soul: he began to groan; they again sent for Arendt. At his arrival it was found necessary to administer a clyster; but it did no good, and only seemed to increase the patient's sufferings, which at length reached the highest pitch, and continued till seven o'clock in the morning. What would have been the feelings of his unhappy wife, if she had been able, during the space of these two eternal hours, to hear his groans? I am confident that her reason could not have borne this agonizing trial. But this is what happened: she was lying, in a state of complete exhaustion, in the drawing-room, close to the doors which were all that separated her from her husband's bed. At the first dreadful cry he uttered, the Princess Viázemskii, who was in the drawing-room with her, darted to her side, dreading that something might happen. But she still lay immovable, (although she had been speaking a moment before,) a heavy lethargic slumber had overcome her, and this slumber, as if purposely sent down in mercy from above, lasted till the very minute when the last groan rang on the other side of the door. But in this moment of most cruel agony, according to the account of Spásskii and Arendt, the dying man's firmness of soul was shown in all its force: when on the point of screaming out, he with violent effort merely groaned, fearing, as he said himself, that his wife might hear it, and that she might be frightened. At seven o'clock the pain grew milder. It is necessary to remark, that during all this time, and even to the end of his sufferings, his thoughts were perfectly rational, and his memory clear. Even at the beginning of the terrible attack of pain, he had called Spásskii to his bedside, ordered him to hand him a paper written with his own hand, and made him burn it. He then called in Danzás, and dictated to him a statement respecting a few debts which he had incurred. This task, however, only exhausted him, and afterwards he was unable to make any other dispositions. When, at the arrival of morning, his intolerable suffering ceased, he said to Spásskii, "*My wife! call my wife!*" This farewell moment I dare not attempt to describe to you. He then asked for his children; they were asleep; but they went for them, and brought them half asleep as they were. He bent his eyes in silence upon each of them, laid his hand on their heads, made a sign of the cross over them, and then, with a gesture of the hand, sent them away. "*Who is there?*" he enquired of Spásskii and Danzás. They named me and Viázemskii. "*Call them in!*" said he in a feeble voice. I entered, took the cold hand which he held out to me, kissed it. I could not speak; he waved his hand, I retired; but he called me back. "*Tell the Emperor,*" he said, "*that I am sorry to die; I would have been wholly his. Tell him that I wish him a long, long reign; that I wish him happiness in his son, happiness in his Russia.*" These words he spoke feebly, interruptedly, but distinctly. He then bade farewell to Viázemskii. At this moment arrived the Count Vielhórskii, and went into his room; and he was thus the last person who pressed his hand in life. It was evident that he was hastening to his last earthly account, and listening, as it were, for the footstep of approaching death. Feeling his own pulse, he said to Spásskii, "*Death is coming.*" When Turgénieff went up to him, he looked at him twice very earnestly, squeezed his hand, seemed as though he desired to say something, but

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waved his hand, and uttered the word "*Karamzín!*" Mademoiselle Karamzín was not in the house; but they instantly sent for her, and she arrived almost immediately. Their interview only lasted a moment; but when Katerína Andréevna was about to leave the bedside, he called her and said, "*Sign me with the cross,*" and then kissed her hand. In the mean time, a dose of opium which had been given eased him a little; and they began to apply to his stomach emollient fomentations instead of the cold effusions. This was a relief to the sufferer; and he began, without a word of resistance, to perform the prescriptions of the doctors, which he had previously refused obstinately to do, being terrified by the idea of prolonging his tortures, and ardently desiring death to terminate them. But he now became as obedient as a child; he himself applied the compresses to his stomach, and assisted those who were busied around him. In short, he was now apparently a great deal better. In this state he was found by Dr Dahl, who came to him at two o'clock. "*I am in a bad way, my dear fellow,*" said Púshkin, with a smile, to Dahl. But Dahl, who actually entertained more hopes than the other physicians, answered him, "We all hope; so you must not despair either." "No," he cried; "*I cannot live; I shall die. It seems that it must be so.*" At this moment, his pulse was fuller and steadier. A slight general fever began to show itself. They put on some leeches: the pulse grew more even, slower, and considerably lighter. "I caught," says Dahl, "like a drowning man at a straw. With a firm voice, I pronounced the word *hope*; and was about to deceive both myself and others." Púshkin, observing that Dahl was growing more sanguine, took him by the hand, and said—"There is nobody there?" "No one." "Dahl, tell me the truth, shall I die soon?" "We have hopes of you, Púshkin—really, we have hopes." "Well, thank you!" he replied. As far as it appears, he had only once flattered himself with the consolation of hope: neither before nor after this moment did he feel any trust in it. Almost the whole night (that is, of the 29th, during the whole of which Dahl sat by the bedside, and I, Viázemskii, and Vielhórskii, in the next room,) he held Dahl's hand. He often would take a spoonful of water, or little lump of ice, into his mouth, doing every thing himself: taking the tumbler from a shelf within reach, rubbing his temples with ice, applying himself the fomentations to his stomach, changing them himself, &c. He suffered less from pain than from an excessive feeling of depression. "*Ah! what depression!*" he several times exclaimed, throwing his hands backward above his head; "*it makes my heart die within me!*" He then begged them to lift him up, or to turn him on his side, or to arrange his pillow; and, without letting them finish to do so, would stop them generally with the words—"There! so, so—very well; so it is very well; well enough; now it is quite right;" or, "*Stop—never mind—only pull my arm a little—so! now it is very well—excellent!*"—(these are all his exact expressions.) "In general," says Dahl, "with respect to my treatment, he was as manageable and obedient as a child, and did every thing I wished." Once he inquired of Dahl, "*Who is with my wife?*" Dahl answered, "Many good people feel a sympathy with you; the drawing-room and the antechamber are full from morning to night." "Oh, thank you," he replied; "*only go and tell my wife that all is going on well, thank God! or else they will talk all sorts of nonsense to her there, I suppose.*" Dahl did not deceive him. From the morning of the 28th, when the news that Púshkin was dying had flown through the whole town, his antechamber had been incessantly crowded with visitors; some enquiring after him by messengers, others—and people of all conditions, whether acquainted with him or not—coming themselves. The feeling of a national, an universal affliction, was never more touchingly expressed than by this proceeding. The number of visitors became at last so immense, that the entrance-door (which was close to the study where the dying man lay) was incessantly opening and shutting; this disturbed the sufferer, and we imagined the expedient of closing that door, by placing against it a chest from the hall, and instead of it opening another little door which led from the stair-case into the pantry, and partitioning off with screens the dining-room from the drawing-room, where his wife was. From this moment, the pantry was unceasingly thronged with people; none but acquaintances were admitted into the dining-room. On the faces of all these visitors was expressed a most heartfelt sympathy; very many of them wept. So strong a testimony of general affliction touched me deeply. In Russians, to whom is so dear their national glory, it was not to be wondered at; but the sympathy of foreigners was to me as gratifying as it was unlooked for. We were losing something of our own; was it wonderful that we should grieve? But what was it that could touch *them* so sensibly? It is not difficult to answer this. Genius is the property of all. In bowing down before genius all nations are brethren; and when it vanishes untimely from the earth, all will follow its departure with one brotherly lamentation. Púshkin, with respect to his genius, belonged not to Russia alone, but to all Europe; and it was therefore that many foreigners approached his door with feelings of *personal* sorrow, and mourned for *our* Púshkin as if he had been *their own*. But let me return to my recital. Though he sent Dahl to console his wife with hope, Púshkin himself did not entertain the slightest. Once he enquired, "*What o'clock is it?*" and on Dahl's informing him, he continued, in an interrupted voice, "*Have I ... long ... to ... be tortured thus?... Pray ... haste!*" This he repeated several times afterwards, "*Will the end be soon?*" and he always added, "*Pray ... make haste!*" In general, however, (after the torments of the first night, which lasted two hours,) he was astonishingly patient. When the pain and anguish overcame him, he made movements with his hands, or uttered at intervals a kind of stifled groan, but so that it was hardly audible "You must bear it, my dear fellow; there is nothing to be done," said Dahl to him; "but don't be ashamed of your pain; groan, it will ease you." "No," he replied, interruptedly; "*no,... it is of no ... use to ... groan;... my wife ... will ... hear;... 'tis absurd ... that such a trifle ... should ... master me,... I will not.*"—I left him at five o'clock in the morning, and returned in a couple of hours. Having observed, that the night had been tolerably quiet, I went home with an impression almost of hope; but on my return I found I had deceived myself. Arendt assured me confidently that all was over, and that he could not live out the day. As he predicted, the pulse now grew weaker, and began to sink perceptibly; the hands began to be cold. He was lying with his eyes closed; it was only from time to time he raised his hand to take a piece of ice and rub his forehead with it. It had struck two o'clock in the

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afternoon, and Púshkin had only three quarters of an hour left to live. He opened his eyes, and asked for some cloud-berry water. When they brought it, he said in a distinct voice,—“*Call my wife; let her feed me.*” She came, sank down on her knees by the head of the bed, and carried to his lips one, and afterwards another spoonful of the cloud-berries, and then pressed her cheek against his; Púshkin stroked her on the head, and said, “*There, there, never mind; thank God, all is well; go.*” The tranquil expression of his face, and the firmness of his voice, deceived the poor wife; she left the room almost radiant with joy. “You see,” she said to Dr Spásskii, “he will live; he will not die.” But at this moment the last process of vitality had already begun. I stood together with Count Vielhórszkii at the head of the bed; by the side stood Turgénieff. Dahl whispered to me, “He is going.” But his thoughts were clear. It was only at intervals that a half-dosing forgetfulness overshadowed them; once he gave his hand to Dahl, and pressing it, said: “*Now, lift me up—come—but higher, higher ... now, come along!*” But awaking, he said, “*I was dreaming, and I fancied that I was climbing with you up along these books and shelves! so high ... and my head began to turn.*” After pausing a little, he again, without unclosing his eyes, began to feel for Dahl's hand, and pulling it, said: “*Now, let us go then, if you wish; but together!*” Dahl, at his request, took him under the arms, and raised him higher; and suddenly, as if awaking, he quickly opened his eyes, his face lighted up, and he said, “*Life is finished!*” Dahl, who had not distinctly heard the words, answered, “Yes, it is finished; we have turned you round.” “*Life is finished!*” he repeated, distinctly and positively. “*I can't breathe, I am stifling*” were his last words. I never once removed my eyes from him, and I remarked at this moment, that the movement of the breast, hitherto calm, became interrupted. It soon ceased altogether. I looked attentively; I waited for the last sigh, but I could not remark it. The stillness which reigned over his whole appearance appeared to me to be tranquillity; but he was now no more. We all kept silence around him. In a couple of minutes I asked, “How is he?” “He is dead!” answered Dahl. So calmly, so tranquilly had his soul departed. We long stood around him in silence, without stirring, not daring to disturb the mysteries of death, which were completed before us in all their touching holiness. When all had left the room, I sat down before him, and long alone I gazed upon his face. Never had I beheld upon that countenance any thing like that which was upon it in this first moment of death. His head was somewhat bent forward; the hands, which a few moments ago had exhibited a kind of convulsive movement, were calmly stretched, as if they had just fallen into an attitude of repose after some heavy labour. But that which was expressed in the face, I am not able to tell in words. It was to me something so new, and at the same time so familiar. This was not either sleep or repose; it was not the expression of intellect which was before so peculiar to the face; nor was it the poetic expression; no! some mighty, some wondrous thought was unfolded in it: something resembling vision, some full, complete, deeply-satisfying knowledge. Gazing upon it, I felt an irresistible desire to ask him, “What do you see, my friend?” And what would he have answered if he had been able for a moment to arise? There are moments in our life which fully deserve the epithet of great. At this moment, I may say, I beheld the face of death itself, divinely-mysterious; the face of death without a veil between. And what a seal was that she had stamped upon him, and how wondrously did she tell her secret and his own! I most solemnly assure you that I never beheld upon his face an expression of such deep, majestic, such triumphant *thought*. The expression had undoubtedly been latent in the face before; but it was only displayed in all its purity then, when all earthly things had vanished from his sight at the approach of death. Such was the end of our Púshkin. I will describe in a few words what followed. Most fortunately, I remembered, before it was too late, that it was necessary to take a cast of the mask; this was executed without loss of time. His features had not yet entirely changed. It cannot be denied that the first expression which death had given them, was not preserved in them; but we now all possess an attractive portrait, a fac-simile of the features, and which images—not death, but a deep, majestic slumber. I will not relate to you the state in which was the poor wife—many good friends remained inseparably with her, the Princess Viázemskii, Elizabeth Zaguájskii, the Count and Countess Stróganoff. The Count took upon himself all the arrangements for the funeral. After remaining some time longer in the house, I went away to Vielhórszkii's to dinner; there were assembled all the other persons who, like myself, had seen Púshkin's last moments; and he himself had been invited, three days before, to this dinner ... it was to celebrate my birth-day. On the following morning we, his friends, with our own hands, laid Púshkin in the coffin; and on the evening of the succeeding day, we transported him to the Koninshennaia (the Imperial Stables) Church. And during the whole of these two days, the drawing-room where he lay in his coffin was incessantly full of people. It nay be safely asserted that more than ten thousand persons visited it, in order to obtain one look at him: many were in tears, others stood long immovable, and seemed as though they wished to behold his face; there was something inexpressibly striking in his immobility amid all this movement, and something mysteriously touching in the prayer which was heard so gently and so uniformly murmured amid that confused murmur of whispered conversation. The funeral service was performed on the 1st of February. Many of our greatest nobles, and many of the foreign ministers, were in the church. We carried the coffin with our own hands to the vault, where it was to remain until the moment of its being taken out of the city. On the 3d of February, at ten o'clock in the evening, we assembled for the last time around all that remained to us of Púshkin; the last requiem was sung; the case which contained the coffin was placed upon a sledge; at midnight the sledge set off; by the light of the moon I followed it for some moments with my eyes; it soon turned the corner of a house; and all that once was Púshkin was lost for ever from my sight.

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V. JUKÓVSKII.

The body was accompanied by Turgénieff. Púshkin had more than once said to his wife, that he desired to be buried in the monastery of the Assumption at Sviatogórsk, where his mother had

recently been interred. This monastery is situated in the government (province) of Pskoff; and in the riding of Opótkhoff, at about four versts from the country-house and hamlet of *Mikháilovskoë*, where Púshkin passed several years of his poetic life. On the 4th, at nine o'clock in the evening, the corpse arrived at Pskoff, from whence, conformably to the excellent arrangements made by the provincial government, it was forwarded on the same night, and the morning of the 5th, through the town of Ostroff to the Sviatogórsk monastery, where it arrived as early as seven o'clock in the evening. The dead man glided to his last abode, past his own deserted cottage, past the three beloved firs which he had planted not long before. The body was placed upon the *holy hill* (*sviatáia gorá*, from which the monastery takes its name,) in the cathedral church of the Assumption, and a requiem was performed in the evening. All night long workmen were employed in digging a grave beside the spot where his mother reposes. On the following day, as soon as it was light, at the conclusion of divine service, the last requiem was chanted, and the coffin was lowered into the grave, in the presence of Turgénieff and the peasants of Púshkin's estate, who had come from the village of Mikháilovskoë to pay the last honour to their kind landlord. Very strangely to the ears of the bystanders sounded the words of the Bible, accompanying the handful of earth as it was cast upon Púshkin—"earth thou art!"

#### FOOTNOTES:

- [1] His fondness for books was absolutely insatiable; he was supplied with all the new publications as fast as they appeared; and he would devote the last money in his purse to this purpose. His extravagance in this article of expense he excused by comparing himself to the glazier, whose trade renders it necessary for him to purchase a diamond, an article which a rich man will frequently abstain from buying.
- [2] The last hours of Púshkin have been minutely and eloquently described by the most distinguished of his friends and brother poets, Jukóvskii, in a letter addressed to Púshkin's father. As this letter contains one of the most touching and beautiful pictures of a great man's death-bed, and as it does equal honour to the author and its subject, we append a translation of it. It is undoubtedly one of the most singular documents in the whole range of literature.—T. B. S.

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## THE NOVEL AND THE DRAMA.

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### (SOME ADVICE TO AN AUTHOR.)

You tell me, my dear Eugenius, that you are hesitating between the novel and the drama: you know not which to attack; and you wish me to give you some suggestions on the subject. You are candid enough to say that it is not point-blank advice that you ask, which you would probably heed just as much as good counsel is generally heeded by those who apply for it; but you would have me lay before you such ideas as may occur to me, in order that you may have the picking and choosing amongst them, with the chance of finding something to your mind—something which may assist you to a decision. Artists in arabesque get an idea by watching the shifting forms of the kaleidoscope; in the same manner you hope—if I will but turn my mind about a little—that some lucky adjustment of its fragments of observation may help you to a serviceable thought or two. At all events, you shall not have to complain of too much method in what follows.

If I could only, my dear Eugenius, persuade you to leave them both alone!—drama and novel both! But this is hopeless. The love one bears to a woman may be conquered—not indeed by good counsel, but by speedy flight; but the passion that draws us to poetry and romance can only die out, it cannot be expelled; for in this passion, go where we will, we carry our Helen with us. She steals upon us at each unguarded moment, and renews in secret her kisses upon our lip. Well, if I cannot persuade you to leave both alone, my next advice is that you attack both; for if you endeavour to express in either of these forms of composition all that is probably fermenting in your mind, the chance is that you spoil your work.

And by all means lay your hands first upon the drama. True, it is the higher aim of the two, and I will not pretend to augur any very brilliant success. But still it is the more appropriate to the first ebullitions of genius, and the spasmodic efforts of youth. The heart is at this time full of poetry, which, be its value what it may, must be got rid of before the stream of prose will run clear. Besides, the very effort of verse seems necessary to this age, which disdains a facile task, and seeks to expend its utmost vigour on its chosen labour. Moreover, to write a good novel one should have passed through the spring-time and enthusiasm of youth—one should be able to survey life with some degree of tranquillity; neither wrapped in its illusions, nor full of indignation at its discovered hollowness. At two-and-twenty, even if the heart is not burning with fever heat of some kind—some enthusiastic passion or misanthropical disgust—the head at least is preoccupied with some engrossing idea, which so besets the man, that he can see nothing clearly in the world around him. At this age he has a philosophy, a metaphysical system, which he really believes in, (a species of delusion the first to quit us,) and he persists in seeing his dogma reflected to him from all sides. This is supportable, or may be disguised in poetry; it becomes intolerable in prose. Add to all which, that the writer of a novel should have had some *experience* in the realities of life, a certain empirical knowledge of the manner in which the passions develop

themselves in men and women. The high ideal forms of good and evil he may learn from his own heart; but there is in actual life, so to speak, a vulgar monstrosity which must be seen to be credited. I can figure to myself the writer of a drama musing out his subject in solitude, whether the solitude of the seashore or of a garret in London; but the successful novelist must have mingled with the world, and should know whatever the club, the drawing-room, and, above all, the boudoir can reveal to him.

Of course it is understood between us, that in speaking of the drama we make no reference to the stage. Indeed, you can hardly contemplate writing for the stage, as there is no stage to write for. We speak of the drama solely as a form of composition, presented, like any other, to the reader. I have heard the opinion expressed that the drama, viewed as a composition designed only to be read, is destined to be entirely superseded by the novel, which admits of so great a variety of material being worked into its structure, and affords an unrivalled scope for the development both of story and of character. To me it seems that the drama, especially in its more classic form, apart from its application to the stage, has a vitality of its own, and will stand its ground in literature, let the novel advance as it may.

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All the passions of man represent themselves in his speech, the great prerogative of the human being; almost every thing he does is transacted through the medium of speech, or accompanied by it; even in solitude his thoughts are thrown into words, which are frequently uttered aloud, and the soliloquy is wellnigh as natural as the dialogue. Give, therefore, a fair representation of the speech of men throughout every great transaction, and you give the best and truest representations of their actions and their passions, and this in the briefest form possible. You have all that is essential to the most faithful portrait, without the distraction of detail and circumstance. With a reader of the drama the eye is little exercised; he seems to be brought into immediate contact with the minds of those imaginary persons who are rather thinking and feeling, than acting before him. To this select representation of humanity is added the charm of verse, the strange power of harmonizing diction. If the drama rarely captivates the eye, it takes possession of the ear. May it never lose its appropriate language of verse—that language which so well comports with its high ideal character, being one which, as a French poet has happily expressed it, the world understands, but does not speak—

"Elle a cela pour elle—  
Que le monde l'entend, et ne la parle pas!"

The drama is peculiarly appropriate to the ideal; and it seems to me that the very fact, that whatever appertains to the middle region of art, or requires the aid of much circumstance and detail, has found in the novel a far more perfect development, ought to induce us to purify the drama, and retain amongst us its most exalted type. It is in vain that it strives to compete with the novel in the intricacy of its plot, in the number of its *dramatis personæ*, in the representation of the peculiarities, or as they used to be called, the *humours* of men. These have now a better scene for their exhibition than the old five-act play, or trag-i-comedy, could afford them; but the high passions of mankind, whatever is most elevated or most tender, whatever naturally leads the mind, be it good or evil, to profound contemplation—this will still find its most complete, and powerful, and graceful development in the poetic form of the drama.

The novel and the drama have thus their several characteristics. Do you wish to hurry on your reader with a untiring curiosity? you will, of course, select the novel. Do you wish to hold him lingering, meditative, to your pages—pages which he shall turn backwards as well as forwards? you were wise to choose the drama. Both should have character, and passion, and incident; but in the first the interest of the *story* should pervade the whole, in the second the interest of the *passion* should predominate. If you write a novel, do not expect your readers very often to stand still and meditate profoundly; if you write a drama, forego entirely the charm of curiosity. Do not hope, by any contrivance of your plot, to entrap or allure the attention of your readers, who must come to you—there is no help for it—with something of the spirit, and something of the unwillingness, of the student. What some man of genius may one day perform, or not perform, it were presumptuous to assert; for it is the privilege of genius to prove to the critic what is possible; but, speaking according to our *present lights*, we should say that the sustaining of the main characteristic interest of the novel, is incompatible with the more intense efforts of reflection or of poetry. One cannot be dragged on and chained to the spot at the same time. Some one *may* arise who shall combine the genius of Lord Byron and of Sir Walter Scott; but till the prodigy makes his appearance, I shall continue to think that no intellectual chymistry could present to us, in one compound, the charms of *Ivanhoe* and of *Sardanapalus*.

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I should be very ungrateful—I who have been an idle man—if I underrated the novel. It is hardly possible to imagine a form of composition more fit to display the varied powers of an author; for wit and pathos, the tragic and the comic, descriptions, reflections, dialogue, narrative, each takes its turn; but I cannot consent that it carry off all our regard from its elder sister, the drama. In the novel every thing passes by in dizzy rapidity; we are whirled along over hill and valley, through the grandeur and the filth of cities, and a thousand noble and a thousand grotesque objects flit over our field of vision. In the drama, it is true, we often toil on, slow as a tired pedestrian; but then how often do we sit down, as at the foot of some mountain, and fill our eyes and our hearts with the prospect before us? How gay is the first!—even when terrible, she has still her own vivacity; but then she exhausts at once all the artillery of her charms. How severe is the second!—even when gayest, she is still thoughtful, still maintains her intricate movement, and her habit of involved allusions; but then at each visit some fresh beauty discloses itself. It

was once my good fortune—I who am now old, may prattle of these things—to be something a favourite with a fair lady who, with the world at large, had little reputation for beauty. Her sparkling sister, with her sunny locks and still more sunny countenance, carried away all hearts; she, pale and silent, sat often unregarded. But, oh, Eugenius! when she turned upon you her eyes lit with the light of love and genius, that pale and dark-browed girl grew suddenly more beautiful than I have any words to express. You must make the application yourself; for having once conjured up her image to my mind, I cannot consent to compare her even to the most eloquent poetry that was ever penned.

Undoubtedly the first dramatic writer amongst our contemporaries is Henry Taylor, and the most admirable dramatic poem which these times have witnessed is *Philip van Artevelde*. How well he uses the language of the *old masters!* how completely has he made it his own! and how replete is the poem with that sagacious observation which penetrates the very core of human life, and which is so appropriate to the drama! Yet the author of *Philip van Artevelde*, I shall be told, has evidently taken a very different view of the powers and functions of the drama at this day than what I have been expressing. In his poem we have the whole lifetime of a man described, and a considerable portion of the history of a people sketched out; we have a canvass so ample, and so well filled, that all the materials for a long novel might be found there. But the example of *Philip van Artevelde* rather confirms than shakes my opinion. I am persuaded that that drama, good as it is, would have been fifty times better, had it been framed on a more restricted plan. You, of course, have read and admired this poem. Now recall to mind those parts which you probably marked with your pencil as you proceeded, and which you afterwards read a second and a third and a fourth time; bring them together, and you will at once perceive how little the poem would have lost, how much it would have gained, if it had been curtailed, or rather constructed on a simpler plan. What care we for his Sir Simon Bette and his Guisebert Grutt? And of what avail is it to attempt, within the limits of a drama, and under the trammels of verse, what can be much better done in the freedom and amplitude of prose? Under what disadvantages does the historical play appear after the historical novels of the Author of Waverley!

The author of *Philip van Artevelde*, and *Edwin the Fair*, seems to shrink from idealizing character, lest he should depart from historic truth. But historic truth is not the sort of truth most essential to the drama. We are pleased when we meet with it; but its presence will never justify the author for neglecting the higher resources of his art. Do not think, however, that in making this observation I intend to impeach the character of Philip van Artevelde himself. Artevelde I admire without stint, and without exception. Compare this character with the Wallenstein of Schiller, and you will see at once its excellence. They are both leaders of armies, and both men of reflection. But in Wallenstein the habit of self-examination has led to an irresolution which we feel at once, in such a man, to be a degrading weakness, and altogether inconsistent with the part he is playing in life. It is an indecision which, in spite of the philosophical tone it assumes, pronounces him to be unfit for the command of men, or to sway the destinies of a people. Artevelde, too, reflects, examines himself, pauses, considers, and his will is the servant of his thought; but reflection with him comes in aid of resolution, matures it, establishes it. He can discuss with himself, whether he shall pursue a life of peaceful retirement, or plunge into one of stormy action; but having once made his election, he proceeds along his devoted path with perfect self-confidence, and without a look that speaks of retreat. A world of thought is still around him; he carries with him, at each step, his old habit of reflection—for this, no man who has once possessed, can ever relinquish—but nothing of all this disturbs or impedes him.

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Do not you, Eugenius, be led by the cant of criticism to sacrifice the real interest of your *dramatis personæ*. Some dry censor will tell you that your Greeks are by no means Greek, nor your Romans Roman. See you first that they are real men, and be not afraid to throw your own heart into them. Little will it console either you or your readers, if, after you have repelled us by some frigid formal figure, a complimentary critic of this school should propose to place it as a frontispiece to a new edition of Potter or of Adam—applauding you the while for having faithfully preserved the classic costume. I tell you that the classic costume must ruffle and stir with passions kindred to our own, or it had better be left hanging against the wall. And what a deception it is that the scholastic imagination is perpetually imposing on itself in this matter! Accustomed to dwell on the points of difference between the men of one age and of another, it revolts from admitting the many mere points of resemblance which must have existed between them; it hardly takes into account the great fund of humanity common to them both. The politics of Cicero, it is true, would be unintelligible to one unversed in the constitution and history of Rome; but the ambition of Cicero, the embarrassment of the politician, the meditated treachery, the boasted independence, the doubt, the fear, the hesitation,—all this will be better studied in a living House of Commons, than in all the manuscripts of the Vatican. Sacrifice nothing of what you know to be the substantial interest of your piece, to what these critics call the *colour* of the age, which, after all, is nothing better than one guess amongst many at historic truth. Schiller fell a victim, in one or two instances, to this sort of criticism, and, in obedience to it, contradicted the natural bias of his genius. In his *Wilhelm Tell*, instead of the hero of liberty and of Switzerland, he has given us little more than a sturdy peasant, who, in destroying Gessler, follows only a personal revenge, and feels the remorse of a common assassin. If this were historic truth, it was not the part of the poet to be the first to discover and proclaim it. Was he to degrade the character below the rank which ordinary historians assigned to it? We do not want a drama to frame the portrait of a Lincolnshire farmer; it is the place, if place there is, for the representation of the higher forms of humanity.

After taking note of the distinctive qualities of the drama and the novel, it were well—O author

that will be!—to take note of thyself, and observe what manner of talent is strongest within thee. There are two descriptions of men of genius. The one are men of genius in virtue of their own quick feelings and intense reflection; they have imagination, but it is chiefly kindled by their own personal emotions: they write from the inspiration of their own hearts; they see the world in the height of their own joys and afflictions. These amiable egotists fill all nature with the voice of their own plaints, and they have ever a tangled skein of their own peculiar thoughts to unravel and to ravel again. The second order of men of genius, albeit they are not deficient in keen susceptibility or profound reflection, see the world outstretched before them, as it lies beneath the impartial light of heaven; they understand, they master it; they turn the great globe round under the sun; they make their own mimic variations after its strange and varied pattern. Now you must take rank, high or low, amongst this second order of men of genius, if you are to prosper in the land of fiction and romance. Pray, do you—as I half suspect—do you, when sitting down to sketch out some budding romance, find that you have filled your paper with the analysis of a character or a sentiment, and that you have risen from your desk without relating a single incident, or advancing your story beyond the first attitude, the first *pose* of your hero? If so, I doubt of your aptitude for the novel. I know that you have some noble ideas of elevating the standard of the romance, and, by retarding and subduing the interest of the narrative, to make this combine with more elaborate beauties, and more subtle thought, that has been hitherto considered as legitimately appertaining to the novel. I like the idea—I should rejoice to see it executed; but pardon me, if the very circumstance of you being possessed with this idea, leads me to augur ill of you as a writer of fiction. You have not love enough for your story, nor sufficient confidence in it. You are afraid of every sentence which has in it no peculiar beauty of diction or of sentiment. A novelist must be liberal of letter-press, must feel no remorse at leading us down, page after page, destitute of all other merit than that of conducting us to his *dénouement*: he writes not by sentences; takes no account of paragraphs; he strides from chapter to chapter, from volume to volume.

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"Verily," I think I hear you say, "you are the most consolatory of counsellors; you advise me to commence with the drama—but with no prospect of success—in order to prepare myself for a failure in the novel!"

My dear Eugenius, you shall not fail. You shall write a very powerful, exciting, affecting romance. Pray, do not be too severe upon our sensibilities, do not put us on the rack more than is absolutely necessary. It has always seemed to me—and I am glad to have this opportunity of unburdening my heart upon the point—it has always seemed to me, that there was something *barbarous* in that torture of the sympathies in which the novelist delights, and which his reader, it must be supposed, finds peculiarly grateful. It really reminds me of that pleasure which certain savages are said to take in cutting themselves with knives, and inflicting other wounds upon themselves when in a state of great excitement. I have myself often flung away the work of fiction, when it seemed bent upon raising my sympathies only to torture them. Pray, spare us when you, in your time, shall have become a potent magician. Follow the example of the poets, who, when they bear the sword, yet hide it in such a clustre of laurels that its sharpness is not seen.

To take very common instance—All the world knows that the catastrophe of a romance must be inevitably postponed, that suspense must be prolonged, and that the two lovers whose fate we have become interested in, cannot possibly be made happy in the first or even in the second volume. But the expedients employed to delay this term of felicity, are sometimes such as the laws of a civilized society ought really to proscribe. I will mention the first example that occurs to me, though your better memory will directly suggest many more striking and more flagrant. It is taken from the work of no mean artist; indeed, none but a writer of more or less talent could inflict this gratuitous anguish upon us. In the novel of *Rienzi*, a young nobleman, Adrian, goes to Florence, at that time visited by the plague, to seek his betrothed Irene, sister of the Tribune. Fatigue, the extreme heat, and his own dreadful anxiety, have thrown him into a fever, and he sinks down in the public thoroughfare. It is Irene herself who rushes to his assistance. Every one else avoids him, thinking him struck by the plague. She and a benevolent friar convey him, still in a state of unconsciousness, into an empty and deserted palace which stood by, and of which there were many at that time in Florence. She tends him, nurses him day and night, aided only by the same pious and charitable friar. In his delirium he raves of that Irene who is standing by his head, and who thus learns that it is to seek her he has exposed himself to the horrors of the plague. At the end of this time the friar, who had administered to the patient some healing draught, tells her, on leaving, that Adrian will shortly fall into a sound slumber—that this will be the crisis of his fever—that he will either wake from this sleep restored to consciousness and health, or will sink under his malady. Adrian falls accordingly into a sound sleep, Irene watching by his side. Now we know that the patient is doing well, and our hearts have been sedulously prepared for the happy interview that is promised us, when, on awaking, he will see beside him the loved Irene whom he has been seeking, and recognise in her the saviour of his life. But this sleep lasts longer than Irene had anticipated; she becomes alarmed, and goes away to seek the friar. The moment she has left the room, Adrian wakes!—finds himself well and alone—there is no one to tell him who it is that has preserved his life; nor has Irene, it seems, left any trace of her presence. He sallies forth again into the city of the plague to seek her, and she is destined to return to the empty chamber! Taken to a hideous sort of charnel-house, Adrian is shown the body of a female clad in a mantle that had once been Irene's, and concludes that it is the corpse of her who, for the last three days and nights, has been tending on him. I recollect that, when I came to this part of the novel, I threw the book down, and stalked for five minutes indignantly about the room, exclaiming that it was cruel—barbarous—savage, to be sporting thus with human

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sympathies. To be sure, I ought to add, in justice to the author, that, after exhaling my rage in this manner, I again took up the novel, and read on to the end.

I do beseech you, Eugenius, do not give us a *philosophical* novel. Every work of art of a high order will, in one sense of the word, be philosophical; there will be philosophy there for those who can penetrate it, and sometimes the reader will gather a profounder and juster meaning, than the author himself detected in his fiction. I mean, of course, those works where some theory or some dogma is expressly taught, where a vein of scholastic, or political, or ethical matter alternates with a vein of narrative and fictitious matter. I dislike the whole genus. Either one is interested in your story, and then your philosophy is a bore; or one is not interested in it, and then your philosophy can gain no currency by being tacked to it. Suppose the narrative and didactic portions of such a book equally good, it is still essentially two books in one, and should be read once for the story, and once without. We are repeatedly told that people are induced to peruse, in the shape of a novel, what they would have avoided as dry and uninteresting in the shape of an essay. Pray, can you get people to take knowledge, as you get children to take physic, without knowing what it is they swallow? So that the powder was in the jelly, and the jelly goes down the throat, the business, in the one case, is done. But I rather think, in gaining knowledge, one must *taste the powder*; there is no help for it. Really, the manner in which these good nurses of the public talk of passing off their wisdom upon us, reminds us of the old and approved fashion in which Paddy passes his bad shilling, by slipping it between two sound penny pieces. To be sure it is but twopence after all, and he gets neither more nor less than his twopenny-worth of intoxication, but he has succeeded in putting his shilling into circulation. Just such a circulation of wisdom may we expect from novels which are to teach philosophy, and politics, and political economy, and I know not what else. But such works have succeeded, you will tell me. What shall I say to *Tremaine*?—what to *Coningsby*? In *Tremaine*, so far as I remember, the didactic portion had sunk like a sort of sediment, and being collected into a dense mass in the third volume, could easily be avoided. As to *Coningsby*, I deny that it anywhere calls upon the reader for much exercise of his reflective powers. The novel has some sparkling scenes written in the vivacious manner of our neighbours, the French, and these we read. Some Eton boys talk politics, and as they talk just as boys should talk, their prattle is easily tolerated. Besides, I am not responsible for the caprice of fashion, nor for those adventitious circumstances which give currency to books, and which may sometimes compel us all to read what none of us heartily admires.

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Certainly, if I were admitted to the counsels of a novelist, I should never have finished with my list of grievances, my entreaties, and deprecations. I will not inflict it upon you. But there is one little request I cannot help making even to a novelist in embryo. I have been annoyed beyond measure at the habit our writers of fiction have fallen into, of throwing their heroes perpetually into a sort of swoon or delirium, or state of half consciousness. That a heroine should occasionally faint, and so permit the author to carry her quietly off the stage—this is an old expedient, natural and allowable. What I complain of is, that whenever the passions of the hero himself rise to a certain pitch; or whenever the necessities of the plot require him to do one thing, whilst both his reason and his feelings would plainly lead him to do another—he is immediately thrown into a state of half frenzy, has a "vague consciousness" of something or other, makes a complete nightmare of the business; is cast, in short, into a state of *coma*, in which the author can carry him hither and thither, and communicate to him whatever impulse he pleases. In this sort of dream he raves and resolves, he fights or he flies, and then wakes to confused memory of just what the author thinks fit to call to his recollection. It is very interesting and edifying, truly, to watch the movements of an irrational puppet! I do beg of you, when you take up the functions of the novelist, not to distribute this species of intoxication amongst your *dramatis personæ*, more largely than is absolutely necessary. Keep them in a rational state as long as you can. Depend upon it they will not grow more interesting in proportion as they approximate to madmen or idiots.

And so, dear Eugenius, you are resolved, at all events, in some form or other, to be the author! This is decided. What was that desperate phrase I once heard you utter—you would strike one blow, though you put your whole life into the stroke, and died upon the broken sword!

Ah! but one does not die upon the broken sword; one has to live on. Would that I could dissuade you from this inky pestilence! This poetizing spirit, which gives all life so much significance to the *imagination*, strikes it with sterility in every thing which should beget or prosper a personal career. It opens the heart—true, but keeps it open; it closes in on nothing—shuts in nothing for itself. It is an open heart, and the sunshine enters there, and the bird alights there; but nothing retains them, and the light and the song depart as freely as they came. You lose the spring of action, and forfeit the easy intercourse with the world; for, believe me, however you struggle against it, so long as you live a poet, will you feel yourself a stranger or a child amongst men. And all for what? I have that confidence in your talent, that I am sure you will make no ridiculous failures. What you write for fame, will be far superior to what others write for popularity. But these will attain their end, and you, with far more merit, will be only known as having failed. And know you not that men revenge on mediocrity the praise extorted from them by indisputable celebrity? It is a crime to be above the vulgar, and yet not overawe the vulgar. There are a few great names they cannot refuse to extol; men of genuine merit, of a larger merit than they can measure, who yet cannot confessedly approach to these select few, they treat with derision and contempt.

But suppose the most complete success that you can rationally expect—what have you done? You have added one work of art the more to a literature already so rich, that the life of a man can

hardly exhaust it; so rich, that it is compelled to drop by the way, as booty it cannot preserve, what in another literature, or at an earlier period of its own career, would have been considered invaluable treasure.

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But the question of success or failure is not, after all, the first or most important to your happiness. Could the hope of literary fame, could the passion for it, could the esteem even of its possession, keep a steady place in your mind, there were but little danger in admitting this species of ambition as the ruling spirit of your house. But, alas! whilst it is the most tenacious, it is also the most fluctuating of passions. It rises all radiant with the morning, and before the sun is in the zenith, it forsakes you, and the bright world at your feet is as a glittering desert. But if you should make good resolutions to reform and eject your tyrant, it will not fail to return before the night descends to dash and confound them.

I remember meeting somewhere with the complaint of a young poet who had made trial of his muse and failed; the style was perhaps somewhat quaint, but it spoke the language of truth, and I copied it out. I will transcribe it for your edification, and so conclude this wandering epistle. You must not ask me for the title of the book, for I am not sure that I could give it you correctly. Besides, it would be of no use, as the work I know is out of print.

"I could do better," says the poet in reply to his friend, who had been suggesting the usual consolations and lenitives applicable to the case, "but I could not so far excel what I have written, as to make all the difference between obscurity and fame. It is not a brief and tolerated existence in the world of letters that can be a sanction and motive to my endeavours; and since a noble immortality is denied me, I am willing to sink at once into oblivion. The sentence has been passed. I have not that obstinacy of hope which can make an appeal to the decision of posterity. My labours have been futile—my whole being has been an error—my life is without aim or meaning."

"I sought it not," continued the disappointed bard, "I sought not this gift of poesy—I despised not the ruder toils of existence—I strove to pursue them, but I strove in vain. I could not walk along this earth with the busy forward tread of other men. The fair wonder detained and withheld me. Flowers on their slender stalks could prove an hindrance in my path; the light acacia would fling the barrier of its beauty across my way; the slow-thoughted stream would bend me to its winding current. Was it fault of mine that all nature was replete with feeling that compassed and enthralled me? On the surface of the lake at eventide, there lay how sweet a sadness! Hope visited me from the blue hills. There was perpetual revelry of thought amidst the clouds, and in the wide cope of heaven. This passion of the poet came to me, not knowing what it was. It came the gift of tranquil skies, and was breathed by playful zephyrs, and fell on me, with many a serene influence from the bright and silent stars.

"I saw others pursuing and enjoying the varied prosperity of life—I felt no envy at their success, and no participation in their desires. I could not call in and limit my mind to the concerns of a personal welfare. I had leaned my ear unto the earth, and heard the beating of her mighty heart, and the murmur of her mysteries, and my spirit lost its fitness for any selfish aim or narrow purpose. I stood forth to be the interpreter of his own word to man. Alas! I myself am but one—the poorest—of the restless and craving multitude.

"Gone! gone for ever! is the pleasant hope that danced before me on my path, with feet that never wearied, and timbrel that never paused! Oh, gay illusion! whither hast thou led me? and to what desolation has the music of thy course conducted? I am laden, as it were, with the fruitage of cultivated affections, but I myself am forlorn and disregarded. I kindle with innumerable sympathies, but am shut out for ever from social endearments—from the sweet relationships that make happy the homes of other men. I am faint with love of the beautiful, and my heart pants with an unclaimed devotion—but who may love the poet in his poverty?"

The disappointed bard, who, I should mention, was an Italian, resolves to quit Rome, and books, and meditations; he goes to a seaport town, becomes a mariner, and is soon advanced to the rank of captain of a small trading vessel. The same friend to whom he had poured out the lamentation I have already transcribed, encounters him in this new character, and he then gives the following account of himself:—

"I worked hard with the men, and studied diligently with the captain. One voyage to the Levant was speedily followed by a second; I gained experience; I have earned promotion—go to—I have earned money! Here I am, master of this vessel, which shall carry you to the mouth of the Tiber, or the port of Genoa."

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"Then you have quite merged the poet in the sailor?" said his companion.

"Quite! quite! These hands are hard," replied the poet, gaily exhibiting his swarthy palms; "they have tugged at other than the cordage of a lyre. I, who used to burden the passing clouds with many a pensive sentiment, now ask of them what weather they predict. I, who was wont to give a thousand utterances to the winds of heaven, enquire from what point of the compass they are blowing. I, who could

never behold the ocean without lapsing into dreamy emotions or endless speculations, now study its tides, and sound its shallows, and know it as the high-road I travel on. Yes," he continued, pacing the deck with animation, "I am no longer that commiserated mortal, whose musing gait marks him out for the mingled ridicule and, compassion of all observers; who burns with a passion for fame which renders him at once the most solitary and the most dependent of men. Me—I belong to the multitude—I am one of themselves. They cannot point the finger at me. I am released from that needless necessity to distinguish myself from others—from that pledge, given unsought to a heedless world, to leave behind an enduring memento of my existence. I can be filled with daily life, as with daily bread. Life is indeed a freedom—I can give *all* to death."

"I think," said his friend with a smile, "I trace something of the leaven of poetry even in this description of your unpoetized condition. Fear you not that the old fever will return?"

"No; I resist—I fly from all temptation. If leaning, perchance, over the side of the vessel, and looking down on the troubled water, my mind grows troubled also with agitated thoughts, I start from the insidious posture. I find something to tug—to haul. A rope is thrown to me, and I am saved! Or I seize the rudder—I grasp its handle, grown smooth by its frequent intercourse with the human palm—and, believe me, there is a magic in its touch that brings me back instantly to the actual world of man's wants and of man's energies. I feel my feet press firm upon the boarded deck; I look out and around me; and my eye surveys, and my ear listens to the plain and serviceable realities of this our habitable globe."

This seems like a case of cure. But the symptoms were deceptive. The next time we meet the poet-sailor he has embarked all he possessed in an expedition of discovery in the new world which had recently been laid open by Columbus; and this, not from love of gain, nor love of science, nor even the ardour of enterprise, but purely from the restlessness of a spirit which, ejected from its home in the world of thought, could never find another amongst those "serviceable realities" of life, which he knew so well how to applaud. He set sail from the port of Genoa, and was never heard of afterwards. The moral of which is, that you take timely warning, Eugenius, lest your poetic culture end in a voyage of discovery to New South Wales!

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## MARSTON; OR, THE MEMOIRS OF A STATESMAN.

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### PART XVII.

"Have I not in my time heard lions roar?  
Have I not heard the sea, puft up with wind,  
Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat?  
Have I not heard great ordnance in the field,  
And Heaven's artillery thunder in the skies?  
Have I not in the pitched battle heard  
Loud 'larums, neighing steeds, and trumpets clang?"

SHAKSPEARE.

The speech of the Opposition leader decided the question. No man on his side would venture beyond the line which he had drawn; and the resolutions of Government were triumphantly carried, after a brief appeal from me to the loyalty and manliness of the House. I placed before them the undeniable intention of the cabinet to promote the public prosperity, the immeasurable value of unanimity in the parliament to produce confidence in the people, and the magnitude of the stake for which England and Ireland were contending with the enemy of Europe. Those sentiments were received with loud approval—my language was continually echoed during the debate, I was congratulated on all sides; and this night of expectancy and alarm closed in a success which relieved me from all future anxiety for the fate of the Government.

The House broke up earlier than usual; and, to cool the fever which the events of the night had produced in my veins, I rambled into one of the spacious squares which add so much to the ornament of that fine city. The night was serene, the air blew fresh and flower-breathing from the walks, the stars shone in their lustre, and I felt all the power of nature to soothe the troubled spirit. Some of the fashionable inhabitants of the surrounding houses had been induced by the fineness of the night to prolong their promenade; and the light laugh, and the sound of pleasant voices, added to the touching and simple charm of the scene. A group had stopped round a player on the guitar, with which we made a tolerable accompaniment to some foreign songs. My ear was caught by a chorus which I had often heard among the French peasantry, and I joined in the applause. The minstrel was ragged and pale, and had evidently met with no small share of the buffets of fortune; but, cheered by our approval, he volunteered to sing the masterpiece of his collection—"The Rising of the Vendée"—the rallying-song of the insurrection, a performance chanted by the Vendéan army in the field, by the Vendéan peasant in his cottage, and which he now gave us with all the enthusiasm of one who had fought and suffered in the cause.

## THE RISING OF THE VENDÉE.

It was a Sabbath morning, and sweet the summer air,  
And brightly shone the summer sun upon the day of prayer;  
And silver-sweet the village bells o'er mount and valley toll'd,  
And in the church of St Florèn were gather'd young and old.  
When rushing down the woodland hill, in fiery haste was seen,  
With panting steed and bloody spur, a noble Angevin.  
And bounding on the sacred floor, he gave his fearful cry,—  
"Up, up for France! the time is come, for France to live or die.

"Your Queen is in the dungeon; your King is in his gore;  
On Paris waves the flag of death, the fiery Tricolor;  
Your nobles in their ancient halls are hunted down and slain,  
In convent cells and holy shrines the blood is pour'd like rain.  
The peasant's vine is rooted up, his cottage given to flame,  
His son is to the scaffold sent, his daughter sent to shame;  
With torch in hand, and hate in heart, the rebel host is nigh.  
Up, up for France! the time is come, for France to live or die."

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That livelong night the horn was heard, from Orleans to Anjou,  
And pour'd from all their quiet fields our shepherds bold and true;  
Along the pleasant banks of Loire shot up the beacon-fires,  
And many a torch was blazing bright on Lucon's stately spires;  
The midnight cloud was flush'd with flame that hung o'er Parthenaye,  
The blaze that shone o'er proud Brissac was like the breaking day;  
Till east and west, and north and south, the loyal beacons shone,  
Like shooting-stars, from haughty Nantz to sea-begirt Olonne.

And through the night, on foot and horse, the sleepless summons flew,  
And morning saw the Lily-flag wide waving o'er Poitou;  
And many an ancient musketoon was taken from the wall,  
And many a jovial hunter's steed was harness'd in the stall;  
And many a noble's armoury gave up the sword and spear,  
And many a bride, and many a babe, was left with kiss and tear;  
And many a homely peasant bade "farewell" to his old "dame;"  
As in the days, when France's king unfurl'd the Oriflame.

There, leading his bold marksmen, rode the eagle-eyed Lescure,  
And dark Stofflet, who flies to fight as falcon to the lure;  
And fearless as the lion roused, but gentle as the lamb,  
Came, marching at his people's head, the brave and good Bonchamps.  
Charette, where honour was the prize, the hero sure to win;  
And there, with Henri Quatre's plume, the young Rochejaquin.  
And there, in peasant speech and garb—the terror of the foe,  
A noble made by Heaven's own hand, the great Cathelineau.

We march'd by tens of thousands, we march'd through day and night,  
The Lily standard in our front, like Israel's holy light.  
Around us rush'd the rebels, as the wolf upon the sheep,  
We burst upon their columns, as the lion roused from sleep;  
We tore the bayonets from their hands, we slew them at their guns,  
Their boasted horsemen flew like chaff before our forest-sons;  
That eve we heap'd their baggage high their lines of dead between,  
And in the centre blazed to heaven their blood-dyed Guillotine!

In vain they hid their heads in walls; we rush'd on stout Thouar,—  
What cared we for its shot or shell, for battlement or bar?  
We burst its gates; then, like the wind, we rush'd on Fontenaye—  
We saw its flag at morning's light, 'twas ours by setting day.  
We crush'd, like ripen'd grapes, Montreuil, we tore down old Vetier—  
We charged them with our naked breasts, and took them with a cheer.  
We'll hunt the robbers through the land, from Seine to sparkling Rhone.  
Now, "Here's a health to all we love. Our King shall have his own."

This song had an interest for me, independent of the spirit of the performer. It revived recollections of the noblest scene of popular attachment and faithful fortitude since the days of chivalry. I heard in it the names of all the great leaders of the Royalist army—names which nothing but the deepest national ingratitude will ever suffer France to forget; and it gave a glance at the succession of those gallant exploits by which the heroic peasantry and gentlemen of Anjou and Poitou had gained their imperishable distinction.

But the streets of a capital, itself almost in a state of siege, were not the scene for indulging in romance by starlight; and one of the patrols of soldiery, then going its rounds, suddenly ordered the group to disperse. The Frenchman, unluckily, attempted to apologise for his own appearance on the spot; and the attempt perplexed the matter still more. The times were suspicious, and a

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foreigner, and of all foreigners a Gaul, caught under cover of night singing songs of which the sergeant could not comprehend a syllable, was a personage in every way formed for the guard-house. The startled Frenchman's exclamations and wrath at discovering this purpose, only made the sergeant more positive; and he was marched off as a traitor convicted of guitar-playing and other traitorous qualities.

I interposed, but my interposition was in vain. My person was unknown to the man in authority; and I was evidently, from the frown of the sergeant, regarded as little better than an accomplice. My only resource was to follow the party to the guard-house, and see the officer of the night. But he was absent; and half-laughing at the singular effect of the report in the morning, that I had been arrested as the fellow-conspirator of a French mendicant, I called for pen, ink, and paper, to explain my position by a message to the next magistrate. But this request only thickened the perplexity. As I approached the desk to write, the prisoner bounded towards me with a wild outcry, flung his arms round my neck, and plunging his hand into the deepest recesses of his very wayworn costume, at length drew out a large letter, which he held forth to me with a gesture of triumph. The sergeant looked graver still; his responsibility was more heavily involved by the despatch, which he intercepted on the spot, and proceeded to examine, at least so far as the envelope was concerned. He and his guard pored over it in succession. Still it was unintelligible. It was a mysterious affair altogether. The Frenchman and I begged equally in vain to be allowed to interpret. Impossible. At length the subaltern on duty was found; and on his arrival I was released, with all due apologies, and carried off the captive and his despatch together.

The letter was addressed to me, in French, and in a hand with which I was unacquainted. To obtain any knowledge of its contents on my way home, and from its bearer, was out of the question, until, with a hundred circumlocutions, I had heard the full and entire hair-breadth 'scapes of Monsieur Hannibal Auguste Dindon. He had been the domestic of Madame la Maréchale de Tourville, and had attended her and the countess to England in the emigration; in England he had seen me. On the reduction of the Maréchale's household he had returned to his own country, and taken service with the Royalist army in the Vendée. There, too, he had suffered that "fortune de la guerre", which is ill-luck with every body but the elastic Frenchman. He had been taken prisoner, and was on the point of being shot, when he saw the countess, a prisoner also in the Republican hands, who interceded for his safety, and gave him this letter, to be delivered to me if he should escape. After following the march of the armies, a defeat scattered the Republican division along with which they were carried; he procured a conveyance to the coast of Britanny, and they embarked in one of the fishing vessels for England. Again ill-luck came; a storm caught them in the Channel, swept them the crew knew not where, and finally threw them on the iron-bound shore of the west of Ireland. Clotilde was now actually in the capital, on her way to England!

If ever there was wild joy in the heart of man, it was in mine at that intelligence. It was a flash, bright, bewildering, overwhelming!

I longed to be alone, to hear no sound of the human tongue, to indulge in the deep and silent delight of the overladen heart. But M. Hannibal was not a personage to be disappointed of his share of interest; and, to avoid throwing the honest prattler into absolute despair, I was forced to listen to his adventures, until the blaze of the lamps in the vice-royal residence, and the challenge of the sentries, reminded him, and me too, that there were other things in the world than a Frenchman's wanderings. The substance of his tale, however, was—that his resources having fallen short on the road, and resolving not to burden the finances of the countess, which he believed to be scarcely less exhausted than his own, he had made use of his voice and guitar to recruit his purse—a chance which he now designated as a miracle, devised by the saint who presided over his birthday, to finish his perils in all imaginable felicity.

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Giving him into the care of my servants, I was at length alone. The letter was in my hand. Yet still I dreaded to break the seal. What might not be the painful sentiments and sorrowful remonstrances within that seal? But Clotilde was living; was near me; was still the same confiding, generous, and high-souled being.—Sorrow and terror were now passed away. I opened the letter. It was a detail of her thoughts, written in the moments which she could snatch from the insulting surveillance round her; and was evidently intended less as a letter than a legacy of her last feelings, written to relieve an overburdened heart, with but slight hope of its ever reaching my hand. It was written on various fragments of paper, and often blotted with tears. It began abruptly. I shuddered at the misery which spoke in every word.

"I am, at this hour, in the lowest depth of wretchedness. I have but one consolation, that no life can endure this agony long. After being carried from garrison to garrison, with my eyes shocked and my feelings tortured by the sights and sufferings of war, I am at last consigned to the hands of the being whom on earth I most dread and abhor. Montrecour has arrived to take the command of Saumur. I have not yet seen him; but he has had the cruelty to announce that I am his prisoner, and shall be his wife. But the wife of Montrecour I never will be; rather a thousand times would I wed the grave!—

"This letter may never reach your hands, or, if it does, it may only be when the great barrier is raised between us, and this heart shall be dust. Marston, shall I then be remembered? Shall my faith, my feelings, and my sufferings, ever come across your mind?—Let not Clotilde be forgotten. I revered, honoured, loved you. I feel my heart beat, and my cheek burn at the words—but I shall not recall them. On the verge of the future world, I speak with the truth of a spirit, and oh, with the sincerity of a woman!—

"From that eventful day when I first met your glance, I determined that no power on earth should ever make me the wife of another. To me you remained almost a total stranger. Yet the die was cast. I finally resolved to abandon the world, to hide my unhappy head in a convent, and there, in loneliness and silence, endure, for I never could hope to extinguish, those struggles of heart which forced me to leave all the charms of existence behind for ever.

"The loss of my beloved parent gave me the power of putting my resolution into effect. I returned to France, though in the midst of its distractions, and took refuge under the protection of my venerable relative, the superior of the convent at Valenciennes. My narrative is now brief, but most melancholy. On the evening of the day when I heard your love—a day which I shall remember with pride and gratitude to the closing hour of my existence—we were suffered to pass the gates, and take the route for Italy. But, on the third day of our journey, we were stopped by a division of the Republican forces on their march to the Vendée. We were arrested as aristocrats, and moved from garrison to garrison, until we reached the Republican headquarters at Saumur; where, to my infinite terror, I found Montrecour governor of the fortress. He was a traitor to his unhappy king. The republic had offered him higher distinctions than he could hope to obtain from the emigrant princes, and he had embraced the offer. Betrothed to him in my childhood, according to the foolish and fatal custom of our country, I was still in some degree pledged to him. But now no human bond shall ever unite me to one whom I doubly disdain as a traitor. Still, I am in his power. What is there now to save me? I am at this moment in a prison!

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"I hear the sounds of music and dancing on every side. The town is illuminated for a victory which is said to have been gained this morning over the troops of Poitou, advancing to the Loire. The stars are glittering through my casement with all the brilliancy of a summer sky; the breath of the fields flows sweetly in; laughing crowds are passing through the streets; and here am I, alone, friendless, broken-hearted, and dreading the dawn.—

"I spent the livelong night on my knees. Tears and prayers were my sole comfort during those melancholy hours. But time rolls on. Montrecour has just sent to tell me that my choice must be made by noon—the altar or the guillotine. An escort is now preparing to convey prisoners to Nantes, where the horrible Revolutionary Tribunal holds a perpetual sitting; and I must follow them, or be his bride!—Never! I have given my answer, and gladly I welcome my fate. I have solemnly bade farewell to this world.—

"No! My tyrant is not so merciful. He has this moment sent to 'command' (that is the word)—to command my presence in the church; as he is about to march against the enemy, and he must be master of my hand before he takes the field. The troops are already preparing for the march. I hear the drums beating. But one short hour is given me to prepare. Would I were dead!

"There are times when the soul longs to quit her tenement; when the brain sees visions; when the heart feels bursting; when a thousand weapons seem ready for the hand, and a voice of temptation urges to acts of woe.—Marston, Marston, where are you at this hour?"

The letter fell from my hands. I had the whole scene before my eyes. And where was I, while the one to whom every affection of my nature was indissolubly bound, this creature of beauty, fondness, and magnanimity, was wasting her life in sorrow, in captivity, in the bitterness of the broken heart? If I could not reproach myself with having increased her calamities, yet had I assuaged them; had I flown to her rescue; had I protected her against the cruelties of fortune; had I defied, sword in hand, the heartless and arrogant villain who had brought her into such hopeless peril? Those thoughts rushed through my brain in torture, and it was some time before I could resume the reading of the blotted lines upon my table. I dreaded their next announcement. I shrank from the pang of certainty. The next sentence might announce to me that Clotilde had been compelled by force to a detested marriage;—I dared not hazard the knowledge.

Yet the recollection, that I was blameless in her trials, at length calmed me. I felt, that to protect her had been wholly out of my power, from the day when she left Valenciennes; and, while I honoured the decision and loftiness of spirit which had led to that self-denying step, I could lay nothing to my charge but the misfortune of being unable to convince her mind of the wisdom of disdaining the opinion of the world. I took up the letter again.

"Another day has passed, of terror and anguish unspeakable. Yet it has closed in thanksgiving. I have been respite—I was forced from my chamber. I was forced to the altar. I was forced to endure the sight of Montrecour at my side. A revolutionary priest stood prepared to perform the hateful ceremony. I resisted, I protested, I wept in vain. The chapel was thronged with revolutionary soldiers, who, regarding me as an aristocrat, were probably incapable of feeling any sympathy with my sufferings. I was hopeless. But, during the delay produced by my determination to die rather than yield, I could see confusion growing among the spectators. I heard the hurried trampling of cavalry through the streets. Drums and trumpets began to sound in all quarters. The tumult evidently increased. I could perceive even in the stony features of Montrecour, his perplexity at being detained from showing himself at the head of the troops; and with senses wound to their utmost pitch by the anxiety of the moment, I thought that I could perceive the distant shouts of an immense multitude advancing to the walls. Aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp now came hurrying in—each with a fresh summons to the general. He alternately threatened, insulted, and implored me. But no measure or entreaty on earth could make me consent. At length I heard a heavy fire of cannon, followed by the shattering of houses and the outcries of the people. The batteries of the town soon returned the fire, and all was uproar. Montrecour, gnashing his teeth, and with the look and fury of a fiend, now rushed towards me, and bore me to the feet of the priest. I felt the light leaving my eyes, and hoped that I was dying.

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At that moment a cannon-shot struck the roof, and dashed down a large portion of its fragments on the floor. The priest and his attendants, thinking that the whole fabric was falling, made their escape. Montrecour, with an exclamation full of the bitterness of his soul, flung me from him, and swearing that my respite should be brief, darted from the chapel, followed by the soldiers. What words ever uttered by human lips can tell the gratitude with which I saw myself left alone, and knelt before the altar covered with ruins!—

"I am now on my way once more, I know not whither. The battle continued during the day; and the sights and sounds were almost too much for the human senses to bear. At night the Royalists stormed the outworks of the fortress; and, to prevent our release on the capitulation, the prisoners were sent away in the darkness. As our carriage passed the gates, I saw Montrecour borne in, wounded. The spirit of the insulter was in him still. He ordered the soldiers to bring his litter near me, and in a voice faint through pain, but bitter with baffled revenge, he murmured —'Countess, you shall not have long to indulge in your caprices. My hurts are trifling. You are still in my power.'

"What a hideous desolation is war! We have just passed through one of the forest villages, which, but a few days since, must have been loveliness itself.—Vineyards, gardens, a bright stream, a rustic chapel on a hill—every thing shaped for the delight of the eye! But a desperate skirmish had occurred there between the retreating Republicans and their pursuers, and all that man could ruin was ruined. The cottages were all in ashes, the gardens trampled, the vineyards cut down for the fires of the bivouac, the chapel was even smouldering still, and the river exhibited some frightful remnants of what were once human beings. Not a living soul was to be seen. A dog was stretched upon the ground, tearing up with his paws what was probably the grave of his master. At the sight of the escort, he howled and showed his teeth, in evident fury at their approach; a dragoon fired his pistol at him—fortunately missed him; and the dog bounded into the thicket. But when I looked back, I saw him creep out again, and stretch himself howling upon the grave.

"I write these lines at long intervals, in fear, and only when the escort are sleeping on their horses' necks, or eating their hurried meals upon the grass.

"Last night the Royalist army crossed the Loire; and the firing was continued until morning. The heights all seemed crowned with flame. The forest in which we had stopped for the night was set on fire in the conflict, and a large body of the Royalist cavalry skirmished with the retreating Republicans till morning. It was a night of indescribable terror; but my personal fears were forgotten in the sorrow for my honoured and aged companion. She often fainted in my arms; and in this wilderness, where every cottage is deserted, and where all is flight and consternation even among the soldiery, what is to become of her? I gazed upon her feeble frame and sinking countenance, with the certainty that in a few hours all would be over. How rejoicingly would I share the quiet of her tomb!"

My eyes filled, and my heart heaved, at a reality of wretchedness so deep, that I could scarcely conceive it to have passed away. The paper fell from my hands. My mind was in the forest. I saw the pursuit. The firing rang in my ears; and in the midst of this shock of flying and fighting men, I saw Clotilde wiping the dews of death from the brow of her helpless relative.

The illusion was almost strengthened at this moment, by the flashing of a strong and sudden light across the ceiling of the chamber, and the trampling of a body of troops by torchlight, entering the Castle gates. A squadron of dragoons had arrived, escorting a carriage. Even my glance at the buildings of the Castle-square could scarcely recall me to the truth of the locality; until an aide-de-camp knocked at my door, with a request from the viceroy that I should see him as soon as possible. Safely locking up my precious record, I followed him.

There was a ball on that night in the Castle, and our way to the private apartments of his excellency leading through the state saloon, the whole brilliant display struck upon my eyes at once. By what strange love of contrast is it, that the human mind is never more open to the dazzling effects of beauty, splendour, and gaiety than when it has been wrapt in the profoundest sorrow? Are the confines of joy and anguish so close? Is there but a hair's-breadth intervention of some invisible nerve, some slender web of imagination, between mirth and melancholy? The Irish are a handsome race, and none more enjoy, or are more fitted by nature or temper, for all the ornamental displays of society; a Castle ball was always a glittering exhilaration of lustre and beauty. But I had seen all this before. To-night they mingled with the tenderness which the perusal of Clotilde's letter had shed over all my feelings. As the dance moved before my eye, as the music echoed round me, as I glanced on the walls, filled with the memories of all the gallant and the great, whose names lived in the native history of hundreds of years, I imagined the woman with whom I had now connected all my hopes of happiness, moving in the midst of that charmed circle, brilliant in all the distinctions of her birth, admired for her accomplished loveliness, and yet giving me the whole tribute of a noble heart, grateful for the devotion of all its thoughts to her happiness. I involuntarily paused, and, leaning against one of the gilded pillars of that stately hall, gave unrestrained way to this waking dream.

My conference with the viceroy was soon concluded. The prisoner had commanded a body of insurgents, who, after some partial successes, had been broken and dispersed. The leader, in his desperate attempts to rally them, had been severely wounded, and taken on the field. From the papers found on his person, an important clue to the principal personages and objects of the revolt was promised; and I proceeded to the place of temporary detention to examine the prisoner. What an utter breaking up of the vision which had so lately absorbed all my faculties!

What a contrast; was now before me to the pomps and pleasures of the fête! On a table, in the guard-house, lay a human form, scarcely visible by the single dim light which flickered over it from the roof. Some of the dragoons, covered with the marks of long travel, and weary, were lounging on the benches, or gazing on the unhappy countenance which lay, as if in sleep or death, before them. A sabre wound had covered his forehead with gore, which, almost concealing all his features, rendered him a hideous spectacle. Even the troopers, though sufficiently indignant at the very name of rebel, either respected the singular boldness of his defence, or stood silenced by the appalling nature of the sight. All hope of obtaining any information from him was given up; he was evidently insensible, and all that I could do was done, in placing him in the care of the medical practitioner in attendance on the Household, and ordering that he should have every accommodation consistent with his safe-keeping for the time.

I returned to my chamber, and was again lost in the outpourings of a pen which had all the candour of a dying confession. Clotilde was again murmuring in my ear those solemn thoughts, which she believed that she was writing only to be trampled in the mazes of a French forest. Her last words were—

"Marston, Marston, we shall never meet again! In my days of wretchedness, I have sometimes wept over the resolution by which I tore myself away from you. But every calmer thought has strengthened me in the consciousness, that I could give no higher proof of the honour, the homage, the fond and fervent affection, of my soul. I dared not be a burden on your tenderness, or an obstacle to your natural distinction. What could I, helpless, houseless, fortuneless, be but a weight upon that buoyancy and ambition of eminence which marks superior natures for the superior honours of life. I relinquished the first object of my heart, and in that act I still take a melancholy pride. I showed you of what sacrifices I am capable for your sake. But what sacrifice is too vast for the heart of woman? Farewell! you will never see me more."

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"CLOTILDE DE TOURVILLE."

During that night I found it impossible to rest; I continued alternately reading those fragments, walking up and down my chamber, and gazing on the skies. The cavalry torches still illumined the Castle-square; the blaze from the windows of the ball-room still poured its steady radiance on the gardens; and the pure serenity of a rising moon shone over all. Captivity, luxury, and the calm glory of the heavens, were at once before me. Feverish with pain and pleasure, pressed with the anxieties of state, and filled with solemn and spiritualized contemplation, I continued gazing from my casement until the torches and the lights of the fête had decayed, and the moonbeams had grown pale before the first flush of dawn. The sounds of life now came upon the cool air, and I was again in the world.

The eventful day was come—the day which I had longed for with such ceaseless impatience through years of trial—the day of which, among scenes the most disturbing, the most perilous, and the most glittering, I had never lost sight for a moment—the day which I had followed with a fond and fixed eye, as the pilgrim gazes on the remote horizon where stands the shrine he loves—it was come at last; and yet, such are the strange varieties and trembling sensibilities of human feelings, I now felt awed, uncertain, and almost alarmed, at its arrival. Before its close, I was to see the being in whom my existence was involved. When I had met Clotilde last, her sentiments for me were as devoted as were those expressed in her letter; yet she had repelled my declarations, sacrificed my happiness to a high-toned enthusiasm, and rejected all the supplications of an honourable heart, under the promptings of a spirit too noble to be called pride, yet with all the effect of the haughtiest disdain.

Still the hour advanced, and I sent a note by her attendant, soliciting an interview. Her hotel was within a short distance; yet no answer came. I grew more and more reluctant to approach her without her direct permission. There are thousands who will not comprehend this nervousness, but they are still ignorant of the power of real passion. True affection is the most timid thing in the world. At length, unable to endure this fever of the soul, I determined to make the trial at once, enter her presence, make a final declaration of all my hopes and fears, and hear my fate once for all.

I was on the point of leaving my chamber for the purpose, when a message from the viceroy stopped me. The prisoner whom I had seen brought in during the night was to be examined before the privy council, and my presence was essential. Fate, or fortune, seemed always to thwart me, and I followed the messenger. The prisoner was led into the council-room just as I entered; and at the first glance I recognised him as the unhappy being whom I had so strangely met in the North, and whose romance of rebellion had so deeply excited my interest. His features, which, in the night, disfigured with dust and blood, I had been unable to distinguish, now exhibited their original aspect, that cast of mingled melancholy and daring which marked him at once as conscious of the perils of his career, and resolved to encounter them to the uttermost. His tribunal was formed of the first men of the country, and they treated him with the dignity of justice. His conduct was suitable to this treatment—calm, decided, and with more the manner of a philosopher delivering deliberate opinions on the theory of government, than of a desperate contemner of authority, and the head of a stern and fierce conspiracy against the settled state of things. He cast his deep and powerful glance round the council-board; as if to measure the capacities of the men with whom he had once prepared himself to contend for national supremacy; but I could not discover that he had any recollection of me. I knew him well; and if ever painter or sculptor had desired to fix in canvass or marble the ideal grandeur of magnificent conspiracy, there stood its model. He spoke without the slightest appearance of

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alarm, and spoke long and ably, in explanation of his views; for he disdained all justification of them. He acknowledged their total failure, but still contended for their original probability of success, and for their natural necessity as the restoratives of Ireland. He was listened to with the forbearance alike arising from compassion for the fate he had thus chosen, and respect for the singular talent which he displayed in this crisis of his fate. Man honours fortitude in all its shapes. The criminal was almost forgotten in the eloquent enthusiast; and while, with his deep and touching voice, and eager but most expressive gesture, he poured out his glowing dreams, revelled in brilliant impossibilities, and created scenes of national regeneration, as high-coloured as the glories of a tropical sunset; they suffered him to take his full range, and develop the whole force of that vivid imagination, whose flame alike lured him into the most dangerous paths of political casualty, and blinded him to their palpable dangers. He concluded by declaring a total contempt for life; pronouncing, that with the loss of his political hopes it had lost its value, and making but one request to the council, that, "since fortune had flung him into the hands of their law, its vengeance might be done upon him with the least possible delay."

He was now removed; and a feeling of regret and admiration followed his removal. But his crime was undeniable, the disturbance of the public mind was too serious to allow of any relaxation in the rigour of justice; and I gave my unwilling signature to his final consignment to the state prison.

I was now once again disengaged from the fetters of office; and, resolved not to spend another day of suspense, I drove to the hotel. I found it crowded with families which had fled from their houses in the country in the first alarm of the insurrection; and in the midst of the good-humoured but unmanageable tumults of a great household of Irish strangers, was forced to make my own way at last. In passing along the gallery, my eye was caught by a valise laid outside one of the parlours, and corded, as for an immediate departure. It was marked with "La Comtesse de Tourville." I knocked gently at the door. I was unanswered. I touched it—it gave way, and I stood on the threshold. Before me, at a table, sat a female figure writing, with her face turned from me, and apparently so deeply engaged as not to have heard my entrance. But I should have known her among a million. I pronounced her name. She started up, in evident alarm at the intrusion. But in the next moment, her pale countenance was flushed by nature's loveliest rose, and she held forth her hand to me. All my fears vanished with that look and the touch of that hand. All the language of earth would not have told me half what they told at that moment. Of this I say no more. It was the golden moment of my life; I make no attempt to describe our interview, to describe the indescribable.

I returned to the Castle a new being. The burden which had weighed so long upon my spirits was removed. The root of bitterness, which continually sent up its noxious vegetation in the midst of the most flattering hopes of my public existence, was now extirpated; I was secure in the full confidence of one of the loveliest and the noblest-hearted of human beings. And yet how narrowly had I escaped the loss of all? Clotilde, hopeless of ever hearing of me more, had formed the determination to leave Ireland on that day; and weary of disappointed affections, and alienated from the world, to change her name, abjure her rank, and take the veil in one of the Italian convents connected with her family. I should thus have lost her for ever. She had waited on this eventful day only for the return of her domestic. His arrest on the night before had deranged her plans; and when he had returned, his mixture of French verbiage and Irish raptures, his guard-house terrors and his Castle feasting, formed a mélange so unintelligible, that she was compelled to believe him under the influence of a spell—that spell which is supposed to inspire so much of the wit and wisdom of one of the cleverest and most *bizarre* regions of a moonstruck world. Even my note only added to her perplexity. It was given by Monsieur Hannibal with such a magniloquent description of the palace in which he found me, and which he fully believed to be my own—of the royal retinue surrounding my steps—of my staff of glittering officers, and the battalions and brigades of my body-guard; that while she smiled at his narrative, she was perfectly convinced of his derangement. But all this had luckily produced delay; and the hour came when her past anxieties were to be exchanged for the faith and fondness of one who knew her infinite value, and was determined to devote his life to embellishing and cheering every hour of her existence.

We were married; and I had the delight and honour of introducing Clotilde into a circle of rank and lustre equal to the highest of her native country. The monarchy of France was long since in the tomb; its nobility were wanderers over the face of the earth. The fortunes, the hopes, the honours, all but the name of her distinguished family, had gone down in the general wreck. But now was given to me the joyous duty of replacing, by the purest and fondest of all rights, all that the chances of the world had taken away. I thought her countenance lovelier than ever. It exhibited some slight evidence of the deep and exhausting trials which she had so long endured; it was pale, yet the paleness reminded me of the exquisite hue of some of those fine sculptures which the Italian chisel has given for the admiration of mankind. Its expression, too, had assumed a loftier character than even when its first glance struck my young imagination. It had shared something of the elevation of a mind noble by nature, but rendered still loftier and more intellectual by being thrown on its own resources. Yet all this was for society. Her courtly air, inherited from an ancestry of princes; her manners, which retained the piquant animation of her own country, combined with the graver elegance of high life in ours; that incomparable taste in dress, which seems the inheritance of French beauty; and the sparkling happiness of language, scarcely less the gift of her native soil, made her conspicuous from the first moment of her introduction to the circle of the Castle.

But it was in our quiet and lonely hours that I saw the still more captivating aspects of her nature; when neither the splendid Countess de Tourville, nor the woman of brilliant conversation was before me, but an innocent and loving girl—no Armida, no dazzling mistress of the spells which intoxicate the heart by bewildering the mind; but a sweet and guileless creature in the first bloom of being, full of nature, full of simplicity, full of truth. How often, in those days of calm delight, have I seen her fine eyes suddenly fill with tears of thankful joy, her cheek glow with fond gratitude, her heart labour with the unutterable language of secure and sacred love! What hours can be placed in comparison with such hours of wedded confidence! It was then that I first became acquainted with the nature of the female heart. I then first knew the treasures which the spirit of woman may contain—the hope against hope, the generous faith, the unfailing constancy, the deep affection. How often, when glancing round our superb apartments, crowded with all the glittering and costly equipment of almost royal life, she would clasp my hand, and touchingly contrast them with the solitude of the cell, or the anxieties of the life of trial "from which I alone had rescued her!" How often, when we sat together, uninterrupted by the world, at our sumptuous table, would she, half sportively and half in melancholy, contrast it with the life of flight and fear which she had so lately led, with the rude repast snatched in forests and swamps, in the midst of civil war, with desolation round her and despair in prospect, imprisoned, in the power of a tyrant, and, at every step, approaching nearer to the place of a cruel death! Then a look would thank me more than all the eloquence in the world. Then I saw her eyes brighten, and her cheek bloom with new lustre and beauty unknown before, until I could have almost fallen at her feet and worshipped. I felt the whole supremacy of woman, with the whole homage of the heart of man.

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A change in the British cabinet, by the death of one of its leading members, now produced a change in the viceroyalty; and the charge of the government, during the interregnum, necessarily devolved on the secretary. I never felt business more irksome than at this juncture, and I had, more than once, grave thoughts of casting aside the staff of office in spite of all its gilding, withdrawing from the disturbances of public life, and, with Clotilde at my side, finding some quiet corner of England, or the earth, where we might sit under our own vine and our own fig-tree, and forget revolutions and court-days for the rest of our lives.

But against this my young and lovely partner protested, with all the spirit of her ancestry; declaring that, though nothing would give her more unfeigned delight than to quit courts and cities, and fashion and fêtes, for ever, if I quitted them along with her—she could not endure the thought of my allowing "the talents which nature had given to me, and the opportunities which had been so liberally offered by fortune," to perish useless to the world. I had no answer to offer but that I had made her the arbitress of my fate, and she was welcome to do with me as was her sovereign will. Accordingly I left her, looking like Hebe in her bower, to plunge into a chaos of undecipherable papers, to be deafened with a thousand impossible applications, to marshal lazy departments, to reform antiquated abuses, and, after spending twelve hours a-day in the dust and gloom of official duty, to spend nearly as many hours of the night battling with arrogant and angry faction in the House of Commons.

But this toil, like most other toils, had its fruits; it gave me an extraordinary increase of public influence, and that influence produced, in the natural course of such things, an extraordinary crop of adherents. If I could have drunk adulation, no man was in more imminent hazard of mystifying his own brains. I began to be spoken of as one equal to the highest affairs of the state, and to whom the viceroyalty itself lay naturally open. But I still longed for a return to England. Delighted as I was with the grace of the higher ranks, amused with the perpetual whim and eccentricity of the lower, and feeling that general attachment to Ireland which every man not disqualified by loss of character must feel, my proper position was in that country where my connexions, my companionships, and my habits, had been formed. A new viceroy was announced; and I solicited my recall. But I had still one remarkable duty to undergo.

The northern insurrection had sunk, and sunk with a rapidity still more unexpected than the suddenness of its rise. The capture of its leader was a blow at the heart, and it lost all power at the instant. In the Castle all was self-congratulation, and the officials talked of the revolt with as much scorn as if there existed no elements of discord in the land. But I was not quite so easily inclined to regard all things through the skirts of the rainbow which had succeeded the storm; however unwilling to check the national exultation among a people who are as fond of painting the world *couleur de rose* as the French; laugh as much, and enjoy their laugh much more—my communications with England constantly warned ministers of the hazard of new insurrections, on a broader, deeper, and more desolating scale. Even my brief tour of the island had shown me, that there were materials of wilder inflammability in the bosom of the south than in the north. The northern revolt was like the burning of a house—the whole was before the eye, the danger might be measured at a glance, the means of extinction might operate upon it in their full power, and when the materials of the house were in ashes, the conflagration died. But the southern insurrection was the burning of a coalmine—a fire ravaging where human skill could scarcely gain access, kindled among stores of combustion scarcely to be calculated by human experience, growing fiercer the deeper it descended, and at every new burst undermining the land, and threatening to carry down into its gulfs all that was stately or venerable on the surface of the soil.

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I continued to represent that the north had revolted only on theories of government, metaphysical reveries, pamphleteering abstractions—food too thin to nurture the fierce firmness by which conspiracy is to be carried forward into triumph; while the south pondered on real or fancied injuries, which wounded the pride of every peasant within its borders.—That the one took

up arms for republicanism, the feeblest of all temptations to national resistance; while the other brooded over a sense of wrong, in visions of revenge for hereditary rights, and the hopes of restoring the fallen supremacy of its religion—motives, in every age, the most absorbing among the wild impulses of man. I repeatedly warned the Irish cabinet against an outbreak, which, if it succeeded, must convulse the empire; and which, even if it failed, must cost the heaviest sacrifices to the country. My advice was answered by professions of perfect security, and magnanimous declarations of the wisdom of extinguishing peril by exhibiting the absence of fear! My part was now done, and I was thenceforth to be only a spectator. But the course of things was not to be controlled by the confidence of cabinets. The sun went down, notwithstanding the government conviction that it would shine through the whole twenty-four hours; the political night came, as regularly as the night of nature, and with it came the march of tens of thousands of political lunatics, as brave as lions, though as incapable of discipline. My prediction was formidably fulfilled: the firebrand and the pike ravaged the land; blood flowed in torrents; and when the country returned to its senses, and the light of common sense once more dawned, ministers and people alike had only the melancholy office of burying the common offences in that great resting-place where the faults of the past generation are marked by tombs, and where the wisdom of the future is to be learned only from inscriptions recording the frailty of all that lived before.

The conspiracy which it had fallen to my lot to extinguish had been brief and local. The half-Scottish population among whom it broke out, were among the most sharp-witted and well-informed subjects of the empire; and they had no sooner made the discovery, that government was awake, than they felt the folly of attempting to encounter the gigantic strength of the monarchy, and postponed their republican dreams to a "fitter season." The time now approached when the leader of the Northern insurrection was to be brought to trial; and hostile as I was to the effects of his enthusiasm, I took no trivial interest in the individual. Still, to set him at liberty was palpably impossible; and my only resource was, to give him such aid in this extremity of his career as could be given by lightening the severities of his prison, and providing him with the means of securing able counsel. I had now an opportunity of seeing, for the first time, the genius of this singular people displayed under a new and brilliant form—the eloquence of the bar.

In England the Bar holds a high rank; from its essential value to the maintenance of public right in a country, where every possession, property, and principle of man comes continually in the shape of a question of right, and where the true supremacy is in the law. But in Ireland, the spirit of the nation compensated for the deficiency of power in the law; and the bar was, *par excellence*, the profession of the gentleman. This gave it the highest tone of personal manners. But it had another incentive, still more characteristic. The House of Commons was in the closest connexion with the bar. It was scarcely more than a higher bar. All the principal men of that House had either been educated for the profession, or were actually practising barristers; and as the distinctions of the senate were more dazzling, as well as more rapidly attainable, than those of the law, the force of the profession was thrown into parliamentary life. The result was, a reflected influence on both; the learning of the bar invigorating the logic of the debates, the eloquence of the debates enriching and elevating the eloquence of the courts of law. At this period the Courts abounded with eloquent men, who would have been distinguished at any tribunal on earth; but, while some might exhibit keener argument, and others more profound learning, the palm of forensic eloquence was universally conceded to one. Need I pronounce the name of Curran? Take him for all in all, he was the most extraordinary example of natural faculties that I have ever known. All the chief orators of that proud day of oratory had owed much to study, much to circumstances, and much to the stimulus of great topics, a great cause, and a great theatre for their display. When Burke spoke, he had the world for his hearers.—He stood balancing the fates of empires; his voice reached to the bosom of all the cabinets of civilized nations; and with the office of a prophet, he almost inevitably adopted the majestic language, and seized the awful and magnificent views of the prophet. This is no depreciation of the powers of that immortal mind; for what can be a higher praise than that, with the largest sphere of duty before him perhaps ever opened to man, he was found equal to the fullness of his glorious task? Sheridan, too, was awakened to a consciousness of his own powers by the national voice raised against Indian delinquencies. He had a subject teeming with the loftiest materials of oratory—the sufferings of princes, the mysteries of Oriental superstition, the wild horrors of barbaric tyranny, the fall of thrones, once dazzling the eye and the mind with all the splendours of Oriental empire; himself the chosen pleader for India, in the presence of the assembled rank, dignity, and authority of England. There can be no question of the genius which showed itself competent to so illustrious a labour. But the materials were boundless; the occasion was a summons to all the energies of the human intellect; never was the draught of human praise, the spell of that enchantress which holds the spirit of men in most undisputed sway, presented to the lip in a more jewelled goblet.

But Curran spoke almost wholly deprived of those resistless stimulants; his topics were comparatively trivial—the guilt of provincial conspiracy, incurred by men chiefly in the humbler ranks of life, and in all instances obscure. No great principles of national right were to live or die upon the success of his pleading; no distressed nation held him as its advocate; no impregnable barrier against oppression in Europe or Asia was to be inscribed with his name. He was simply the advocate in the narrow courts of a dependent kingdom—humiliated by the hopeless effort to rescue a succession of unfortunate beings whose lives were in the grasp of justice—compressed on every side by localities of time, habit, and opinion; and thwarted alike by the clamour of prejudice and the frowns of authority. Yet his speeches at the bar are matchless, to this hour. His creative powers seemed to rejoice in the very emptiness of the space which they were to fill with

life, lustre, and beauty. Of all the great speakers, his images arose from the simplest conceptions; while they rapidly wrought themselves into magnitude and splendour. They reminded me of the vapours rising from the morning field—thin, vague, and colourless, but suddenly seized by the wind, swelling into volume, and ascending till they caught the sunbeams, and shone with the purple and gold of the summer cloud. This trial of the unfortunate rebel leader gave him a signal opportunity for the exertion of his extraordinary faculties. It had excited the deepest interest throughout the country. Thousands had flocked from all parts of the land to be present at a crisis which involved the national feelings in the highest degree; which involved the personal safety of individuals, perhaps of a much superior rank to the accused; and, above all, which seemed to fix the stamp of public justice on the guilt or impunity of opinions long cherished by the mind of Ireland. As the day of the trial approached, physiognomies were seen in the streets, which showed that individuals were brought together by the event who had never been seen in the metropolis before. The stern, hard, but sagacious countenances of the north contrasted with the broad, open, and bold features of the south; and those again contrasted with the long, dark, and expressive visages of the west, which still give indelible evidence of their Spanish origin. Many of those men who now filled the busy thoroughfares of the capital, had come from the remotest corners of Ireland, as if to stand their own trial. The prisoner at the bar was their representative; his cause was their cause; his judgment the decision of the tribunal on their principles; his fate an anticipation of their own.

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As I pressed on to the noble building where the trial was to take place—one of the stateliest examples of architectural grace and dignity in a city distinguished for the beauty of its public buildings—it was impossible to avoid being struck with the general look of popular restlessness. The precaution of government had called in a large military force to protect the general tranquillity, and the patrols of cavalry and the frequent passing of troops to their posts, created a perpetual movement in the streets. The populace gathered in groups, which, rapidly dissolving at the approach of the soldiery, as rapidly assembled again, when they had passed by; street minstrels of the most humble description were plying their trade with a remorseless exertion of lungs; I heard the names of the Parliamentary leaders and the government frequently transpiring in those rough specimens of the popular taste; and from the alternate roars of fierce laughter and bursts of wild indignation which arose from the groups, it was evident that "men and measures" were not spared. The aspect of the multitude in the vicinity of the Law Courts was still more disturbed. Rebellion has a physiognomy of its own, and I had by this time learned to read it with tolerable fidelity to nature. It always struck me as of a wholly different character from that of the vice or the violence of the people. It wears a thoughtful air; the lips seem to have a secret enclosed, the eye is lowering, the step unsteady, the man exhibits a consciousness of danger from the glance or tread of every passer-by. His visage is sullen, stern, and meditative—I can scarcely allow this conception to be a work of fancy, for I have never been deceived in my readings of that most expressive of all betrayers of the inner man. And on this day, I could have predicted the preparation for some general and reckless rising against government, on the first opportunity when it should be found slumbering on its post: and my prediction would have been true.

The court was crowded, and it was with no small difficulty that I was enabled to reach the seat beside the judge, which had been provided for me. The arraignment and preparatory routine of the trial gave time for the court to subside into order; and the address of the principal law-officer for the prosecution, though exciting the deepest anxiety, was listened to in the most respectful silence. The case was strong, and was ably dealt with by the attorney-general. The evidence was clear and complete, and the hope of an acquittal seemed to be gradually abandoned in the expressive gloom of the spectators. The prisoner at the bar, too, seemed more dejected than I had presumed from his former intrepidity; and the few glances which I could suffer myself to give to a being in his calamitous condition, showed me a frequent writhing of the lip, a clenching of the teeth, and a nervous contraction of the features, which looked like despair. At length the counsel for the defence rose. It was the first instance of my seeing the memorable Curran engaged in his profession. I had met him from time to time in general society, and felt the delight which all experienced in his unfailing spirits and brilliant pleasantry. I had hitherto enjoyed him as the wit. I was now to be dazzled, delighted, and overwhelmed by him as the orator.

Curran was the last man to be judged of by appearances. Nature had been singularly unkind to his exterior, as if the more to astonish us by the powers of the man within. His figure was undersized, his visage brown, hard, and peasantlike, his gesture was a gesticulation, and his voice was alternately feeble and shrill. His whole effect was to be derived from means, with which that little meagre frame and sharp treble had nothing to do. But he had a singularly vivid eye. It was of the deepest black, and such was the intensity of its expression in his more impassioned moments, that it was scarcely an exaggeration to say that it shot fire. Still, a stranger would have regarded him chiefly as a humorist, from the glances of sly sarcasm, and even of open ridicule which he cast round the court during the pleadings of some of his "learned brethren." But, in that court his true faculties were known; and the moment of his rising, careless as was his attitude, and listless the look which he gave as he turned from his brief to the jury, was the signal for universal silence, and the fixing of every eye upon the great pleader.

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He began by sweeping away the heap of useless facts and forensic prolixities with which his predecessors had encumbered the case; and nothing could be more admirable than the dexterity with which he seized on the most casual circumstances tending to clear the character of the accused. But it was when he arrived at higher topics that he displayed his genius.

"*Nunc in ovilia, mox in reluctantates dracones.*" It was when, from developing the ignorance and

contradictions of the informer by whom the charge of conspiracy was sustained, he rushed to the attack on the general system of the Irish government, that I saw him in full vigour. He denounced it as the source of all the tumults which had of late years shaken the "isle from its propriety." "Here was the fount," said he, "from which flowed the waters of bitterness, not the less bitter that I can trace its wanderings through centuries of national desolation, through fields of blood, through the graves of generations." After giving the most daring outline of what he termed the evils of the local sovereignty of Ireland, he surprised me into sudden acquiescence and involuntary admiration, by a panegyric on the principles of British government in the more favoured island—on "the majestic supremacy of the law, extending over all things, sustaining all things, administering life and health and purity to all; a moral atmosphere, and though invisible, like the physical, yet irresistible in its strength, penetrating through the whole national existence, and carrying on undisturbed and perpetual, in the day and night of empire, all the great processes of national animation and prosperity." Then, suddenly darting away from this lofty and solemn view, he indulged in some wild story of native humour, which convulsed the whole audience with laughter. Yet, before the burst had subsided, he touched another string of that harp which so magically responded to the master's hand. He described the long career of calamity through which an individual born with a glowing heart, brilliant faculties, and an aspiring spirit, must struggle, in a country filled with the pride of independence, and yet for ages in the condition of a province. Some part of his pathos in this sketch was probably borrowed from his own early difficulties; and I heard, poured out with the touching vehemence of painful reality, probably the very meditations which had preyed upon the heart of the student in his chamber, or darkened his melancholy walks in the cloisters of the Temple. But he suddenly started on a new train of thought; and reprobated with the loftiest rebuke, that state of the law which, while it required two witnesses for the proof of treason in England, was content with one in Ireland. This he branded with every name of indignant vituperation, frequently adopted, according to his habit, from the most familiar conceptions; yet, by their familiarity, striking the mind with astonishing force. He called it "playing at pushpin with the lives of men"—"the reading-made-easy of judicial murder"—"the 'rule of three' of forensic assassination;—given, a villain, multiplied by a false oath, the product, an execution!" He now revelled in the boldest extravagances of imagery and language, expressions which, written, might resemble the burlesque of a public jester, or the wildness of a disturbed mind, but which were followed by the audience, whom he had heated up to the point of passion, with all but acclamation. Still he revelled on. His contrasts and comparisons continued to roll out upon each other. Some noble, some grotesque, but all effective. After one dazzling excursion into the native history, in which he contrasted the aboriginal hospitality and rude magnificence of the old Irish chieftain, the Tir-Owen or O'Nial, with the chilling halls of the modern absentee; he suddenly changed his tone, and wandered away into a round of fantastic, and almost frolicsome pleasantries, which shook even the gravity of the bench. Then, suddenly checking himself, and drawing his hand across his brow to wipe away a tear—for even the hard-headed lawyer was not always on his guard against the feeling of the moment—he upbraided himself, and the bystanders, for the weakness of being attracted by any lighter conception, while the calamities of Ireland were demanding all their sympathies. And even this he did in his characteristic manner. "Alas!" said he, in a voice which seemed sinking with a sense of misfortune, "why do *I* jest? and why do *you* smile? Or, are we for ever to be the victims of our national propensity, to be led away by trivialties? We tickle ourselves with straws, when we should be arming for the great contests of national minds. We are ready to be amused with the twang of the Jew's harp, when we should be yearning for the blast of the trumpet. You remind me, and I remind myself, of the scene at one of our country-wakes. It is the true portrait of our fruitless mixture of levity and sorrow. We come to mourn, and we are turned to merriment by the first jest. We sit under the roof of death, yet we are as ready to laugh as ever. The corpse of Ireland is before our eyes: we fling a few flowers over its shroud, and then we eat, drink, and are merry. Must it be for ever pronounced—that we are a frivolous and fickle race—that the Irishman remains a voluntary beggar, with all the bounties of nature round him; unknown to fame, with genius flashing from his eyes; humiliated, with all the armoury of law and liberty open to his hands; and laughing, laughing on, when the only echo is from the chambers of the grave?"

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The orator dropped his head on his clasped hands as he spoke the words; and there was an universal silence for a while. It was interrupted by a groan of agony from the prisoner. All eyes were instantly turned to the dock, and the spectacle there was startling. He seemed writhing under intolerable torture. His hands clung eagerly to the front of the dock, as if to sustain him; his lips were as colourless clay, but his features and forehead were of the most feverish crimson. At first the general impression was, that he had been overcome by a sense of his perilous state; but it was soon evident that his pangs were more physical than moral. Curran now flung his brief upon the table, and hurried to his side. A few words passed between them, inaudible to the court; but they had the unexpected effect of apparently restoring the sufferer to complete tranquillity. He again stood erect; his brow, and it was a noble one, resumed its marble smoothness; his features grew calm, and his whole aspect returned to the stern and moveless melancholy of an antique statue.

The advocate went back to his place, and commenced a singularly dexterous attempt to avert the sentence, by an appeal to the national feelings. "If," said he, "my client had been charged with any of those crimes which effect their object by individual injury, I should disdain to offer a defence, which could be accomplished only by confounding the principles of right and wrong. But here is an instance in which the noblest mind might err, in which the highest sagacity might be perplexed, in which the most self-denying virtue might discover nothing but a voluntary sacrifice." The problem before his client was "the proudest that had ever occupied the mind of

ancient or modern times. It was, by what means a patriot might raise his country to the highest possible elevation. What are the essentials for such a purpose? Intrepidity, independence of heart, the steadiest perseverance, the manliest fortitude; all the great qualities of the head and the heart. Those are the tributes which he must bring to the altar of his country. But the priest must be prepared himself to be the sacrifice. Is it the hands of his countrymen that are to bind him to the horns of the altar?"

A sense of this hazardous line of observations, however, soon struck the keen understanding of the great pleader; and he admitted in all its fulness the necessity of respecting public tranquillity, of relinquishing doubtful projects of good, and of studying the prosperity of a nation, rather through the "microscope of experience" than by "vague, though splendid, telescopic glances" at times and things beyond our power. "The man," said he, "who discovers the cause of blight in an ear of corn, is a greater benefactor to the world than the man who discovers a new fixed star." From the glow on his countenance, and the sudden brightness of his eye, I could see that he was about to throw himself loose on some new current of rich and rapid illustration, when he was suddenly stopped by a shriek from the dock; the prisoner had fallen with his head over its front, and seemed gasping in the last pangs. The drops of torture stood thick on his brow, his eye was glazed, and his lips continued to quiver, without the power of utterance. The advocate approached him; the dying man caught him by the hand; and, as if the touch had restored his faculties at the instant, said, with a faint smile, and in a low tone, yet so clear as to be audible to the whole assembly, in the words of Pierre—"We have deceived the senate!" In the utterance he fell back and died. To escape the ignominy of the scaffold, the unhappy man, before he came into court, had swallowed poison!

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I speak of Curran, only as I see him through the lapse of years. Time has had no other effect on my recollection, than raising my estimate of his genius. I admit, too, that in judging of an extraordinary man, time may exalt the image as well as confuse the likeness. The haze of years may magnify all the nobler outlines, while it conceals all that would enfeeble their dignity. To me, his eloquence now resembles those midsummer night dreams, in which all is contrast, and all is magical. Shapes, diminutive and grotesque for a moment, and then suddenly expanding into majesty and beauty; solitudes startling the eye with hopeless dreariness, and at a glance converted into the luxury of landscape, and filled with bowers of perpetual spring. The power of his contrasts still haunts me; Aladdin's palace, starting from the sands, was not more sudden, fantastic, or glittering. Where all seemed barren, and where a thousand other minds would have traversed the waste a thousand times, and left it as wild and unpeopled as ever; no sooner had he spoken the spell, than up sprang the brilliant fabric of fancy, the field was bright with fairy pomp, and the air was filled with genii on the wing.

Next morning, I was on my road to London.

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## LEBRUN'S LAWSUIT.

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In France, even before the Revolution, less regard was paid to the decisions of a court of law, than to public opinion. That tyrant of our modern days had already seized the throne, and his legitimate authority and divine right were never doubted by the most anti-monarchical of the sons of liberty. The only check on the insolence of the noblesse, and the only compensation for the venality of the judges, was found in a recourse to the printer. A marquis was made to imitate the manners of a gentleman by fear of an epigram; a defeated party in a lawsuit consoled himself by satirizing the court; and from Voltaire down to Palissot, all the people who could write, and could borrow ink and paper, had pen in hand, ready to appeal from prejudiced juries, overbearing nobles, or even *lettres de cachet* and the Bastile itself, to the reading, talking, gossiping, laughing, quick-witted, cold-hearted citizens of Paris. The consequence was that the whole city was overrun with pamphlets. Ministers of state, marshals, and princes of the blood, were as busy as any Grub-street garretteer. Literary squabbles employed the lifetime of all the literary men—and some of them, indeed, are only known by their squibs and lampoons on their more popular brethren. But so great at last seems to have been the rage for calling in the public, that it was not even expelled from the consulting chambers of counsel learned in the law. If a case came before an advocate that gave any scope for his talents as a pamphleteer, his opinion immediately took the shape of a little *historiette*, and in a few days was in print. The attorney was no less literary in getting up his brief; and innumerable were the sage labours of *avocats* and *procureurs* which rushed into type before the trial was over, and did duty, very much to the reader's satisfaction, as a tale of fashionable life. In fact, a very amusing collection might be made, of the memorials of counsel which appeared in Paris about the middle of last century. The writings, for instance, which secured the fame of witty Beaumarchais among the gossips of the capital, were not the *Barber of Seville*, or his comedies, but the briefs which he composed in his lawsuit with the Goezmans and the Sieur Bertrand. All the laughers were on his side; and though he was beat in the trial, his triumph was complete; for it was not in the nature of Parisian public opinion to believe a man guilty who was so prodigal of bon-mots; or that the opposite party had right or justice on their side, whose pleadings were as uninteresting as a sermon. But Beaumarchais was not the only author who owed his notoriety to his legal proceedings. One of the great lyric poets of France, who is placed by his countrymen upon the same level as Pindar—Denis Leonhard Lebrun—was the town-talk for several years, during his action against his wife for the restitution of conjugal rights. And as his *Mémoire*, or pleading, gives a view of French life at the period,

(1774,) of a grade in society omitted in the *Mémoires* and *Souvenirs* of dukes and princesses, we propose to give some account of it, and also of the hero of the process, whose strange eventful history was not drawn to a close till 1807. He was born in 1729, in the house of the Prince de Conti, in whose service his father was. His talents soon recommended him to the notice of the prince; and, before he was thirty, he had established his reputation as a poet of the first order by an ode on the earthquake at Lisbon. Acknowledged as a man of genius, and feared as a man of wit—for his epigrams were even more celebrated than his lyrics—and placed in easy circumstances by the kindness of his master, who bestowed on him the title and salary of his "Secrétaire des Commandemens," nothing seemed wanting to his felicity but a wife to share his glory; and, accordingly, in the year 1760, he married. If we believe his own account, he was the happiest of Benedictines for fourteen years; but all of a sudden, without warning, without reason, and (though she was a poetess) without even rhyme, his household gods were broken, and all his happiness engulfed. It was a second edition of the Lisbon earthquake. The opposite party denied the fourteen years' felicity, and talked wonderful things about cuffs and kicks bestowed on the spouse—and maledictions of more force than elegance; but both sides agree that the matter came to a crisis when a certain Sieur Grimod—a sort of Cicisbeo—Platonic of course—was requested to leave the house, and discontinue his visits to Madame Lebrun. This simple proceeding let loose all the winds of heaven; poor Lebrun was pounced upon by the whole female sex. Even his old mother turned against him; even his sister, a sour vestal of thirty-seven, sided with her injured sister-in-law; and what had the wretched poet to say for himself? He suspected nothing improper—a good easy man—he adored his "Fanny"—he wanted her to come back—but that horrid fellow Grimod!—he would not have Grimod within his door. So Fanny would not go within it either; and off to the *avocat* rushed Lebrun, to force her to come back by legal process; and off went Madame, accompanied of course by the Sieur Grimod, to *her avocat*, to resist the demand; and then followed paper upon paper—love, regrets, promisings, courtings, on one side; hatred, defiance, and foul names, *ad libitum*, on the other. And, finally, the whole case was put into a *Mémoire*, with the help of Monsieur Hardoin de la Regnerie, *avocat*; and every tea-table—but there was no tea in those days—every card-table in Paris was as well able to decide the cause as the Parliament itself.

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The *Mémoire* commences with some general reflections on the advantages possessed by a pretty woman, in all cases of a quarrel with a man. And when, in addition to her prettiness, she has the art to appear ill-used, there is no resisting her attacks. A halo of sympathy gathers round her, while a cloud envelopes the unfortunate antagonist; and people at last think that they are performing an act of pure and disinterested justice, when they kick him into the Seine. Impressed with this disagreeable conviction, (from which we gather that Madame Lebrun was a handsome woman, while the husband was nothing to boast of—at all events compared to the Sieur Grimod,) he hurries on to the facts—and they rather alter the appearance of affairs.

It was in the year 1760, as we have said, that the Sieur Lebrun married the Demoiselle de Surcourt. Interest and ambition had nothing to do with the match. Love was the only fastener of the bond. The Sieur Lebrun and the Demoiselle de Surcourt had been acquainted—had been lovers—for three years. And that passion, born of a sympathy of tastes and sentiments, had grown in mystery—a secret correspondence was its aliment and interpreter—a delicious correspondence—where the Demoiselle de Surcourt knew how to combine the sallies of imagination with the soft outpourings of the soul, or the burning expressions of her love! Pardon the Sieur Lebrun if he transcribes a few passages from her letters; Madame Lebrun, above all, ought to excuse him. It is not betraying her secrets; it is recalling her to herself, and to a sentiment she would never have forsaken, if she had been allowed to follow the dictates of her heart:—

"From my bed, this Tuesday evening.

"If it is flattering to be loved by those we love, it is still more so when the loved object is you, my dear Misis. 'Twould make me vain to think I pleased you really as much as you say I do; but I feel my happiness too truly to give way to pride on account of it. Is it true, then, that you think of me, and prefer my remembrance to the gaieties of society? Ah! why am I not in the room where you remain for my sake? You make me wish more—I wish I could be with you wherever you think of me. You are right in saying our hearts are made for one another; they have the same sentiments, they burn with the same fires. That charming harmony is the work of love; but nature had created a sympathy between them that seems to tell us they were made to love and to be united. Yes, my dear Misis, they must love for ever; but in the mean time will you consent to languish in absence and constraint? I would not remind you of your unhappiness, since you have interdicted me from the subject, if you did not complain yourself; and your complaints make me wretched. They reveal to me your sufferings, and awaken all my affection. Do you think, if I had an opportunity of seeing you, that I would not seize it? Ah! you ought to feel assured of all I would do for you if I had it in my power. But we can't help hoping what we desire so much. Reproach me, therefore, no more; tell me rather again that you are convinced of my affection, and promise to love me all your life. I ought to be sure of it already; but every time you reproach me, I make you repeat the promise by way of expiating your fault. Good-night, my dear Misis; I hope you will think of me in your dreams. Why must I say good-night so far from you?"

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Of the same period is the following:—

"From my bed, this Wednesday night.

"What! you scold me in sober truth! You write me a scrap of a letter—in the coldest, gravest style. Yes—you were sad—I see you were. Do you fancy that the lecture you gave me makes up for my grief at losing you? Ah! if I had not recalled your eyes glowing with love, and all our mutual endearments, I should have been angry with you. How strange that your very recollection pleads your excuse! Whatever may be your fault, you have but to show yourself to be forgiven. But do not presume, upon this confession, to add to your faults. Alas! if ever you deserve a punishment, its bitterness will all belong to me. Fortune befriended us when last we met; but don't you find time pass too quickly when we are together? I have always a thousand things to say to you; it is not, perhaps, the shortness of the time—it is, that the more I say to you the more I wish to say. In the same way, the more kisses I give you, the more I wish to give; all the feelings you inspire are in extremes. How you ought to love me if you wish your tenderness to equal mine! And since it is always on the increase, how cruel that we can never give way to the sentiments we feel, and express them to each other! What pleasure we are deprived of, dear Misis! why are you not beside the couch where I am now writing? Our silence alone would be more eloquent than all our letters. The kisses I would give you would no longer be in dreams, though my happiness would perhaps make me think it one. Adieu! the more I think of it, the more I feel the misery of being separated from you. It is near one o'clock. Are you in bed yet? Think of me!"

This secret correspondence lasted for three years; but, at last, a letter was opened by a servant, and the secret was discovered by the Sieur de la Motte, who passed for the Demoiselle de Surcourt's uncle, and with whom she lived. The Sieur Lebrun had but to whisper marriage, and all would have been arranged. Under other circumstances the word would have been easy—but there was a bar between them: the Demoiselle de Surcourt was of illegitimate birth. Love, however, laughed at the obstruction. The Sieur Lebrun hurried to the house of De la Motte; demanded the hand of the lady he loved; and the Demoiselle de Surcourt became his wife. The marriage contract will prove his disinterestedness. The portion he obtained was small; consisting but of eighteen hundred francs a-year. The Sieur Lebrun, secretary of the domains of the Prince de Conti, with two thousand livres a-year, might have looked higher—at all events he might have bargained for a settlement in his favour; but, so far from that, he made no claim upon her fortune, but settled all he had upon her. Is this the man whom Madame Lebrun accuses of having married her from interested motives?

Alas, sometimes, for the marriages which have been preceded by too violent a love!—illusion gives place to sad reality. The boy and girl love without having learned to know each other; and cease to love when that knowledge comes! But the attachment of the Sieur and Madame Lebrun experienced no revolution of the kind. Fourteen years passed away in uninterrupted union. Though converted into a husband, the Sieur Lebrun did not cease to be Misis; the wedded De Surcourt continued to be "Fanny"—charming names—ingenious disguises—chosen by two lovers to perpetuate the memory of the times of courtship!

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More than three hundred letters, written by Madame Lebrun during that time, were in the hands of her husband—irrefragable proofs of their mutual affection; but she has found means to get away the greater part of them; enough, however, remain to make his justification complete. Never was a union more harmonious—a wife more petted and indulged. It seemed that felicity, resting on such foundations, could never be disturbed; but one single moment was sufficient to overturn the work of seventeen years!

The Sieur and Madame Lebrun had been intimate for some years with a certain Sieur Grimod, who held an appointment from the king, and lived as if his office was of great value. The Sieur Lebrun is not astonished that his wife was pleased with the acquaintance, for he prized it very highly himself; but a time came when he thought it better for all parties that it should cease. The Sieur Lebrun believes in his wife's virtue as in his own existence. What! if he had *not* that belief, would he be here to reclaim her by course of law? But it is not enough for a woman to have the reality of virtue—she must have the appearance also; and every man has a right to be in that respect a Cæsar. Already some indiscretions of Madame Lebrun, which the openness and purity of her mind could alone render excusable—her portrait drawn without her husband's knowledge for the Sieur Grimod—a letter from that individual to the lady, written in a style such as no one would use towards a lady he respected—had begun to inspire the Sieur Lebrun with a certain coolness. The whisperings at last, unjust as they were, no doubt, of a malicious public—the advice of his friends—his own susceptibility, made it imperative on him to come to a rupture, in which Madame Lebrun should have been glad to join. And here is the letter he wrote to the Sieur Grimod:—

This 15th January 1774.

"There are a thousand circumstances, Sir, which every day make it a man's duty no longer to see the persons who have previously been most highly prized. I experience this myself in declining an acquaintance with you, which in other respects I greatly valued. You know better than any one else how much I lose by this step. Madame Lebrun unites her regrets to mine, and begs me to assure you, and also Madame Grimod, of her affectionate thanks, ('de ses plus tendres remercimens.') I have the honour to be, with perfect truth, and for the last time," &c.

And the Sieur Grimod immediately replied—

"Your letter, Sir, did indeed surprise Madame Grimod and me, who believed ourselves among the number of your friends, after the many years we have had the

honour to know you. We do not know the motives for so sudden a quarrel; if you were pleased with our society, we were no less so with yours. The number of true friends we retain, does not hinder us from regretting those we lose, in you and Madame Lebrun, to whom we beg you will express our regret. We have the honour," &c.

After two such polite epistles, the reader would naturally expect that the Sieur Lebrun and the Sieur Grimod, with their respective wives, would toss their heads at each other when they met in the street, and give the cut direct with the utmost unanimity. But another glance into the *Mémoire* will soon convince him of his mistake. The Sieur Lebrun may probably look vastly majestic, and pass the Sieur Grimod with a contemptuous jerk; but sorry are we to say that Madame Lebrun joins in no such dignified proceeding. She cuts the magnanimous Lebrun instead; she stirs up against him the wrath and indignation of all his friends and relations; she continues her intimacy with the Sieur Grimod; and, as a finish to her connubial obedience, she goes one morning with three hackney coaches, and carries off every article of furniture the unhappy little man possesses. A pleasant specimen of a wife of the middle class in the year 1774! A duchess could scarcely be more sublime. Now, who was this Sieur Grimod, and what manner of rank was his considered? He had nothing to do with the noblesse; he kept no shop; he had no private fortune; but he was one of the true causes of the French Revolution, the rascally collectors of taxes, the underlings of the atrocious *fermiers généraux*, who wrung the last farthing from the already oppressed peasant, and made the whole realm of France as sterile, hopeless, and wretched, as a nation must inevitably become, if it is allowed to be the prey of an O'Connell in every parish. His nominal salary was under a hundred a-year; but we shall see the style he lives in, as we get on in the account—his country-houses—his carriages, and even his politenesses to Madame Lebrun; and we shall hear in every one of these luxurious enjoyments the sharpening of the guillotine axe. Madame Lebrun the wife, Madame Lebrun the mother, and Mademoiselle the sister, are all in the same story. The old lady, whose virtuous indignation towers above her sex, has no patience for the insufferable tyrant who won't let his wife see her best friends, ("qui vouloit l'empêcher de voir ses bons amis.") They trump up all manner of stories against him; and even maintain, in their first paper of accusation, that he threshed and kicked his tender-hearted spouse, and put her in bodily fear. But when the magistrate looked at our diminutive friend, and compared his powers of threshing and kicking with the tall majestic figure and full chest of the complainant, he dismissed the charge "avec une sorte d'indignation," as the Sieur Lebrun triumphantly declares; and we think the magistrate was quite justified in so doing. No, no—the Sieur Lebrun was bad enough, as you shall hear in the sequel; but he never had the cruelty, not to mention the courage, to attack so stately a woman as his wife. But, alas! from the magistrate's decision there lay a power of appeal. The three ladies—with the help, no doubt, of the irresistible Sieur Grimod—carried the cause into a higher court. They brought it before the bailliage of the Temple; but the Sieur Lebrun had some misgivings as to the impartiality of the court, and he carried it before the judges at the Châtelet. In this court, Grimod and his party knew they had no chance, suffered the case to go against them by default, and finally appealed to the Grande Chambre. And the Sieur Lebrun did all this to get back a woman that had robbed, and pillaged, and slandered him, and preferred her *bon ami* the Sieur Grimod, and her *bonne amie* the Dame Grimod, to her Misis, in spite of his ode on the earthquake at Lisbon, and his being ranked by the Parisian critics as a little above Pindar.

Well, to it they go, reply, replication, rejoinder—till at last we are verily persuaded the little man tried to get her into his power again for the express purpose of murdering her at his leisure. And what our verdict in such a case, if we had been upon the jury, would have been, we are not prepared to say.

The lady, in the course of her accusations, proved too much. She brought witnesses to state, that for the whole fourteen years of her wedded life she had been thumped and bullied worse than Cinderella; accused of trying to poison her lord and master; and, in short, had led a life of perfect misery. Oho! cries the Pindar of the reign of Louis the Fifteenth, you are a pretty woman to talk of misery and ill-treatment for fourteen years! Why, never was such a merry, happy, careless being in France. For fourteen years you did nothing but amuse yourself and worship me, as a good wife ought. I buried myself in my books, and wrote astonishing odes and epigrams, corresponded with Voltaire, and discovered grand-daughters of Corneille, and got up subscriptions for their benefit; and all the while you attended every party, went to all the theatres, and never missed a single masquerade. No, 'twas when I forbade the visits of Grimod —But at that name his eloquence leaves him, and he descends to facts. There is one fact, he says, against which the whole plot of this separation will fall to pieces. It is the harmony which always reigned between man and wife till about six weeks before she went away. The witnesses of the Sieur Lebrun to this fact are indubitable. They are her own letters—those, be it understood, which she left behind, or rather, which she was not able to carry away with her. By the perusal of some of her notes before marriage, we have seen the vivacity of sentiment which united the Demoiselle de Surcourt to the Sieur Lebrun. That vivacity is traceable, in all its force, in a letter she wrote to him after the marriage, when he had left her for a short time in the August of 1760.

"I heard yesterday from my dear Misis. I have not heard to-day. It brings back all my uneasiness. Has he slept well to-night? is he not fatigued? I hope he has nothing else to complain of but ennui. My dear Misis, I do not doubt that you think of your dear Fanny, of her grief, her love, her impatience. Tell me the day, then, the day I so long for, that is to bring you back to me again. All my thoughts turn only to you. Nothing has any interest for me that is not in some way or other

connected with you. I rejoice in seeing the fine weather, for I think you can now enjoy a walk. I hate the heat, for it keeps you from exercise, and may make you ill. The moment I feel the slightest zephyr, I long to send it to you. I wish there was even a tempest for your sake. I would make the very elements do your bidding. I wish that every thing in nature may only serve to make you happy, my dear Misis. How much does she not owe him, since he has painted her so well? He makes her still more beautiful by the light of his own soul—that soul fired at once by genius and by love. You write such beautiful things, and I can't see them! I have no pleasure in life. I have no consolation left, but the hope of our meeting soon. To-day I passed the morning with your mother. She pities me. We spoke of nothing but you. She told me some anecdotes of your childhood that amused me much. You must have been interesting even then. At four years old, I really believe I should have fallen in love with you. I like every thing that belongs to you; I feel as if they brought me nearer to yourself. She and your sister send you a thousand loves, and your brother also, who supped here this evening. They talked a great deal of Homer, Greek, Latin, &c. My dear aunt and uncle were delighted with him, and think him very clever. It is now midnight. I am in my couch—my solitary couch—far from thee. Alas! nothing which you see where you now are can remind you of love. Love dwells not in palaces. I have nothing but your heart to rely on to recall me to your mind. Adieu, my dear Misis—adieu, my little man! I send you a thousand kisses. Ah! Why am I not in your arms?

"This morning, when I was just going to seal my letter, Murgi brought me yours. Ah, how sorry I am! I feel more than ever that my heart is not made for these lengthened separations. No, I can't exist absent from what I adore. I tried to reason myself into submission for five days; but how am I to endure the fifteen that it will be now? Pity me, dear Misis. It is delightful to me to see that your regret is equal to mine; but the more you make me love you, the greater is my grief. If any thing could lessen the sorrow caused me by your letter, it is to hear that you are well. The assurance of that gives me one grief less. Take care of yourself, for my sake. I can't understand how the letter I wrote you on Sunday has not reached you yet. Write to me often, if 'tis but one word. I embrace you again—Your Fanny."

Thanks to the wise precaution of Madame Lebrun, there is a blank of seven years in her correspondence with her husband. But if we lose the pleasure of reading a multitude of letters worthy of those we have transcribed, the cause of the Sieur Lebrun is no loser by the omission; for we find, at the end of those seven years, the Dame Lebrun still unchanged—a clear proof that no change has, in the interval, taken place in the Sieur Lebrun. *Voici*, continues the *Mémoire*—behold the letter she wrote to him on the 17th September 1767, from the country-house of—who do you think?—the Sieur Grimod.

"I flatter myself, my dear little man, that I shall have a good report of your health. I am told you started in first-rate condition; no doubt the open air, and the pleasures of such agreeable society, will keep you in good case. I need not wish you any new enjoyments. I have only to congratulate you on those you possess. Let me enter into them, for the description of yours will make me more fully appreciate my own. I hope, at the same time, you will perceive that there is a something wanting, and that you will have the same feelings on the subject as I have. The country agrees with me admirably, and I am in wonderful health. We walk a great deal, and musicate ('musiquons') a great deal more. We lay all the elements under contribution for our amusement. We have a gondola for our water parties, a swing for the air, and we only want Torræus and his Acheron to take a trip through fire. We have made parties to go fishing, and we intend making one to go fowling with nets and looking-glasses, as it is so beautifully described by a poet of my acquaintance, (the Sieur Lebrun himself.) I hope the same accident won't happen to us that befell the bird-catcher in the fable. It is for you to be on your guard, if you enter into such amusements; for love keeps constantly prowling in the scenes frequented by the Graces. We are, therefore, in safety here, in spite of his wings. We expect the family of M. and Madame Grimod at the beginning of next month. They have charged me to invite you to come, and take your place on the famous jonquil sofa. They send you a thousand compliments, and expect you early next month. We have half made up our minds to go and see the king hunt at St Hubert. Adieu, my dear little man! I embrace you with all my heart. Write me immediately. My respects to the ladies, and a thousand remembrances to M. le Comte de Turpin, and M. le Comte de Brancas. Tell him that I was highly flattered by his indignation, though it was altogether unjust. We return you your brilliant 'epistle.' We have answered it with a song; don't lose it. The invalid (Julia) sends you a lot of messages."

Poetry itself was employed by the Dame Lebrun to paint the feelings with which her husband had the happiness to inspire her.

The proofs brought of this latter assertion are very convincing; but before we give extracts from the poetical declarations of her connubial bliss, let us see what a curious insight this gives us, into the style of life among French poetasters and their wives in the middle of last century. We have seen that the irate Lebrun had a settled income of about a hundred and eighty pounds a-year, equal, with little pickings and stealings, to perhaps three hundred pounds at the present time. His wife, evidently a clever, brisk coquette, sends friendly messages to two of the first nobles in France, the Count de Turpin and the Count de Brancas, and in the house of the latter nobleman the Sieur Lebrun is domiciled at the time she writes. In the meanwhile, she is spending months at a time in the country mansion of the too fascinating Grimod, whom we have presented to the reader as a sub-collector of taxes. A sub-collector of taxes! Wait till the next payments are due for the income-tax, and watch the countenance of the respectable individual who will give you his receipt. Is that a man to awake jealousy in the soul of Pindar, or get up private

theatricals, or even take a prominent part in an acted charade? His soul is set upon a hot beefsteak, and he thinks strong ale. He wouldn't give twopence for all the poets in England, and still less for their wives. But the Sieur Grimod is made of different metal. Less lead, but a great deal more brass—more polished, but less useful—a pinchbeck imitation of the lords and ladies who were waltzing, flirting, acting proverbs, and writing pasquinades, at the very moment when the first great throes of the "portentous doom" were beginning to shake France to her foundations, and the cloud was gathering that was to fall down in the blood and horror of the Revolution. A sub-collector of taxes! in his country-house—with his friends' wives about him, in addition to his own—giving parties of the most gorgeous magnificence—splendid masques in honour of a birthday, like *Comus* at Ludlow Castle—bird-huntings, where ladies, with attendant squires, sallied forth in fanciful array, armed with silken nets to catch the prey, after having wiled them from the trees by blinding them with polished mirrors—horns sounding, and music stationed in woody dells—and all carried on with a grandeur like the cavalcades of the duke and duchess in *Don Quixote*. A sub-collector of taxes, we say, doing all this, shows very clearly that some change or other was needed; and we will only say, that the moment we see similar proceedings going on in the same rank of life in England, we shall emigrate to some happy island—not Tahiti—where poets and poetesses, and sub-collectors of taxes, are utterly unknown. We shall extract from the *mémoire*—which, we again remind the reader, is a strictly legal document, though rather different from the dull concerns our Solons in Lincoln's Inn are the authors of—at some length; for we shall gain a very tolerable idea of the interior arrangements of a *maison de campagne*, on a fête-day in 1768.

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The day of St Denis was usually chosen by the Dame Lebrun for a charming party, to which she lent all the charms of her muse. In that which she gave on the eve of St Denis, at the house of the Sieur Grimod, she had introduced all the deities of Olympus to pay compliments to her husband. First appeared Love and the Graces; then Flora, then Diana—who all sang songs in character. Apollo followed, who presented his lyre to the Sieur Lebrun, and said—

"The suffrages of all you claim,  
The gods themselves your talents prize;  
Through endless ages may your name  
Partake their immortalities!  
Take from Apollo's hand this lyre,  
To sound upon the sacred hill;  
And while your finger wakes its fire,  
They'll say, 'it is Apollo's still.'"<sup>[3]</sup>

After Apollo, Pomona immediately came; it was the character which the Dame Lebrun had reserved for herself; and her couplet would have been out of place in any person's mouth but her own—

"Let gods their crowns bestow—  
An orchard is my all:  
Yet poor gifts richer grow,  
When from the heart they fall.  
If of Pomona's store  
To taste you kindly deign,  
Trust me, I'll give you as much more  
When autumn comes again."<sup>[4]</sup>

The divertisement ended with a dance of Bacchus and Bacchantes. The Sieur Grimod enacted the part of Bacchus in full costume, with his head ornamented with a cap and bells!

We suspect the head of the counsel assisting in getting up this memorial had been so long surmounted with a wig, that he did not remark upon the absurdity of the masquerade of the Sieur Grimod. A cap and bells on the head of wild Bacchus! It is evident, even from the couplet chanted by the fascinating sub-collector of taxes, that he appeared in a very different character from the youthful conqueror of India; though we confess that heads, of which a cap and bells would be the fittest covering, are not altogether unknown among the heroes and conquerors of the gorgeous East. It is clear, from the verses, that the great Grimod appeared, "for this night only," in the character of Folly.

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"To set every thing right,  
'Tis on that I am bound;  
To put sorrow to flight  
The true secret I've found!  
All these poor silly gods,  
With their bouquets held so,  
With their songs and their odes,  
Without me are no go!  
Folly flings  
From its wings  
A new light on each day.  
It incites,  
It invites,  
To be happy and gay."

Well may the learned barrister close his account of this festival with the remark—that the life of the Dame Lebrun was a continued series of amusements; and this cruel husband, when he was not the object or the cause of her pleasures, was at least made the confidant of them all. As a proof of this confidence, a history is given of certain proceedings in the ninth year of their marriage, in which it will be seen that the Bacchus of the divertissement is not kept entirely in the background. In the month of February, in 1769, she paid a visit to Havre to see the sea. To show the terms they were on, it would be necessary to quote the letters of the Dame Lebrun at full length. It will be seen how unreservedly she entered into the pleasures of the place, and how minutely she recorded them all to a man, whom she well knew that her descriptions would enable to share them as if he had been at her side. But in the absence of the entire correspondence, which it would be tedious to transcribe, we content ourselves with copying out the passages, where the friendship and intimacy that then united the husband and wife are most strongly marked.

"We arrived in perfect health, my dear friend, on Tuesday, at two o'clock. I trust you also are flourishing. Take care of yourself, and write me how you are. M. and Madame Grimod, as also M. Sieuve, charge me with a thousand messages. M. Grimod insists on your coming as soon as possible, that you may see the sea. I also wish you could see it. In looking at it, I have often thought on the effect it would have on you; and I should be delighted if you could enjoy the prospect along with me. I tell you I now eat fish as you do. This very day I have eaten a dozen oysters, a bit of skate, some smelts, and some fresh cod—I think I shall finish by devouring all the fish in the sea. I wish I could send you some of the oysters of this place: they are as large as your hat. Adieu, my dear friend; I embrace you from my heart. I have told you all I have seen, and I will tell you all that may occur worth talking of when I arrive. *Friendly regards to Julia. I hope to find her in good health, and that she has taken care of yours.*"

With a wonderful knowledge of the effects of small type, the poetical Lebrun and his counsellor have printed the "Advice to Julia" in italics. What! the Dame Lebrun send friendly regards ("bien des amitiés") to Julia! Why, isn't this the woman they trump up a story about, as having been a perpetual source of jealousy to the neglected wife, and monopolizing all the tenderness and pretty speeches of the once faithful and still too conquering Misis? For our own part, we think it is a shocking instance of female audacity, for the devourer of such boat-loads of fish, and the visiter of M. and Madame Grimod, to affect jealousy of Julia or any one else. Let her be contented with her Grimods and oysters, and leave Julia to listen to the harpings of Apollo in peace. We have another letter, dated a few days after the first, and still from Havre.

"I received your letter, my dear friend, when I was on board a ship, and read it on deck. We laughed amazingly at your epigrammatic witticisms; your reputation is already established here. You are known as a man of genius; so you may judge if they listened to your letter. M. Grimod, from the first, has been the trumpeter of your talents and wit; and the best of the joke is, that on the strength of his descriptions of you, they insist on believing that I am a person of infinite cleverness as well. I am delighted to hear such good accounts of your health. I was anxious to hear how you were. M. Grimod insists that I travel merely for curiosity, and not for the sake of health; and this moment, let me tell you in a parenthesis, he interrupts me to say he is sure I am writing my best, I look so pleased in writing to you. To-morrow we are going to breakfast in a ship, where the captain gives us a collation of all fine things, among others chocolate; then we prepare to go to Rouen where we shall stop two or three days to see the lions. We do nothing but go out, change the scene, dress ourselves, and pack up our trunks. It is a delightful life; we have scarcely time to breathe. But in spite of that, I am grown very fat. I eat like four, and can't do without oysters. I wished to bring you some present from this part of the country, but there is nothing remarkable except the fish. Adieu, my dear friend! I shall be delighted in relating all my experiences when we meet. I hope some day you will visit these beautiful scenes, or others as beautiful; and that the house-dove will take its flight to see all the beauties of nature, which he knows so well how to paint. You will see that there is no danger, and that I shall come back to you without any accident to my wings."

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Now, be it known that the last sentence is an allusion to an incident in Lebrun's poem, *De la Nature*, of which some specimens had been published before this time, but which the grief brought on him by his wife's behaviour prevented his finishing—a great loss, says the disinterested author, to the world, for it was a transcendent work! In the month of April of the same year, the house-dove also took its flight. The Sieur Lebrun took a journey to Marseilles, and the tender solicitudes of his wife accompanied him.

After a few of her usual enquiries about his health, and recommendations to enjoy himself as much as he could among "les habitans aimables de cette ville," she pays him a few compliments.

"I beg you to say in rhymed prose, to M. Menier, a thousand things for me, which will become beautiful spoken by your lips, and heard by his ears. I am as much astonished as pleased with your punctuality in writing. Every post-day we are all on the look-out. Madame Grimod begs her compliments—and so do all the family, whom I delight with the reading of your letters. They are so witty and clever! If you employ much of your time in writing them, we spend a great deal of ours in reading them."

But the trips of the year 1769 are not over yet. Scarcely, says the *Mémoire*, had the Sieur Lebrun returned from Marseilles, when the Dame Lebrun set off, in company with M. Grimod, to visit it. She spent six weeks there, during which she wrote several letters to her husband, and cherished his answers as before. But we shall not follow the example of the *Mémoire*, in repeating all these

tit-for-tat endearments, but pursue our own object, which is to trace the style of occupation of people of their rank. And here we must observe, that, as far as we see in this process, the whole occupation of the Grimods and others was to make tours for their pleasure, and get up fêtes for their amusement. Wherever they are, there is always something or other going on—a breakfast, a dance, or a masquerade; and in spite of the protestations of the Dame Lebrun, of her sorrow at being separated from her little man, it is evident she never allows her grief to have any effect upon her appetite. It rather seems as if, in all her distresses, she applied to the cook, and measured the extent of her sufferings by the quantity she could dispatch at a meal.

"How delighted I should be with but one quarter of an hour of your charming conversations with Madame la Comtesse de Brancas! But from intellectual feasts like that, I am doomed here to the most rigorous abstinence; and, to make up for it, I am forced to throw myself on the mullets, sardines, sprats, and tunnies, with the wines of Cyprus and Syracuse; so that I have always the body full and the mind empty. You sent me an admirable piece of wit. I laughed at it amazingly, and wished to read it to some of the people here; but I soon perceived that their appreciation of letters is limited to letters of exchange. In spite of that, they are never tired of praising you, and holding forth about your talents."

In a letter of the 25th October, after a very spirited description of a marriage-feast, and a dance to the sound of tambourines, she says:—

"We have been oppressed with the innumerable kindnesses of all this amiable family. One after another, every body was full of regrets that you were not of the party, declaring that a man of such wit and genius as you was exactly made for society. If ever you return to this country, you will be splendidly received...." [Pg 715]

"Amuse yourself as much as you can. Go and dine often with your friends. I should be sorry if I thought you were alone. Don't be surprised at my scrawl. I danced all last night, and had got to bed very late. It is now eleven o'clock, and I am obliged to be dressed by one so, you see, I have not much time to spare."

And her letter of the 22d November brings us to the end of the year '69, and also of her residence at Marseilles. Even the *Mémoire* grows tired of the gaieties of the Dame Lebrun, and passes over a long detail of dinners, suppers, balls, and fêtes, to tell us that, "fatiguée de bonne chère," and "lassée de plaisirs," she wrote to her husband, who was contenting himself with a Welsh rabbit and Julia at home—"One would need four stomachs in this county. I envy your frugality, and long for the little, quiet suppers we used to have at the fireside."

Now, this regret for the domestic broiled bones—though evidently caused by a momentary surfeit—is dwelt upon by the enraptured Lebrun as a triumphant disproof of the accusations of cruelty and violence, brought against him by the Grimods and his charming wife. "She regrets their quiet suppers! And yet we are told by the Dame Lebrun, and some of her witnesses, that these quiet suppers never passed off without the most horrible altercations, or nearly being stained with blood from murderous blows!" From all we can make out, this accusation of the "petit homme" attempting to pummel the lady with four stomachs, and capacity for oyster-eating that must have thrown the late Mr Dando into despair, is nothing more than an attempt to make the whole affair ridiculous, and allow the conduct of the defendant to escape the obloquy it deserved, under cover of the laughter excited by so ludicrous an image. If there were any "coups meurtriers" in the case, we will venture the long odds that the mark of them was left in the ogles, or other undefended portions of the countenance of the Sieur Lebrun. She is constantly complaining of delicate health; and yet undergoes more fatigue than a washerwoman. We have now traced her for nearly ten years. She must by this time be two or three-and-thirty; and yet, we will venture to say, no girl of eighteen ever panted so earnestly for her first ball, as the Dame Lebrun did for six or seven of those entertainments every week. We can imagine no greater misery to her, than one of the quiet suppers she talks of; and if, in the agony of her disgust, she occasionally gave the Sieur Lebrun a slap in the face, we have not the slightest doubt he deserved it, and that she enjoyed the rest of the evening with the soothing conviction in her own mind that she was a much-injured woman, and had vindicated the honour of her sex. We have seen, from one of her letters, that it took her two hours to dress—that she thought nearly as much of eating and drinking as even of Monsieur Grimod; and we shall shortly perceive, that clothes, and love, and gluttony, don't interfere with the powers of poetical compliment, and that her husband—perhaps on the principle of poetry succeeding best in fiction—is still the object of them.

The St Denis's Day of 1770, says the *Mémoire*, was celebrated, like the former ones, by a fête, designed and composed by the Dame Lebrun. The room represented a lawn, with a grove, fountains, &c. Naiads, hidden in the reeds, chanted these lines in honour of her husband:—

"Ye naiads smiling round,  
Sing Nature's poet in your lays!  
Let echoes, till they're tired, resound  
With his harmonious praise!  
Oh, let your fountains flow  
On the greensward below;  
And with their notes prolong  
The birds' full-throated song!

"Thou, Flora! spread thy mantle round

All this enchanted ground!  
Pour blessings on these happy, happy hours!  
Laurels, and you, ye myrtles, amorous flowers!  
With loving hand I pluck you now,  
Stripping your leaves adown,  
To be a glorious crown,  
Of a new god to decorate the brow!"

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In the next year, another fête owed its *éclat* to the talents of the Dame Lebrun; but the object of it was no longer the Pindaric poet, but the sub-collector of taxes. But as it was impossible to keep the Sieur Lebrun entirely away from any of the haunts of the Muses, he was enlisted in the corps of subject personages, and performed the Co-too to the Sieur Grimod in the character of a satyr! And this was the more in keeping, as the scene was a wood, and the hero of the entertainment enacted the part of a sort of Orson, under the name of Sylvanus. In 1772, the gaieties of the Dame Lebrun suffered no abatement, except from an attack of illness; and, for the recovery of her health, she spent the greater portion of the year at the country-house of the Sieur Grimod—sometimes with her husband, says the *Mémoire*, and sometimes without. The following spring was passed, as usual, in balls and masquerades. The house of the Sieur Grimod was again the scene of a splendid entertainment; but, on this occasion, the object of the fête was neither the Sieur Bacchus, nor the Sieur Sylvain, but Madame Lebrun herself. The indefatigable Bacchus, however, if not the principal personage of the day, was the chief performer. There was a procession in boats. The Sieur Lebrun did the honours of the enchanted island to his wife. Dressed as a sailor, he conducted her, disguised as Flora, in an ornamented barge, all festooned with garlands, and illuminated with coloured lamps. It was a truly fairy scene, and the Dame Lebrun did not at that time look on the composer of the spectacle as a malignant cobold, the enemy of her repose.

In January 1774, she wrote letters to her husband as full of gaiety, and as expressive of affection, as any of the others; and on the 5th of March she sued for a separate maintenance! Such is the history, contained in a lawyer's brief, of fourteen years of the wedded life of a French family of the middle rank, or rather below it. And from incidents contained in the account, we perceive that this actual labour of enjoyment, these balls, and fêtes, and entertainments of all kinds, were the usual mode of life of most of the people they associated with. Imagine the same scenes going on in England;—women, after thirteen or fourteen years of marriage, going dressed up as heathen goddesses in boats, and being attended round enchanted isles by Bacchuses and Orsons, dressed in shaggy skins, and chanting doggerel till echo was dead beat! Bacchus, a secretary, at a salary of a hundred a-year—Orson, a sub-collector of taxes! But more than all—let us think that the fault of the Sieur Lebrun does not seem to have consisted, in the eyes of his mother and sister, in allowing the intimacy between his wife and the friends, but in putting a stop to it. When such things are the fashion in England, let us prepare for the National Convention.

The demand of the Sieur Lebrun for restitution of conjugal rights, was rejected; he appealed against the decision, wrote bitter epigrams on the judges, and celebrated his wife in some elegies worthy of Tibullas, under the name of Fanny. From court to court he carried his cause, his epigrams, and his elegies; till finally, in 1781, the Parliament decided against him, and the Dame Lebrun was freed for ever from the matrimonial claim, and the little suppers beside the garret fire. But not for ever was Grimod free from the vengeance of the virtuous Lebrun. And not for the last time was heard the shrill voice of the complaining husband by the fastidious ears of Fanny. A few years passed on—Louis the Sixteenth was hurried to the scaffold—the golden locks of Marie Antoinette were defiled with the blood and sawdust, which Young France regarded as the most acceptable offering to the goddess of liberty; and who is that sharp-featured little man, sitting in the front row of the spectators of those heaven-darkening murders, with a red cap on his head, and a many-stringed harp in his hand, chanting the praises of the murderers, and exciting the drunken populace to greater horrors? Lebrun. Yes, the French Pindar is appointed poet-laureate to the guillotine, and has apartments assigned him at the national cost in the Louvre. Whenever an atrocity is to be committed, an ode is published, "by order of authority," to raise the passions of the people to the proper pitch. When the atrocity is over, another ode is ordered to celebrate the performers, and congratulate the people on their triumph. When Grimod was brought before the Convention as one of the oppressors of the people, and parasites of the aristocracy—a woman, old and trembling, was leaning on his arm—his personal crimes, if any, were so little known, that he was on the point of being dismissed from the bar for want of an accuser. Pindar, in his red cap, with his many-stringed harp in his hand, was there; and all Helicon glowed like molten lead in his vindictive heart when he looked at the miserable pair. "What sentence shall we pass on the person called Grimod, ci-devant sub-collector of taxes, and the woman beside him, who has aided and abetted him in several attempts to escape from the censorship of the Committee of Public Safety?" The accused looked timidly round, in hopes that no answer would be returned to this routine enquiry, in which case their safety would have been assured; but red-capped Pindar struck his hand hurriedly over the chords, and cried, in the shrill sharp tones, that both the prisoners remembered too well, "A la mort! à la mort!" and in ten minutes their bodies were lying headless, side by side, amidst the hootings and howlings of ten thousand demons, exemplifying to astonished Europe the perfection of civilization and philanthropy. Little more needs to be said of the Sieur Lebrun. He lived through the dangers of the Revolution; wrote odes and satires indiscriminately on friend and foe; worshipped power to the last, and was the sycophant, and would have been the murderer, of Napoleon, as he had been of Louis and Robespierre; and died at last in receipt of a pension from the state, member (like Lord

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Brougham) of the National Institute of France; and had his panegyric pronounced on him by his successor, as if he had united the virtues of Aristides to the genius of Homer. Whereas, we take him to have been the true type of the Frenchman of his time—a monkey, till he got the taste of blood, and then a tiger.

## FOOTNOTES:

- [3] In case we should have done injustice to the poetical inspiration of the Dame Lebrun, we give the originals—

"Tu captives tous les suffrages,  
Tes talens sont chéris des dieux;  
Puisse ton nom, dans tous les ages,  
S'immortaliser avec eux!  
D'Apollon reçois cette lyre,  
Pour chanter au sacré vallon;  
Dans tes mains même on pourra dire,  
C'est toujours cette d'Apollon!"

- [4] "Que les dieux te courronnent;  
Moi, je n'ai qu'un verger;  
Mais le cœur assaisonne  
Les présens des bergers.  
Si des fruits de Pomone  
Tu devenais friand,  
Je te promets, à chaque automne,  
De t'en offrir autant."

## CENNINO CENNINI ON PAINTING.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN BY MRS MERRIFIELD.

So long ago as 1839, in the June number of this Magazine, we noticed M. Merimée's posthumous work on oil-painting. It was ushered into the world with no little parade, under the sanction and strong recommendation of a committee of the Royal Institute of France; and in this country with the somewhat authoritative and permitted dedication to the President of our Royal Academy, by the editor and translator, Mr Sarsfield Taylor. We should have cared little about reviewing such a work, had we not felt persuaded that the public, and more especially artists, required some caution, under the high influence of the mode of its publication, how they should receive a work whose direct tendency was to misguide them—to mislead them from the path towards the practice of the old masters, and to confirm artists in the evil practice of mixing varnish with the oils with which their pigments are ground.

The work was the more insidious, as it professed to take the excellence of the old masters as the attainable object. We believe that we satisfactorily showed that M. Merimée was so predisposed in favour of copal varnish, that in his researches he would make every thing bend, even the most stubborn facts, and most opposing sense of passages quoted by him, to that prejudice. We exposed the numerous, we had almost said wilful, mistranslations from the Latin and Italian—especially the former—with which the volume abounded. We showed how entirely and frequently original passages had been distorted from their plain meaning, as if with a systematic purpose, to uphold a fanciful theory. We offer a specimen:—The monk Theophilus, who wrote in the tenth century "De Arte Pingendi," mentions a "Gummi Fornis." This, though M. Merimée confesses it does not resemble it in consistence, he still will have to be copal. Theophilus says, "Hoc glutine omnis pictura *superlinita* lucida fit et decora, ac omnino durabilis."—"Every picture *smeared over* with this gluten becomes lucid and beautiful, and altogether durable." It might be thought almost impossible to mistranslate this. But the varnishing over, or smearing over, being a direct contradiction to the mixing with the pigments, with the view of rendering it according to the writer's prejudice, the passage is thus translated—"Pictures *prepared* with this varnish are brilliant, and remain without any alteration."

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Again, M. Merimée, speaking of M. Tingry, the able professor of chemistry of Geneva, affects to regret that he did not apply his scientific knowledge to the practice of the art, in painting pictures. But the fact is, that the professor does give his attention to the subject, not only by his experiments on oils and varnishes—the vehicles of picture painting; but as one who was well acquainted with the nature of varnishes, he very distinctly warns artists against the practice which it is M. Merimée's object to establish. The passage is so important (and the authority of Tingry so undeniable) that we are here tempted once more to quote it:—

"Some of the English painters, too anxious to receive the fruits of their composition, neglect these precautions. Several artists even paint in varnish, *and apply it with their colours*. This precipitate method gives brilliancy to their compositions at the very moment of their being finished; but their lustre is temporary and of short duration. It renders it impossible for them to clean their paintings, which are, besides, liable to crack and to lose their colour. In a word, it is

not uncommon to see an artist survive his works, and to have nothing to expect from posterity." But lest it should be said, as M. Merimée did say, that Tingry, the author of the above passage, wrote *only* to house painters, he adds thus—"Nothing that relates to the house painter is foreign to the artist of a higher order who paints compositions; in like manner, the precepts admitted by the celebrated painters deserve the attention of the varnisher, to whom the painter entrusts his greatest interests. The observations contained in this note are the brief result of some instructive conversations I had with Saintours, a celebrated painter, my friend and relation."<sup>[5]</sup>

We revert to our review of M. Merimée's work, as preliminary to our notice of the beautiful volume of Mrs Merrifield's translation on Tambroni's edition of *Cennino Cennini*, because the subject of vehicles is here again brought before the public; and we know of no subject more important, as it regards the interests of art, for the consideration of this and of every other country. For it appears incontestable that there was a period when the art of painting, through the discovery of a vehicle, broke forth into uncommon splendour and beauty, which splendour and beauty remain in works fresh and perfect to this day; and that there was a subsequent period at which this particular vehicle was lost. We therefore thank the authoress (for her notes are important, and demand that we should give her this title in addition to that of translator) for again bringing this subject before the public in so attractive a manner, by the elegance of the type, illustration, and binding of this volume, so agreeable to the eye; and for the addition of many of her own judicious remarks. So that, through this feminine grace and good sense, an interest and attention are awakened, which the bare recipes of Cennino Cennini would hardly have commanded.

Cennino Cennini has frequently been partially quoted from Vasari downwards; partially quoted, but little read. He finished writing his book on the arts the 31st day of July 1437; was born soon after 1350; had been twelve years the disciple of Agnolo Gaddi, who died 1387; son of Taddeo Gaddi, the disciple and godson of Giotto, the "father of modern art." The precepts which he delivers are therefore those acquired in immediate succession from that great first master, and as the secrets of his art. We grieve to add that the work was written in prison, dated from the Stinche in Florence, at eighty years of age, and in extreme poverty; a proof among many, that the patronage of the arts in those days was not a mantle of charity of adequate dimensions to cover the wants of the numerous professors of the art; while it tells somewhat unfavourably for the gratitude of the contemporary world to know, that the one work alone of this deserted old man, the Virgin in the Hospital of Bonifacio Lupi, (so well coloured, says Vasari, that it is to this day in good preservation,) would produce a sum that would probably not only be sufficient to have paid his debts, but to have equalled the wants of no small portion of his prolonged life. The work itself seems to bear testimony to an earnest, amiable, and religious mind; there would appear, therefore, no moral fault to which to attribute his unfortunate condition. We must suppose that struggles with the world's difficulties, incompatible though they seem with art, are necessary; and that the cradle of genius must be first rocked by Want—that necessity is the great "Magister Artium;" for we find it has ever been so, even to the present enlightened age. A few favourites occupy the Goshen of patronage, who at their death are not remembered, and whose works *do* "follow them;" and then, the works of those who have lived neglected, lived, worked, and died in penury, are eagerly sought after at any price. Such men, whilst they lived, were yet teaching a lesson in taste which the world were *slow to learn*; for it is in the nature of genius to be before the age, and in some respects to teach a novelty, which the world in not prepared to receive. Genius works on by the compulsion of its own nature, and the world is improved by it when it can no longer reward it but by a too late admiration, that reaches not, as far as we know, the dead. The complaint of Horace has been ever justified, and is still, in the eager search after works of our Wilson and Gainsborough—

"Virtutem incolumem odimus,  
Sublatam ex oculis quærimus invidi."

This edition of Tambroni is not from an original MS. or printed copy, but from a transcript about a century old, discovered by Angelo Mai among the Ottobonian manuscripts. Two other copies of Cennino Cennini are known to exist; we are curious for their examination, the present rescript *may* in some respects be deficient. As Cennino Cennini completed his work 1437, and the discovery of Van Eyck is said to have been 1410, it might have been expected that we should find some notice of Van Eyck's vehicle. We rather lament than are surprised that we find none. Those were the days for seccries. Cennino himself speaks of many of his recipes as great secrets; and we are told that Van Eyck only in his old age taught his secret to Antonello—and the whole story goes to show the profound secrecy with which this vehicle was retained; nor is there any reason to doubt that it occasioned the murder of Domenico, said to have been perpetrated in 1470, thirty-three years after the writing of Cennino Cennini. Vasari says positively, that "John Van Eyck would not let any one see him work, nor would he teach the secret to any one—but being old," &c. This is certainly an argument against those who would affirm, if Van Eyck had discovered a vehicle, it would have been universally known. Such secrets are slow in progress, independent of the caution to keep them so. Artists did not formerly spring up self-taught; they were bound to masters, and learned their art from the beginning, and slowly, and learned not many of their secrets till after years of servitude, for such we must call it. They had then to make as well as to grind their own colours, to make their own brushes, tablets, and cloths.

Mrs Merrifield and Tambroni certainly do not agree in their opinions respecting this discovery of a vehicle by Van Eyck. The Italian is rather foolishly sensitive for the honour of his country, and his sensitiveness seems to bias his judgment. He would not that a foreigner should have the

merit. Tambroni believes, and probably truly, that Vasari never thoroughly read Cennino; but he bears testimony to the *noble-mindedness* of Vasari—"Whence," says he, "we are constrained to believe that he merely glanced lightly over the titles to the chapters of part of the manuscript; and that, thinking it useless, he did not care to examine and investigate the whole work. For this reason it cannot be supposed that this noble-minded man, so zealous for the honour of his country, and whose every effort had been directed to make it pre-eminent, would withhold from one of his fellow-countrymen the just fame which he deserved by so valuable a work. Nor do I intend here to reprove him, or to lessen his glory. I shall only say that he committed a great error in not having examined the work of this old master: for then, perhaps, he would not so easily have given the credit of those things to strangers which certainly were known in his own beautiful Tuscany, and in all Italy, as I shall hereafter study to prove." Yet he does not hesitate after this to charge "this noble-minded man" with fabricating "a romance or tale of the imagination." But he misquotes Vasari. As Mrs Merrifield justly observes, "he takes only part of Vasari's account into consideration, instead of stating the whole, and reasoning on it as Lanzi has done. Vasari does not limit Van Eyck's discovery to the simple fact, that he had discovered that linseed and nut oils were more drying than any he had tried; but he adds, "these then, *boiled with his other mixtures*, made the varnish, which he, as well as all the other painters of the world, had so long desired." It is very singular that this most important passage should have been entirely omitted by the editor, (Tambroni.) It is in *these mixtures* that the secret consisted, not in using the oils; and we may certainly conclude that the process of Van Eyck was very different from that of Theophilus and Cennino, both of whom used linseed oil without the mixture of any other substance. "It will be observed that lake even was used by Cennino without any addition to increase its drying qualities. The only dryer he mentions (as such) is verdigris, which he used for mordants only. The difference in the texture of pictures painted in the Flemish (that is, Van Eyck's manner) and those painted with oil alone, or with the modern megilp, (oil and mastic varnish,) is so well known that it is scarcely necessary to allude to it.

"Picture-cleaners are perfectly aware of this circumstance, having been instructed by observing the manner in which different solvents act upon such pictures, (spirit-of-wine, for instance, will dissolve old pictures, but it has no effect on pictures painted with oil only.—See *Lanzi*.) Vasari gives no clue by which we can discover of what those *mixtures* consisted; but we know that what Vasari calls *vernice liquida* did not form part of them, because *that* had been tried and disapproved of.—See Vasari's *Lives of Antonello da Messina, and Alessio Baldovinetti*. It is probable that the ingredients were common and cheap, or they would not have been accessible to the greater part of Europe; and they appear to have been equally successful in the sunny clime of Italy as in the fogs of Holland."

The translator here entirely agrees with the learned and indefatigable Lanzi, who, aware of discrepancies of dates, ascribes the "*perfect*" method to Van Eyck. He gives full credit to *the facts* as stated by Vasari, and speaks of the difficulties he lay under in obtaining any certain dates, particularly with regard to Venetian matters. That painting in oil was known long prior to Van Eyck, no one who has read the documents upon the subject can for a moment doubt; but it was, in the common way, so inferior in brilliancy, and probably in facility of use to other methods, that it ceased to be in use. It seems pretty clear that this "*perfect method*" came from Flanders, first to Naples, then to Venice; and probably by means of Antonello da Messina, (however some dates may disagree, or it may be possible there were two of that name to have given some confusion to the dates.) In fact, no dates but the strictly historical can be depended upon. There are pictures at Venice with the name of Antonello, and dated 1474—years after his supposed death. We can scarcely suppose that the "*noble-minded*" Vasari would have fabricated an epitaph for Antonello, if none had ever existed; we know how easily not only epitaphs, but the very monuments that bear them, are removed to give place to others. Vasari does not say, in quoting this inscription, that Antonello was the first who painted in oil, but the first who gave splendour, &c. "Sed et quod coloribus oleo miscendis splendorem et perpetuitatem Italiæ contulit." And Hackert says, that this Antonello lived some years in Venice, receiving payment from the state. "Ob mirum hic ingenium Venetiis aliquot annos publice condutus vixit." His celebrity arose from the introduction of the Flemish manner into Italy. The murder of Domenico at Florence, to whom it is said Antonello had imparted the secret, cannot be denied; it was notorious, and must be confirmed by public documents; nor can we imagine so "*noble-minded*" a writer as Vasari would have mentioned the disclosure of the murder by Castagno himself, if the fact had not been notorious. We set aside the labyrinth of dates, which, with regard to the same persons' lives and deaths, are inconsistent and irreconcilable; still there remains a continuous story, not only probable as to its facts, but confirmed by works that exist at this day; for whatever may have been the oil-painting of an earlier age, (and it must be observed, as Lanzi remarks, that there is no certainty that many of the works said to have been in oil, were of that vehicle, for chemists have doubted, and some have been of contrary opinion,) the oil-painting of that precise period when it is said by Vasari to have been introduced into Italy, and as it continued subsequently, is quite a different thing—and exactly agrees with the description of it given by Vasari, and as it was practised in his time. Vasari was but a little more than a century after the supposed discovery of Van Eyck, and was born soon after the death of Raffaelle, and must have known that he was speaking of a vehicle that was not oil alone. It may be here worth while to put down what Vasari does say with respect to Van Eyck's vehicle—that John of Bruges having cracked a picture by exposing it to the sun to dry, being "filosofo e filologo a sufficienza," made many experiments, and "trovò che l'olio de lino e quello de noce erano i più seccativi. Questi dunque bolliti con altre sue misture gli fecero la vernice ch' egli, e tutti pittori del mondo aveano lungamente desiderata"—"found that linseed and nut oil were the most siccative. These, then, boiled together with his other mixtures made the

varnish, (vehicle,) which he and all the painters of the world had long desired." Lanzi here well observes, that the expression "long desired," shows that there must have been many attempts to make oils properly subservient to the painter's use, and that there was none successful until Van Eyck's "solo quella perfetta;" which, as Vasari says, "secca non teme acqua, che accende i colori e gli fa lucidi, e gli unisce mirabilmente"—"which when dry does not fear water, heightens the colours and makes them lucid, and unites them in a wonderful manner." We have a picture by this Van Eyck in our National Gallery; he must have no eyes who will believe that it was painted with oil alone. We have the Correggios—we say the same of them—we have the proof from the experience of picture-cleaners, the hardness of the old paint, and the test of spirits-of-wine, which, as Mrs Merrifield states, solves the paint of old pictures, and leaves the modern untouched. In a former paper, in which we dwelt much on this subject, we mentioned that we had the report of a very scientific friend, who had spent nearly a life of leisure and competence in experiments on pictures, that the paint of the old masters *fused*, not only where white lead had been used, but in every part; and we ourselves saw him try the experiment upon the background of an old picture, by means of the blow-pipe, and the result was a fused substance—a glass. We here leave the question of the discovery of a vehicle by Van Eyck, or by any other person, satisfied that there was a discovery by some one at some time, of a vehicle different from the first painting with oil, and from any of modern use. To dispute this fact, appears to us as absurd as if any one should deny the discovery of America, because there may be disputes as to dates and persons of the first discoverers. We are only surprised that Tambroni and others do not take any notice of the chemical differences in the substances of old and new paint—we mean subsequent to the supposed discovery; and we confess we are surprised at the unworthy, unsatisfactory, and ambiguous manner in which Tambroni settles the matter. "Now, being willing to act with generosity towards this noble writer, and to believe that his religion was not overcome by deception, we should perhaps be able to admit that we were indebted to John of Bruges for the practice of tempering colours with both nut and linseed oils, and to Antonello for having used and made common, through all Italy, a method which, in beauty, greatly exceeds distemper-painting, which, until his time, had always been preferred." Does he really mean, or believe, that this new method consisted only in the use of linseed and nut oils? Is he acquainted with the works of John of Bruges, or with that picture of Andrea del Castagno, the supposed murderer of Domenico, which is called by Guarienti "the wonder of painting;" and which, by the description of its finish, *particularly of the room in which the action is represented*, is supposed to have been an imitation of the style of the Flemish master? If it be asked, how could any good practice in any art be lost? we have only to answer that we are not bound to *account* for a notorious fact with regard to arts in general. Many have been totally lost; but the troubles, the plague, and dispersion of artists in Italy, and the charm of novelty, may be sufficient to account for these changes. Lanzi every where laments them, and tells us that Nicolo Franchini became famous for detaching pieces of paint from old pictures of inferior value, to match deficiencies in more valuable.

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Although we would here willingly end the discussion as to the discovery, we feel ourselves irresistibly led by the importance of the subject to make a few observations, and perhaps throw out a few hints, presuming that they are nothing more than hints, which suggest themselves upon paying some little attention to the actual words of Vasari; and this we do solely with regard to vehicles. Why, we should ask, did Van Eyck dry his picture in the sun, and which seems to have been the practice? As far as we know the nature of gums, there is no difficulty in their drying, without the necessity of resorting to any injurious practice. Were these gums in any degree mixed with undrying substances? Why does Vasari say "che secca non teme acqua"—"which, dry, does not fear water?" Why does he mention water at all? for, supposing that he knew of oil-painting without these "altre sue misture," there would appear to be no occasion that he should mention, as a distinct property of this new vehicle, that which was common with that and the older practice. Here a suggestion seems to let in a glimmer of light. Did he convert these oils into a soap, which, when dry, was no longer soluble in water? Will this be the case with saponaceous oils? Unquestionably. One of the objections made by Lanzi to the changes from the good old method was, as when he speaks of Maria Crespi, that the paint was common and *oily*, and elsewhere complains of "oily appearances." The "colori oleosi" is perfectly descriptive, too, of our modern paint, notwithstanding that our painters try in vain to disguise the "oily" appearance by the admixture of varnishes, and that not a new practice, as we find from Cennino, but one rejected. But can oil be deprived of this appearance? We presume it was deprived of this quality by that process by which, when dry, it did not "fear water"—"secca non teme acqua." Oils are rendered saponaceous by alkalis. We mentioned in former papers experiments of our scientific friend, P. Rainier, M.D. of the Albany, and his use of borax with the oil. The borax he vitrified; and it was because the paint mixed with this oil and borax vitrified also, after the manner of the paint of the old masters, he so used it; but nothing occurred to him about water. We suggested that if this, his medium, resembled the old, it was probably miscible with water, as water would seem to have been introduced into the Venetian practice. Upon this we tried it, and found we could at pleasure dip the brush in this medium, or in water, and then into the paint, and work with great facility, the greater use of the water giving that *crumbly* appearance so often perceptible in the Venetian school; and this effect we found might be increased or omitted at pleasure. And this medium, made by mixing water with the oil through the agency of borax, when dry might be washed even with warm water with perfect impunity. *When dry it did not fear water;* though a saponaceous medium, it was not again soluble in water. What does Vasari mean by "che accende i colori"—"which heightens the colours?" Borax is an alkali. Alkalies are known to heighten colours, "e gli fa lucidi;" now, linseed and nut oil *alone*, particularly the former, takes away the *lucid* character from paint. Had Vasari been describing the working of this vehicle of P. Rainier, he could not have better described it than in the very words "gli unisce mirabilmente;"

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for it is astonishing how nicely to the hand, and to the degrees desired, these repugnant liquids unite the colours. It is singular enough that soda, which is a form of borax, is the actual constituent part of some of our most permanent colours—we need but mention ultramarine; and here we are tempted to transcribe a passage from the translator's preface, which exactly falls in with this our view.—"The use made by the early Italian artists of lyes (lisciva) is deserving of our notice and consideration. Cennino does not inform us how this lye was prepared; but it has been ascertained that lyes produced from pouring water on wood-ashes, from solutions of borax, and also of soda in water, were then used. We find from Cennino's book that ultramarine (of which soda is a constituent part) was prepared with it; that it was also used in preparing *azzuro della magna*, (an ore of cobalt,) and *zafferano*. It has been likewise ascertained that soda has a preserving influence on red, yellow, and black pigments; and the result of experiments on these colours has been so satisfactory, that a certain quantity of soda—or, to speak more correctly, of *soap*, which is a compound of soda with fat or oil, (but not drying oil)—is now used in preparing pigments for painting sails for the British navy. It is also used in the manufacture of printing-ink; and we have now Cennino's authority for using it with *blue* pigments. Sir Humphrey Davy informs us, that the Vestorian or Egyptian azure, the excellence of which is proved by its duration of 1700 years, may be easily imitated by carbonate of soda, opaque flint, and copper filings. The translator has made many experiments on the effect of the alkalis and neutral salts when mixed with colours, and has every reason to be satisfied with the addition of soda, when properly used." We have not ourselves tried sufficiently soda with oil, and have suspected it would not have the effect of rendering the paint hard; but that borax does render the paint very hard we have abundant proof. We have subjected a picture painted with it to the razor to scrape it down, and could with difficulty succeed, though the picture had not been long painted; and we have rolled together masses of paint so mixed, and they have been thought by persons into whose hands we have put them, stone. We have heard artists, who have tried this mixture of borax and oil, declare it had the contrary effect; but, on enquiry, found that they procured the vehicle from colour-makers, who sold them, we have good grounds for believing, a mixture of their own, in which, if borax formed any part, mastic varnish formed a much larger. Among our papers we found one sent us by Dr Rainier; we were not chemists enough to make it intelligible, and for that recipe which we give in a note,<sup>[6]</sup> we are indebted to our friend Mr C. T. Coathupe of Bristol, on whose chemical and general scientific knowledge we have great reliance, and who much confirmed our view, or rather Rainier's, of the advantage of rendering the oils saponaceous by the means of borax. In consequence of our communication with him, Mr Coathupe published in the *Art Union* one or two very valuable papers in 1842. In speaking of this vehicle we do so the more boldly as it is not our own, nor do we claim the least merit on account of it; it is solely the discovery, or re-discovery, be it which it may, of our ever valued friend Rainier, now no more. Without saying that it is or is not *the old one*, "che tutti i pittori del mondo aveano lungamente desiderata," we do not hesitate to say that it is a good one, and does obviate those "oily appearances so disagreeable to the eye"; and we are the more confirmed in our belief in its beneficial quality, by the authorities Mr Coathupe and Mr Field, the well-known scientific author of "chromatography;" and we are much gratified to be able to offer an extract from a letter from Mr Field upon the subject—"I am accordingly ready to admit all the uses of Mr Rainier's medium, and go with him in believing the old painters may have employed it—the Venetians in particular, who were at that time the medium between Europe and India, in the latter of which countries borax had been employed in painting time immemorial." It should here be remarked that Mr Field, in one of his valuable publications, mentions a mixture of lac and oil by means of borax in certain proportions. They do not, however, readily mix, especially in cold weather. The translator does not seem to be aware that borax is the solvent for lac; she mentions "sulphuric or muriatic acid," but water with borax alone will dissolve lac before it boils.<sup>[7]</sup> We would venture to recommend some experiments with lac dissolved in borax to water-colour painters. It is by no means improbable that some of the old Greek paintings are in gum lac; the hardness ascribed to them, and their brilliancy too, and that they rather chip off than crack, seem to answer the properties of lac; and it is curious that lac so dissolved is durable, and not again soluble in water. It *may* therefore be worth while to try experiments with it, both for solid painting with white lead, as likewise as an addition of power partially used for water-colours. We know not if the ancients had any means of discharging the colour, (though a weak solution, in cases of solid painting, may not be very objectional,) but shell-lac can now be rendered perfectly white.

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The reader will be disappointed if he expects to find in "Cennino Cennini" a treatise on art. It is nothing more than a book of receipts—very minute and circumstantial as to most particulars, while here and there is a provoking omission; as, for instance, he speaks of a varnish, but omits to say of what materials composed. However curious much of the matter may be, the modern painter, who has to send to the nearest colour-maker for his tube colours, and French brushes, will think the greater part superfluous, and will smile to be told—"Take the tails of the minèver, (for no other are good,) and these tails must be baked, and not raw." Nor will he trouble himself with Cennino's list of colours, though it would perhaps be better for him if he did enter a little into their chemical properties. Cennino mentions twenty-four pigments; but the best he considers to be but twelve. It is curious that among them are no browns. We have always been of the opinion that the old masters, for the most part, made their browns with blacks and reds and yellows, and gave them depth by glazing over with the same; and we are pretty much of Wilson's mind, who, when told of a new brown, said "I am sorry for it." Very many of our modern pictures are ruined by the violent contrasts of the asphaltum and similar browns with less obtrusive pigments. The very transparency is, in our eyes, an objection. Asphaltum, for instance, besides that it is a changeable and never thoroughly drying pigment, is *too transparent* for depth. It was a mistake of Gainsborough when he said that with asphaltum he would make a Tartarus; the

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depth would be but a little way from the surface; depth is not always intensity of darkness, and never of colour. There is a style of flashy painting which entirely depends on these transparent browns; but it is nevertheless not a good style; it is flimsy, and the *depth* aimed at is missed. The more simple the palette, the better will be the picture. We are taught by the practice as well as words of Titian, who said that "whoever would be a painter, should be well acquainted with three colours, and have a perfect command over them." There are some excellent observations on this subject in the translator's preface, who quotes from Sir Humphrey Davy on colours. "If red and yellow ochres, blacks and whites, were the colours most employed by Protogenes and Apelles, so are they likewise the colours most employed by Raffaelle and Titian in their best style. The St John and Venus in the tribune of the gallery at Florence offer striking examples of pictures, in which all the deeper tints are evidently produced by red and yellow ochres, and carbonaceous substances." Cennino's argument for the use of fine gold and good colours, will be read with more attention by the modern Germans, who have, it is said, for the purposes of their art joined the Catholic Church, than by our English artists, with whom it will but raise a smile, that the artist should be liberal in both, for that if his patron pays him not, our Lady will reward him for it in soul and body. If the practice of poor Cennino was in accordance with this recommendation, he must have been very pious in his resignation, for his reward was a prison in his old age. Cennino acquaints us how to make and prepare pannels, cloth-grounds, cements, and glues; and doubtless some of his recipes will be found practically useful. For temperas (vehicles) many recipes are given. There are two kinds of egg tempera deserving attention mentioned, and the practice of painting in the egg tempera, and afterwards glazing in oil-colour. The translator particularly recommends in a note this mode of painting, and quotes from Mr Field's Chromatography the following passage:—"Mr Clover has successfully employed the yolk of egg for sketching in body colours, in the manner and with the entire effect of oil, which sketches being varnished have retained their original purity of hue, more especially in the whites, and flexibility of texture, without a crack, after many years in a London atmosphere." The translator recommends it from her own practice and experience.

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We have ourselves, in this Magazine, on a former occasion, spoken of a sort of distemper painting—though to give it that name is not very highly to recommend it. We have, nevertheless, found it very good, and admirably adapted for getting in a subject, as affording means of great rapidity of execution. We allude to the admixture of starch and oil—the less oil the more like distemper will it be; or, we should rather say, fresco, which it much more resembles; but oil may be used with it in any proportion. The starch should be made as for domestic use, with water saturated with borax, and the oil added by degrees, and the whole stirred up together while warm; and, in this medium, the colours should be ground as well as worked. It is curious that here, too, the borax is of use; for it not only enables the oil to mix with the water of the starch, but it gives the starch a consistence and toughness, which without it it never possesses. We have found colours retain their hue and purity remarkably well with this vehicle. The whole bears out equally, but without shining. The second painting may produce any desired richness. It is not unpleasant to paint upon a wet ground made with this vehicle, when the picture and ground will dry and harden together.

There is no colour concerning which we are more at a loss in looking at old pictures, than the blues. Three are mentioned by Cennino—indigo, a cobalt, and ultramarine. With regard to the sparing use of the latter, as the most expensive, some practical hints may be met with. We have often wondered with what blue their deep-toned cool greens were made, as in the landscapes of Gaspar Poussin. It was probably Cennino's *azzuro della magna* (German blue or cobalt.) Prussian blue is of recent invention. We believe Mr Field considers it a good colour. It is made of so many hues that it is difficult to procure good, and it is said to be affected by iron. We have heard indigo complained of as a fugitive colour; Cennino mentions it for skies with a tempera of glue. He mentions, likewise, a green cobalt, or *azzuro della magna*. White lead, according to him, may be used with all temperas. He says it is the only white that can be used in pictures; the whites in the old pictures are very pure, so that we may be satisfied of its durability. Many artists have doubted if the white of the best painters was white lead, and many substitutes have been proposed. We may rest assured, by the authority of Cennino, that the fault is not in the lead, but in the vehicle, whenever it changes. There is a letter of Titian's, in which he laments the death of the maker of his white; it was made, therefore, we are to suppose, with particular care, as the principal pigment for light.

Orpiment, which was so much in use in Sir Joshua's time, the ill effects of which is visible in the President's "Holy Family" in our National Gallery, was no great favourite in the olden time. In the note upon this pigment, the translator takes occasion to speak of powdered glass, in reference to a remark of Dr Ure, that powdered glass is mixed with it, which renders it lighter. Mrs Merrifield infers from this, that it, powdered glass, is opaque. Undoubtedly it is so in its dry state, and probably with the glue tempera, which alone, according to Cennino, is its proper vehicle—but mixed with oil it is transparent—and mixed in much body with pigments, will give them great richness, and that degree of transparency, even to pigments rather opaque, which we observe in the substance of the pigments of the best time. China clay, and magnesia too, are opaque in their powdered and dry state, but mixed with the pigments, vary their power *ad libitum*, precisely by the transparency they afford. These two latter substances have likewise a corrective quality upon oils, and we are assured by Mr Coathupe, and have certainly found it to be so, that magnesia is a dryer. We have boiled magnesia and oil together, very thick and jelly-like, and leaving the pipkin exposed, have been surprised to find no skin upon the surface. Mrs Merrifield certainly errs in thinking glass, when mixed with oils, opaque. The blacks of Cennino are from a stone, and opaque; from vine tendrils, ("very black and transparent;") from skins of almonds and kernels of

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peaches, ("a perfect and fine black;") and lamp black, from the smoke of linseed oil. Mr Field observes, that all carbonaceous blacks mixed with white have a preserving influence upon colours, owing chemically to the bleaching power of carbon, and chromatically to the neutralizing and contrasting power of black with white. Leonardo da Vinci in his palette, the account of which is so unfortunately broken off for lack of paper, mentions the mixing every colour with black. Yet we have met with many painters who totally reject it, and fancy it makes their pictures black. This is very absurd, for black mixed with any other pigment ceases to be black; and an artist may paint very black pictures without the use of that pigment. What Titian recommends, one who would be a colourist need not reject. It seems there was of old much caution that iron should not touch the colours. Yet there is, we believe, much iron in ochres. Mr Coathupe has clearly shown, that even Naples yellow does not suffer from contact with iron, otherwise than by abrasion, by which the steel of the knife becomes itself a pigment, as on the hone. Modern science has much enlarged the colour list. There is thus the greater temptation offered to make endless varieties. It has been remarked in language, that the best writers have the most brief vocabulary—so it may be, that the best colourists will have the fewest colours. The rule has been verified in the old masters of the best time. Cennino Cennini, who always begins from the beginning, recommends drawing with the pen—his pen, for that also he tells you how to make, had no slit. O days of Perryian innovation! It was very well, a vast improvement, almost equal to that of adding the shirt to the ruffles, to invent one slit—we have them now with two and with three.

Very strict studies in anatomy were not much in vogue among the early painters. Our author recommends drawing from nature, and lays down his canon of proportions of the human body, which will be little heeded by our academies. The old Italian is not very complimentary to the sex. Mr Etty will open his eyes with alarm, to find he has been practising all his life in a wrong direction, when he reads "leave that of woman, for there are none perfectly proportioned." We are not quite certain, if some of Mr Etty's stay-spoiled figures are taken for examples, but that the opinion of the old Italian may be in some credit. We spoke in the commencement of this paper, of the "Gummi Fornis," which M. Merimée concluded to be copal. The translator, in a note, offers a conjecture, not without its probability, that it may have been sandarac, the "Vernice da Scrivere" of Cennino, and quotes Raffaello Borghini in his "Reposo." If you would have your varnish brilliant, use much sandarac—it makes certainly a very hard varnish—it is difficult to combine it with oil. We suppose it to have been one of the condemned novelties as a vehicle for painting, from its being included in the condemned list of trash, as only fit to polish boots, that moved the satirical pen of Boschini:—

"O de che strazze se fa cavedal!  
D'ogio d'avezzo, mastice e sandraca,  
E trementina (per no dir triaca)  
Robe che ilusterave ogni stival."

MARCO BOSCHINI.

Much has been said of late of "Encaustic Painting." It must have been discontinued before the time of Giotto, as shown by the experiments of Lanzi—no wax has been found in pictures painted after the year 1360. We know that Sir Joshua Reynolds frequently used it, as have some painters since his day. We cannot suppose that, mixed with oil, it would ever give pigments their proper hardness.

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Dryers are not mentioned by Cennino, excepting *verderame* (verdigris,) and that as a mordant. How were the oils made to dry? Will the sun be sufficient? In the summers in Italy their mixed oils readily dry. But in Holland, as in England, for at least a great part of the year, they will not dry of themselves; and it is certain that the longer the pigments are subjected to the action of the oil, the greater is the change. White lead is by no means the best drying colour; and if lead, as a dryer, is so injurious as some will have it to be, to colours in general, why do we not find it so in white lead? Cennino recommends garlic pounded to a juice, and cleared, as a mordant. It is supposed that it gives a drying quality to oil. The practice of the old masters in drying their pictures in the sun—was it only to effect the drying? We believe exposure to the atmosphere is most beneficial to newly painted pictures. We have now a picture before us which was disagreeably oily, and yet did not well bear out. We laid it on the grass, face uppermost, where it lay for about ten days during heat and cold, day and night, dry weather and wet, and in some few burning days exposed to the sun; during these hot days, we had it frequently, plentifully washed with water, left on for the sun to take up. We have this day removed the picture to the easel. The "oily appearance" was gone, it was very dry, but pure, and clean, and bore out equally, but rather like distemper. It is a question worth considering, whether the atmosphere did not take up the impurities of the oil, which always come to the surface.

There is proof enough of this. A picture, unless it be painted with very little oil indeed, will become, in a few days after being painted, greasy—it will not take water on the surface—in fact, "secca teme acqua" will not bear water. If, in this state, the surface be lightly rubbed over with common sand and water, this greasiness will be removed, and the surface will not only be clean, but beautiful; this greasiness will, however, in a day or two come again. If the process of sanding be repeated, *until the greasiness does not* come again, we conjecture that we have done for the picture what time, but a long time, might do—we have removed *all* the impurity of the oil. We believe that pictures after that do not undergo further change, and if the paint be tolerably hard, may be varnished—and that they will become much sooner hard; for it is more than probable that this greasiness in the oil is the main cause of retarding the drying. We have followed this practice

many years, and always with the same results. It is surprising how soon after painting you may sand—even coarse red sand will not remove paint, that is yet tacky—it much remedies the "colori olcesi." The translator lays much stress in the preface upon the importance of white grounds. In the olden time, it appears, that when they were not of gold, they were white; and Leonardo da Vinci thus lays down *his* precept—"Sempre a quelli colori che vuoi che habino belleza preparerai primo il campo *candidissimo*, e questo dico de' colori che sono transparenti, perche a quelli che non sono transparenti non giova campo chiaro." And yet Leonardo is said to have painted occasionally on the canvass without any other priming than a coat of glue. His pictures so painted are said to be durable, and worthy his great name. We should have doubted if Titian did always paint on a white ground—and should fix upon the "Peter Martyr" as the subject of doubt. It is said to have been the practice of Correggio; if so, he did not always derive the benefit from the ground which white grounds are said to confer, for his painting is so generally solid, and the transparency so much the effect of his glazing, that there seems to be no reason why he should have given the preference. It is said the Flemish School used white grounds—probably Rubens did so generally, not all other painters. Teniers used a light drab, and, if we were to judge from some of his skies, painted upon it when that thinly coloured ground was wet. Unless a great body of colour be used, even in the most transparent painting, white grounds are apt to give a weakness and flimsiness. Gaspar Poussin, and perhaps generally, Nicolo, painted on red grounds; the former probably often upon a vermillion ground, though most commonly on one of a deeper tone; the advantage of this, in landscapes, such as his, is evident. There is no colour so good as red to set off greens; and in fact, to make tints appear green, that on another ground would not so be; and, moreover, a red ground, from its warmth, makes those greens appear cool, deep, and refreshing, which is so strong a characteristic in the colouring of that great Italian landscape painter, Gaspar Poussin.

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The most important recipes of Cennino Cennini may be those which relate to fresco-painting; and as that is now likely to be nationally revived, this publication is well-timed. So much has been said and written of late upon this subject, that we think it best simply to refer to the text and notes. To those who mean to practise fresco, they may be important. Besides the value of the recipes of Cennino, there are incidentally some curious things not unworthy of notice. All persons must have been surprised in pictures of grave subjects, and we might especially mention those of Paul Veronese, that dogs are introduced as attendants on feasts, and we find them gnawing bones on very fine floors. But we find in Cennino Cennini that it was the practice to throw their bones under the table. Cennino recommends them to be gathered and selected for black pigments. We have heard it said that Murillo was partial to the pigments made from beef bones taken after dinner.

There is a practice, or we should say happily there was, in the days of these old painters, which did not tend very much to raise the profession. "Sometimes, in the course of your practice," says Cennino, "you will be obliged to paint flesh, especially faces of men and women." He recommends the painting them with egg tempera, with oil, and with *oil and liquid varnish*, "which is the most powerful of temperas." He proceeds to tell how the paint is to be removed. Chapter 162 is entirely devoted to the ladies, and offers a caution now happily unnecessary, but it is so quaintly given, that we quote it:—

"It sometimes happens that young ladies, especially those of Florence, endeavour to heighten their beauty by the application of colours and medicated waters to the skin. But as women who fear God do not make use of these things, and as I do not wish to render myself obnoxious to them, or to incur the displeasure of God and our Lady, I shall say no more on this subject. But I advise you, that if you desire to preserve your complexion for a long period, to wash yourself with water from the fountains, rivers, or wells; and I warn you, that if you use cosmetics, your face will soon become withered, your teeth black, and you will become old before the natural course of time, and be the ugliest object possible. This is quite sufficient to say on this subject."

A modern painter with whom we are acquainted, declares that he has *very often* been called upon to paint "under the eyes" of certain "young men about town"—we presume of the Titmouse grade—that they might appear the more decently before the public and their employers.

If poor Cennino had entertained no other fears but the displeasure of the fair sex, he would have passed a happier old age. We know not that he condescended to paint faces, however, in his most abject condition. There was ever from the beginning a complaint of the little favour bestowed upon artists in general. Was the art considered a slavish practice? Grecia Capta taught it to the Romans, with whom, notwithstanding the force of some few high names, as of Fabius Pictor, it was at no time in very high repute.

The indefatigable Gaye says of the fluctuations incidental to the profession of arts—"While, on one hand, painters, sculptors, and military engineers flourish as ambassadors, magistrates, and correspondents with princes, others live overwhelmed with debt, and pleading for subsistence." A tax return of Jacopo de Domenico, painter, gives this sad account of himself—"Ever since 1400, have I gone on struggling, and eating the bread of others, until 1421; after which I returned to Florence, where I found myself plundered, and in debt, and totally destitute." The reader will be surprised at his remedy, and the modern Poor-law Commissioners, those "Indociles pauperiem pati," will deny the test of destitution, and feel a separating impulse; for he continues—"I took a wife, and went to Pisa, where I mended the roads about the gates, and staid four years." The tax returns afford curious documents. We have that of Massaccio—"Declaration of the means of Tommaso di Giovanni, called Massaccio, and of his brother Giovanni, to the officers of the fisc, detailing their miserable means, inability, and liability—We live in the house of Andrea Macigni,

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for which we pay ten florins a-year." "The son of this Andrea bound himself apprentice in the studio of Nendi Bicci for two years, in 1458, aged seventeen, to have fifteen florins and a pair of shoes yearly."<sup>[8]</sup>

It was the custom of writers, in the time of Cennino, to neglect the precept of Horace. They did not rush "in medias res"—Cennino in particular. He not only begins with the beginning of every particular thing, or invention, or practice; but thinks it necessary to commence his work on the arts with a much earlier fact than the production of Leda's egg—even with the creation of the world—and immediately deduces the art of painting from the fall of Adam, who was from that event compelled to labor; hence invention—hence the art. His book is, however, written in a pious spirit; nor have we now-a-days any right, in good taste, to ridicule his mixing up with his reverence for the Creator, and the Virgin Mary, and all saints in general, and St Eustachius, and St Francis, St John the Baptist, St Anthony of Padua, "the reverence of Giotto of Taddeo, and of Agnolo the master of Cennino;" nor do we in the least doubt, nay, admire his happy zeal, when he says that he begins his book "for the utility, and good, and advantage of those who would attain perfection in the arts." We said that this is a beautiful volume; the few plates and illustrations are not the least of its charms: they are drawn on stone by the translator. We hail the republication of every old work on the arts; and although as yet we have not been so fortunate as to discover the vehicle of Titian or Correggio, we do not despair. In a former paper, if we mistake not, we mentioned a treatise of Rubens—"De Lumine et Colore"—said to have been, somewhat more than half a century ago, in the possession of a canon of Antwerp, a descendant of Rubens: surely it may be worth enquiring after. It is said to be in Latin, which, not being a living and moveable language, is the best form from which we could have a translation upon any subject relating to the arts.

## FOOTNOTES:

- [5] See TINGRY'S *Painter's and Varnisher's Guide*. 1803.
- [6] Take two pounds two ounces and a half of borax, and one pound of acetate of lead, dissolve each in at least a pint of hot water, mix together the two solutions, and allow the precipitate to subside. Pour off the supernatant liquor as soon as it is clear, add some fresh water (rain water is preferable) to the precipitate, and agitate. Then pour the precipitate, whilst it is distributed throughout this last addition of water, upon a filter of white blotting paper, and when the water has passed through the filter, add more water. These fresh additions of water must be repeated three or four times, merely for the purpose of washing away all traces of the liquor which was retained by the first precipitate, and which was formed by the first admixture of the two solutions. The precipitate, when well washed, is to be placed in a Hessian crucible, and exposed to a red heat for half an hour. A clear glass will be formed; which must be reduced to a very fine powder.
- [7] "As the very peculiar property which a saturated solution of borax possesses, of uniting so readily with oil in any proportions, has never yet been noticed by chemical writers, I experimented with its constituents, boracic acid and soda, separately, with a view to determine whether the results were to be attributed to the acid, to the alkaline base, or to the particular salt formed by their union.

"One hundred parts of borax may be said to consist of:—

Parts
Boracic Acid, 35.80
Soda, 16.85
Water, 47.35

Consequently, 24 fluid ounces of water, holding in solution 1 ounce (avoirdupois) of borax, will contain about 4.16 per cent of borax, or 0.702 per cent of soda only.

"I first tried the effect of a saturated aqueous solution of boracic acid with linseed oil. They would not unite. I then prepared some caustic soda by boiling a solution of carbonate of soda with quicklime, decanting the clear caustic liquor, evaporating in a silver crucible, re-dissolving in alcohol, and then distilling the spirit, and heating the residual pure soda to redness. Even in this state, soda contains 23 per cent of water, and only 77 per cent of *pure anhydrous soda*.

"Ten grains of this soda were dissolved in 1000 grains of distilled water. But as 10 grains of this soda contained only 7.7 grains of *anhydrous soda*, the 1000 grains of water would contain just 0.770 per cent of soda—a quantity that differs very little from that contained in the saturated aqueous solution of borax.

"Seven measures of the soda solution were added to four measures of linseed oil. This mixture differed so little in appearance, that it might have been mistaken by any casual observer as identical with that produced by a similar proportion of the solution of borax. It had, however, a more soapy odour; and a considerable separation of its constituent parts occurred almost immediately after agitation. This separation increased for many days. The lower liquid was of a foxy brown colour, and, after a week's repose, it amounted to 38 parts out of 59. The upper 21 parts were white and saponaceous. I tried other proportions of soda solutions with oil, but none resembled the results obtained from solutions of borax with oil.

"Fancying that solutions of the bi-carbonate of soda might be more analogous to those of the bi-borate of soda in their effects upon oil, than solutions of caustic soda, I tried many

mixtures of solutions of the bi-carbonate with oil; but they were all dissimilar, in appearance, odour, and properties, from like mixtures prepared with the bi-borate of soda."—*Letter from C. Thornton Coathupe, Esq., on Vehicles for Pigments. Published in the Art Union of February 1832.*

- [8] We are greatly multiplying artists, by "the promise to the ear," and by our Art-Unions; whether we are like to have such returns to the Commissioners of the Income-tax as those we have quoted, as a consequence of our forced and hot-bed encouragement, remains to be seen. Lord Brougham objects to the railroad mania, on account of the beggary to be induced when the employment they give rise to is over. When the ferment of patronage shall again have settled down to a selection of a few favourites, may we not entertain somewhat similar fears?

## ÆSTHETICS OF DRESS.

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### No. IV.

#### MINOR MATTERS.

It is not to be supposed that a man is to be styled "dressed" when he has only got a proper coat on his back; something more than this is necessary ere he can claim a place in the *beau monde*, or can decently figure in a *bal paré*. There is no one, indeed, but your mere Hottentot, who considers himself the pink of fashion solely from the fact of throwing something, more or less becoming, over his shoulders; though, by the way, we once heard of a negro chief who, in a state of unclad majesty, clapped a gold-laced cocked-hat on his head, and then strutted about with an air of intense satisfaction at the result of his habilimentary effort. He was not a well-dressed man this chief, any more than our friend the Frenchman in the diligence; but we will tell you this æsthetic story, gentle reader.

It was our destiny once—as it has been, too, of many a son of perfidious Albion—to be journeying across the monotonous plains of Upper Burgundy, *en route* for the gay capital. 'Twas a summer morn, and the breezy call of the incense-breathing lady, as Gray the poet calls her, came delightfully upon our heated forehead, as we pushed down the four-paned rattling window of that clumsy typefication of slowness, misnamed a diligence, to escape from the stifling atmosphere of the *rotonde*. Our fellow-travellers consisted of a couple of greasy, black-haired, sallow-faced curés, two farmers' wives with a puking child each, our own portly self, and the sixth passenger. Now, this sixth individual, who was in reality the eighth Christian immured in this quasi Black-hole, was one of those nondescript Parisian existences, to define whom is almost impossible to those who have never witnessed the animal. He might have been a *commis-voyageur*, or a clerk in the passport-office, or the keeper of a small café, or an *épicier*, but he did not look stupid enough for the last. Be this as it may, he was short rather than tall, lean rather than fat,—in a shabby brown surtout—smoked and took snuff—had been in Dauphiné—thought the Germans a set of European Chinese—considered a national guard as the model of a good soldier—kept spitting out of the window from time to time—stretched his legs most inconveniently against ours—tied his head up at dark in a dirty bird's-eye blue cotton *mouchoir-de-poche*, and snored throughout the night. He told us that he had not washed or shaved himself since leaving Lyons, two days before; and in the morning, just as we were opening the window, Monsieur yawned, stretched, rubbed his eyes, spat and spoke—"Sacré nom de cochon! Conducteur! conducteur! vous m'avez donc oublié! il fallait me faire descendre là bas!—là bas! là! là! nom de Dieu!"—"Plait-il?" said the *conducteur* as he came round to the door, taking his pipe out of his mouth, "qu'est ce que vous voulez, M'sieur?"—"Je vous avais dit qu'il fallait me faire descendre chez M. Dubois, et maintenant nous voilà à—où sommes-nous, par exemple?" "Imbécile! il y a encore trois bonnes lieues à la Pissotte!" and the angry *conducteur*, who had been roused from his sleep, and climbed over and round the lumbering vehicle to the back-door, now climbed round and over again to the *banquette*. The sixth passenger squeezed himself back into the corner, and resumed:—"M. Dubois ne m'attend pas: d'ailleurs je ne le connais pas: c'est égal; je me nicheraï chez lui pour une huitaine de jours: j'y ferai de bonnes affaires." All this was of course as unintelligible to the other passengers as it would have been uninteresting if we had cared to listen to him:—"Puisqu'il peut y avoir des dames," he went on, "il faut faire ma toilette." So saying, he took off his pocket-handkerchief from his head, and wiped his face well with it, yawned a good deal, and spat incontinently; opened his coat, spread back and jerked down the lapels; shoved his fingers comb-fashion and comb-colour through his matted hair till it stood up *a là* Bugaboo; and then looked round for admiration. "Ah! je l'avais oublié!" he exclaimed. Upon this he pulled out a large shabby green pocket-book from his coat; took off a greasy black stock, displaying a collarless shirt and neck, upon the tinge of which it would be needless to descant, and then extracting from the pocket-book two curvilinear pieces of dirty white paper, which had been folded more than once, and had an ink spot or two on their surface, applied them to his chin, holding their corners in his mouth, buckled on his stock again over them, adjusted these pseudo collars by aid of his watch-back, grinned a mile of approbation, and exclaimed, "Me voilà propre!"

It is not enough to be *propre* in one article of dress only: you must preserve a certain æsthetical *tournure*, or else set yourself down among the frampy multitude for ever. This must be our

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apology, dear reader, for thus detaining your attention, and for setting before you "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme," which may tend, if properly applied, to the inappreciable beautification of your own valuable person. Descend we therefore from the head and trunk of man—a curious bathos—to his understandings and unmentionables; you know what we mean. And herein, as in duty bound, draw we a distinction. "We know how to call all the drawers by name," (if we may so take a liberty with friend William's prose;) and let us therefore premise that we shall notice the unmentionable trowsers, *femoralia*, or *periscelemata*—as the Greeks would probably have called them, only they wore them not, but like Highland laddies preferred their own hides—of the virile portion of the community only. As for those tantalizing appendages of the better portion of her Majesty's subjects, we leave them in their proper concealment. We could easily write a volume or two to show that the custom came on Ormus, or Ind, or Araby the Blest; but criticism would not be tolerated, and besides—

—"Levius fit patientia  
Quidquid corrigere est nefas."  
"On s'accoutume à tout!"

Go, therefore, æsthetic reader, to Trajan's column at Rome, and amid the barbaric costumes which adorn it, you will find the prototype of the modern trouser. Or you need not travel so much out of your way. In the Townley Gallery there is the figure of Mithras with a fashionable pantaloon on his legs; and in the Louvre there are two or three disconsolate-looking barbaric captives, with their trousers flapping about their shins, and tied round their ankles: these are the originals of our modern what-d'ye-call'ems. As for the good old buckskins of our venerated grandsires and governors, they arose in Roman times. Field-marshall Julius Cæsar wore something very near of kin to them under his military kilt, in that pretty little skirmish wherein he first had the honour of exchanging stones and darts with our British ancestors; and from those days down to the present time has this garment maintained its ground, and proved its utility, with undying pertinacity. Now, we do not approve of the barbaric trowsers: that tying of them round the ankles, though it kept out the cold, was decidedly a Sawney practice: it militated against the curves of the leg, and destroyed all firmness and dignity of gait. Far better was the fashion of the middle ages, when the trouser became a real pantaloon—*a pantalon collant*, as modern artists call it, and when the full symmetry of the limb was displayed to the utmost advantage. This was, no doubt, the acme of perfection that the garment in question was capable of; and it is to be lamented that the mode has not kept its position in society more universally. For all purposes of ceremonial or ornamental dress, this form should still be rigidly adhered to. Utility and ornament here go hand in hand, or rather inside each other. No disguisement of natural form is attempted; and a man's appearance is judged of at its true value. The tight pantaloon is at once simple, useful, and beautiful. So far for its form. But there is an immense difficulty in the choice of its substance. If too elastic, the knee will soon make for itself one of those provoking pudding-bags that have tended, more than any thing else, to bring the fashion into disfavour. If too rigid and too frail, you know the catastrophe! We still remember the case of a fat friend of ours at a fancy-ball! British manufacturing ingenuity should bestir itself to invent a stuff fit for satisfactorily solving this vestimental problem of the greatest strain; and the pantaloon might then once more resume its paramount sway. To revert to the old buckskin: it is a perfectly respectable, useful, and satisfactory affair for the purposes to which it is now applied, and worn with a stout top-boot, and thrown over the side of a gallant horse, has no superior in the world. It is also a very good thing to put on if you are going to a new tailor's in town, especially if you can write Harkaway Hall as your address. The man will set you down for a real country-squire, and will give you tick for the next twenty years. But if you want to avoid having your pocket picked, don't wear buckskins as you go along Piccadilly; buckskins and tops, on foot, are so truly Arcadian in their appearance, that the swell mob cannot resist the temptation, and you are pretty sure to be victimized. As for the unmeaning black things worn with white silk stockings on court-days, and gloried in by all the beaux of the eighteenth century, they ought to be sent to the right-about as neither useful nor becoming. It may be all very well for Spanish matadors and Castilian dancers to wear them; but they were originally intended to have boots beneath them—so Charles I. wore them until he borrowed a foolish fashion from France—and from the very cut and nature of them, they should be worn so still, or abandoned altogether. We quarrel with them, not on the score of form so much as on that of inutility and undue contrast of colour. If the thing be dark, and the stocking light, an effect of cleanliness is attained; but the magpie appearance immediately prevails. The case is the same as that of a white waistcoat and a black coat; too glaring, *trop prononcé*. If they are both of the same colour, then the tight and continuous pantaloon is far more reasonable and becoming, and, for use, any thing else is better—*experto crede*. The only exception in its favour that we can make, is for the sportsman and the farmer; for him who joins on a stout legging or a gaiter, whether of cloth or leather; or, if you wish to do a bit of Jerry Hawthorn to some friend's Tom or Logic, here is your garment *de rigueur*;—put on your leggings, your green coats, and your white hat, and you are complete; but unless you wish to be mistaken for your friend's butler, or a waiter from your club, do not venture on the black *culotte*.

The trouser, then—the modern trouser—what are we to say of this? Why, that it is the most useful, the most comfortable, the most economical, and one of the least ugly garments ever invented by man. We almost remember the day, dear reader, when as yet trousers were among the great unborn; it was only the Duke, and those dashing fellows at his heels, who imported the idea, we believe from Germany originally, though *they* used it in the Peninsula. After the battle of Waterloo, no man of any spirit at all ever wore any thing else for common use. It existed, certainly, among our honest tars long previously to this epoch; but the *fashion* did not come from

them; the rage originated with the Peninsular troops, and was confirmed by the examples of the brilliant staffs that accompanied the Allied sovereigns to this country in 1814. It is true that the trouser did not assume its definite and rational form, such as it now has, all at once; it went through a round of vagaries indicative of a most diseased state of public taste. At one time it was all *à la Cosaque*, and you might have made a greatcoat out of a pair; at another, it was half up the leg, and more than two feet in circumference; by degrees it got strapped down and cut away into a sensible kind of shape; and now it has attained the *juste milieu*, making a happy compromise between the tight symmetry of the pantaloon, and the flaunting of the sailor's ducks. An immense step in the improvement of this garment has been made by the introduction of all that beautiful variety of plaids, and checked patterns, which are so commonly used; those in wool for winter wear are truly delightful; while for summer use, the trouser recommends itself to our untiring favour by the multiplicity of soft light substances which are every where employed. The trouser is to the pantaloon as the foraging cap is to the hat—good for all kinds of use, and likely to remain so for an indefinite period; good for all ranks and for all ages. One canon, however, should be laid down as to the cut:—no pockets should be tolerated on any account whatever: they make a man look like a Yankee. 'Tis the most slovenly custom on earth to keep your hands in your pockets—you deserve to have them sewed in if you indulge in it. And therefore, to avoid this disagreeable penalty, have your pockets sewed up.

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The next step downwards in the scale of dress brings us to the basis, foundation, and understanding of mankind—we mean boots and shoes; and here, being approvers of both "men and women's concise recti," as old Joe used to say, we must give a word of advice to both sexes; and ye who groan under the torments of corns, ("bunions" is a nasty word, we always think of onions when we hear it,) attend to our dictum. If any thing imperatively demands that utility should be consulted before ornament in its construction, it is the covering of the foot; whoever goes hunting in a dancing-pump is a fool, and whoever dances in a shooting-shoe is a clodhopper. There can be no doubt that the human mind speedily adopted normal rules of design when first the idea of protecting the foot was started in the world—and, on the whole, less absurdity has been evidenced in the pedal integuments than in most other matters of dress. The old tragic buskin, and the comic sock, the military sandal, *caliga*, and boot, all did their duty excellently in ancient times: we have not a word of reproach for them—and their successors in the middle ages acquitted themselves of their duties in a tolerably satisfactory manner, though not without some curious flights of fancy. Thus the cross gartering of the Saxon buskin, boots, or gaiter, or whatever else it might have been, looks to us truly absurd and uncomfortable, judging from the caricatured figures of ancient MSS.; but the peaked and tied-up points of the 14th century, when the toe was fastened to the knee, strikes us as the *ne plus ultra* of human folly. How Richard II.'s courtiers must have gone slopping and spirting about in the mud that befouled their streets as well as ours! What queer figures they must have cut on horseback in a rainy day, with the water running off from the pendulous tips of their shoes! Nevertheless, there was something good in the arrangement of the upper part of the shoe or half-boot of those times, and even of earlier days, as any one who reads the *Art-Union*, or who knows the history of British costume, can tell. It formed an appropriate termination to the tightly-dressed limb; and when not too much pointed, prolonged the natural shape of the foot into a gracefully-curving support. Shoes, in the present sense of the term, were not then worn: every thing was limited to the elastic half-boots: but for the huntsman or the horseman, not armed for the tented field, a sort of brown leather boot coming up to the knee was in common use. This had no falling tops, and was far removed from the ridiculous Spanish boot of after days. It was a plain and useful servant to the cavalier, and became him much better than the ponderous jack-boot of later times. It is to the Spaniards that we are indebted, if "indebted" be a suitable term, for the wide-topped falling boot of the sixteenth century; that inconvenient, no-service thing—good for the stage-players, fancy-ball men, and fellows like old Hudibras, who crammed a portable larder and wardrobe into its unfathomable recesses; but for the rough-riding horseman or the active hunter, a nuisance beyond all description. Boots such as these may look admirably well in pictures; for when delineated by a Vandyke, any thing would become graceful; but for actual practice, they would serve only to catch the rain, and to gall the legs of the wearer. Their descendant, the top-boot, has reformed itself wonderfully, and nearly all the inconvenience has been got rid of. Still, the brown colour of the top, which is no longer the inside of the boot turned down, as it was once, is an anomaly, and the boot itself ought to be merged in the plain single-coloured boot which is now much used on the Continent, though in England patronized only by the Meltonians. For positive use, the boot ought to come up fully to, or above, the knee, in order to stand the wear and pressure of the saddle; but for ornament, it may well be allowed to rise only partially up the leg, and to be, in short, the beautiful Hessian or Hungarian boot—far the most graceful covering ever put on the leg of a modern European. That such a truly elegant boot, so gentlemanlike, so dressy, and yet so thoroughly serviceable, should ever have gone out of fashion, is to us a melancholy, though not a needed, proof of the sheer caprice by which men's fancies are commonly swayed. We suspect, however, that if any cause more ostensible than mere accident can be alleged for this change, it is to be traced to some knock-knee'd or spindle-shanked fellow, who was ashamed to show his mis-shapen legs, and therefore concealed them in loose trousers. These boots, it is true, were not so well calculated for campaigning as the smaller ones which still bear the great man's name; and this may have had something to do with their disuse; nevertheless the change is to be lamented æsthetically, for the perfect union of utility and ornament was never so well exemplified as in the Hessian boot.

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With all due respect to the dancing world, or to the world of dancing-masters, we beg leave to anathematize the light shoe or pump; it is an ugly, inconvenient, unsuitable thing, fit for a man

with a white waistcoat, gold chain, knee-breeches, &c., but not for a gentleman. The true æsthetical article is either the elastic half-boot of the middle ages; fitting on to the pantaloons, or else the thin Wellington boot of the present day under the trousers. We do not care to see your ribbed and open-worked silk stockings; such display is not for the sterner sex; even in his highest moments of ornament, a man should always bear about him a trace of the useful. To illustrate what we mean—a man is not born to be a dancing-master, nor a tavern-waiter; a gentleman, more especially, is intended, from the moment he can run alone, to be ready for feats of gallantry and hardihood. He should dress accordingly; and, as a fundamental rule, the reason for which lies deeper than most people think, a gentleman should always be so attired as that, if occasion demands, he should be able to mount a horse on the instant and ride for his life. Now, your modern exquisite in pumps, or your old beau of the last century in high red-heeled shoes, could do nothing of the kind without much previous preparation; and we take it to be a sign of their degenerating manhood. Nine-tenths of the men who take pleasure in shoes and pumps, are but tailors on horseback; and the old fox-hunter, or the old dragoon, (good types both in their way of what a man should be,) love their boots next to their bottle. A slipper and a dressing-gown are excellent companions, agree well together, and never give their master a moment's uneasiness; hence their value; similarly, a stout high-low and a good leathern legging, buttoned well over the ankle beneath, and the knee above, will carry a man through heather or gorse, on foot or on horseback, and will prove "marvellous good wear;" they ought to be, as indeed they commonly are, dear friends to "whoever loves his country."

As for the ladies, truly we have little to say; they have always done pretty well in the matter of their feet. For them shoes are indispensably necessary, and, indeed, highly appropriate and becoming—so, too, are half-boots—and, fixed between these limits, the fair sex never have gone, nor, perhaps, can go, far astray. The nearer they keep to the form of nature in the clothing of their feet the better—it is a rule as true as the day, that a woman can seldom, if ever, artificially *improve* her form. But there is one curious circumstance connected with ladies' shoes, which, it appears, our fair countrywomen are not competent judges of—at least we appeal to every man in England not beyond his grand climacteric, and with two eyes in his head, for the correctness of our views in what we are going to assert:—a lady's shoe, worn with crossing sandals, gently curving over the instep and round the ankle, is immeasurably superior to the plain, quaker-like, old-maid affair, worn with the old-fashioned tie or button. Did women but know how much these slender lines of riband add to their appearance, how well the contrast sets off the anatomical beauties of their feet, they would never put on a shoe without such an appendage. In the same way, the nicely fitted boot, displaying the exact form of the arching foot, and deliciously-contrasted in colour with the robe or stocking, gives a prestige to a lady's foot, which can only be compared to the effect produced by the Hessian boot upon their lords and masters. We have nothing to say against the prevailing fashion of ladies' *chaussures* worn—even down to the clog and pattern, every thing is elegant, every thing is proportionably useful.

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One hint let us give to all. The secret of a well-fitting shoe, or rather of a good-looking shoe—and it is upon this principle that all French shoemakers proceed, but all English cobblers do not—is, that it should be much longer than the foot itself—at least an inch or an inch and a half longer. And for these two reasons: first, that, since a squat, broad, dumpy foot is much uglier than a long thin one, therefore you may always diminish the *appearance* of breadth, by adding to the *reality* of length; and next, that when the shoe is long, the toes have plenty of room, and commonly 'tis here that "the shoe pinches." No one has corns on his heels or the sides of his feet, let his shoes or boots be as narrow as he can well bear them: it is upon those poor, pent up, imprisoned, distorted joints of the toes, that the rubs of the world come, and that the corning process goes on. If you would cure yourself, reader, of the most obdurate corn, or if you would guarantee your children from ever having any, let them, and do you yourself, wear French *chaussures*; or else have the boots, &c., made fitting well to the foot at the side, and with exactly one inch, at the least, to spare in length, when standing in them. We'll bet you a hundred to one on the result: and you may ask any *cordonnier* in the Rue de Richelieu.

English shoemakers, be it observed, are nearly a century behind their Gallic brethren in the craft; they work more clumsily—with less art, less means, and less desire to please; they have no invention in the higher parts of their science, and they are abominably dear. We do not wish to disparage any thing in our native country—far from it; but take the hint, gentle reader; whatever your friends may say about it, always buy a French shoe or boot in preference to an English one; if of equal quality, the cut of the French is sure to be better; if not quite so strong, yet the goodness of the fit makes the thing wear longer. Above all, whenever you go to Paris, lay in as large a stock of these things as your purse will allow; they never get worse for age, and they are cheaper and better there than in any other part of the world. The next time you meet us in the Park, we'll show you a pair of boots made for us by Legrand in 1841, which we have ridden in and walked in now three winters; there is not a crack in them; they, like their master, have never lost their *soles*, (we can't say so much for our *hearts*,) they fit us like our own skin, and they cost less than a pound sterling. *Dear old Hoby* may go and hang himself!

From the regions of mud, dust, leather, and blacking, we will now reascend to the higher localities of the human person, and will fasten ourselves round the reader's neck. Do not be alarmed, we only want to *catch* your attention; we will not extend the word to any thing else. Here, too, ladies are exemplified by their especial privilege from our impudent scrutiny; their necks when unadorned are adorned the most; if they are cold, let them put on their boas, or a *fichu*, or muffle up with their shawls; let them eschew all false collars, let them delight in good lace, and the matter is settled. But for a man with a bad tie! we could take him by the throat and

throttle him! Here it is our duty freely to declare our candid opinion, that Beau Brummell and George IV. were not benefactors to the human race by introducing stiff cravatess and endless swathes of linen round the region of jugular veins and carotid arteries; if a man wishes to be comfortable any where, it is surely in his neck; let old gentlemen with scrofulous chins muffle themselves up to suffocation if they please, but why should we, who have nothing the matter with us, and wish to turn our heads *ad libitum*, be thus girt about and half stifled? Our climate, no doubt, requires some protection for the neck, and while beards are not worn, a cravat of some kind or other may be said to be necessary; but if comfort and use can be combined with elegance and good taste, and yet the old starched thing got rid of, so much the better. Let us remark, therefore, that we have done wrong in quitting the fashion of the seventeenth century as to cravats; we have adopted a stiff and a common material, and we have lost all opportunity of enjoyment, as well as of ornament. If you ever indulge in a white choker, good reader, only reflect for a minute on what you have round your neck—a yard and a half of stuff, the intrinsic value of which may be a couple of shillings, *plus* a pennyworth of starch, *plus* a neck as thick as an elephant's leg, and as stiff as a door-post, *minus* all grace, *minus* all comfort. But go and look at the Second Charles at Hampton Court—see how the merry monarch managed his neck on gal-a-days. You will observe that he had half a yard of the finest cambric, as soft as a zephyr, and as warm as swan's-down, tied once round; and ending before in long deep borders of the most precious Mechlin lace, worth a guinea or two a-yard, falling gracefully on his breast, or placed for convenience into a fold of his coat. How much more sensible, how much more ornamental, how much more noble, such a scarf or cravat as this, which no shopman's boy could emulate, than the cheap and ugly thing in which many a man still seems to delight! How admirably did these bands of rich lace contrast with the silken coats or the polished cuirasses of their wearers! how truly aristocratic was their appearance! how entirely without effort, without pretension, and yet how very distinctive of the type of their wearer! But you will say, if we fail in the matter of white cravats, surely we excel in that of black-silk ones and brocaded stocks! We *might* excel, we allow; but we do not know how to wear these things. We ought either to limit ourselves to the smallest possible bow in front, or else we ought to let the square ends of the scarf be pendant and unconfined. Instead of this, we either put on a stock with a sham tie, (now all *sham* things, of what kind soever, militate against good taste,) or else, to make the most of our scarf, we fill up the aperture of the waistcoat with an ambitious quantity of drapery, and we stick therein an enormous and obtrusively ostentatious pin. This is both vulgar and foolish. If we want a stock, it should be *perfectly plain—à la militaire*, for it is, in truth, an article of military attire, worn for the express purpose of giving stiffness and smartness to the figure. If we want a scarf, do not let us misconceive the nature of its form, the law of its curves, and huddle it up into an untidy, unmeaning mass, fit for nothing but to serve as a field of display for what is commonly cheap and bad jewellery. We may be wrong, but we strongly suspect that the tie-stock and the large silk scarf were brought into use by some dirty fellow, whose linens would not stand the test of public examination; and, indeed, whenever we see a man more than usually adorned in this way about the neck, we conjecture that all is not right beneath. A small black or judiciously coloured cravat, with a very small bow, and just sufficient stiffness to give dignity to the head—this should be the morning wear of the real gentleman; in the evening, let him put on the finest fabric of the flax-loom, and the most expensive lace he can afford to purchase—they will be very becoming, and will be duly appreciated by the ladies, who know the cost of such things; all silks and stocks let him leave to men-milliners.

Which side are we to take in the collar question—ups, or downs, or none at all? We confess ourselves to be practically in a dilemma; although, æsthetically speaking—and, indeed, from motives of comfort—we have no hesitation in saying, turn down your collars; they never were meant to be turned up. But it is now become so much of a French and English affair, that we shall be suspected of want of patriotism if we do not say, keep up your collars, and uphold the national dignity! As for the no-collar view of the subject, much may be said for and against it: it depends a good deal on your complexion, reader, and also on the colour of your cravat. If you have got on your cambric and your lace, you need no further contrast for your physiognomical tint; but if you are wearing a black kerchief, and you are of a bilious brown and yellow hue, pray let us see half an inch, at least, of white beneath the lower jawbone. This point of contrast is the real reason why the collar should, as a matter of taste, be allowed to lie down on the cravat. It produces greater effect—it looks cleaner—it is certainly more comfortable. If the majority of freeborn Englishmen shall ever so far surmount their prejudices as to take a hint from France, (for 'tis an invention of *la jeune France*,) we will walk over from our side of the house, and, in face of the nation and our constituents, will join them.

Collars are connected with wristbands just as the two ends of the electric telegraph are by the communicating wires, and the satisfactory intelligence disclosed by the one, that the wearer is a good friend to his laundress, is, or should be, simultaneously repeated by the other. Believe us, reader, there is no more distinctive mark of a correct man than a snowy-white wristband, *always* to be visible. Here again we must establish another æsthetical rule of proportion, viz. collars are to wristbands as laced cravats are to ruffles; and therefore, if you decide upon taking our advice and indulging in Brussels lace while you sip your claret, you must also buy lace enough to adorn your wrists, and you will not repent of the expense or the effect. It is, in truth, a pretty and a graceful fashion, which, for evening dress, should entirely be re-introduced, and we anticipate that the ladies would be unanimous in their approbation.

A few more words on odds and ends of dress, and we have done with civil costume. Always keep yourself well supplied with gloves; wear them neither of a blue, nor yet of a green, nor even of a red colour: any other kind of tint you may, under various circumstances, indulge in. Always use

white, and the finest cambric, pocket-handkerchiefs: you can thus neither take snuff, nor avoid using a considerable number; do not regret the expense—the ladies will reward you with their approbation, and you cannot be mistaken for an American. Whether you be male or female, gentle reader, do not wear much jewellery—beware of being taken for one of the swell-mob and the doubtfuls; but if you are a lady, and wish for jewellery in the evening, choose between pearls and diamonds; better have a few of these, and good, than whole caskets of topazes and amethysts. If you are a gentleman, wear only two rings—one for your lady-love, the other for your armorial bearings—if you have a gold chain to your watch, keep it, but the less you show of it the better. Avoid a foolish custom now springing up, of fastening the coat with a couple of supplementary buttons, attached by a metallic link. This is the trick of some scoundrel tailor, who sent home a coat too small for the wearer, and thus persuaded him (he must have been an ass) to tie two buttons together, and so make both ends meet. It will do very well for a commercial gent, but not for a gentleman. We need hardly say, be not fine on a Sunday: dress plainer than usual, if you would maintain your dignity; and be not ashamed of an old coat—only let it be clean, *portez-le bien, soyez bien chaussé, bien ganté, bien coiffé et vous n'aurez jamais l'air d'un bourgeois.* Above all things, whether you be man, woman, or child, remember, that the more you approximate to uniformity of colour for the whole of your dress, the better. Whether you prefer white to black, blue to green, or brown to red, no matter. Stick to the law of æsthetic unity—retain natural and undisguised contour, breadth and mellowness of colour, ease and dignity of movement, and you will approximate to perfection.

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## SUSPIRIA DE PROFUNDIS: BEING A SEQUEL TO THE CONFessions OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER.

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### PART I. CONCLUDED.

#### THE PALIMPSEST.

You know perhaps, masculine reader, better than I can tell you, what is a *Palimpsest*. Possibly you have one in your own library. But yet, for the sake of others who may *not* know, or may have forgotten, suffer me to explain it here: lest any female reader, who honours these papers with her notice, should tax me with explaining it once too seldom; which would be worse to bear than a simultaneous complaint from twelve proud men, that I had explained it three times too often. You therefore, fair reader, understand that for *your* accommodation exclusively, I explain the meaning of this word. It is Greek; and our sex enjoys the office and privilege of standing counsel to yours, in all questions of Greek. We are, under favour, perpetual and hereditary dragomans to you. So that if, by accident, you know the meaning of a Greek word, yet by courtesy to us, your counsel learned in that matter, you will always seem *not* to know it.

A palimpsest, then, is a membrane or roll cleansed of its manuscript by reiterated successions.

What was the reason that the Greeks and the Romans had not the advantage of printed books? The answer will be, on ninety-nine persons in a hundred—Because the mystery of printing was not then discovered. But this is altogether a mistake. The secret of printing must have been discovered many thousands of times before it was used, or *could* be used. The inventive powers of man are divine; and also his stupidity is divine—as Cowper so playfully illustrates in the slow development of the *sofa* through successive generations of immortal dulness. It took centuries of blockheads to raise a joint stool into a chair; and it required something like a miracle of genius, in the estimate of elder generations, to reveal the possibility of lengthening a chair into a *chaise-longue*, or a sofa. Yes, these were inventions that cost mighty throes of intellectual power. But still, as respects printing, and admirable as is the stupidity of man, it was really not quite equal to the task of evading an object which stared him in the face with so broad a gaze. It did not require an Athenian intellect to read the main secret of printing in many scores of processes which the ordinary uses of life were *daily* repeating. To say nothing of analogous artifices amongst various mechanic artisans, all that is essential in printing must have been known to every nation that struck coins and medals. Not, therefore, any want of a printing art—that is, of an art for multiplying impressions—but the want of a cheap material for *receiving* such impressions, was the obstacle to an introduction of printed books even as early as Pisistratus. The ancients *did* apply printing to records of silver and gold; to marble and many other substances cheaper than gold and silver, they *did not*, since each monument required a *separate* effort of inscription. Simply this defect it was of a cheap material for receiving impresses, which froze in its very fountains the early resources of printing.

Some twenty years ago, this view of the case was luminously expounded by Dr Whately, the present archbishop of Dublin, and with the merit, I believe, of having first suggested it. Since then, this theory has received indirect confirmation. Now, out of that original scarcity affecting all materials proper for durable books, which continued up to times comparatively modern, grew the opening for palimpsests. Naturally, when once a roll of parchment or of vellum had done its office, by propagating through a series of generations what once had possessed an interest for *them*, but which, under changes of opinion or of taste, had faded to their feelings or had become obsolete for their understandings, the whole *membrana* or vellum skin, the twofold product of human skill, costly material, and costly freight of thought, which it carried, drooped in value

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concurrently—supposing that each were inalienably associated to the other. Once it had been the impress of a human mind which stamped its value upon the vellum; the vellum, though costly, had contributed but a secondary element of value to the total result. At length, however, this relation between the vehicle and its freight has gradually been undermined. The vellum, from having been the setting of the jewel, has risen at length to be the jewel itself; and the burden of thought, from having given the chief value to the vellum, has now become the chief obstacle to its value; nay, has totally extinguished its value, unless it can be dissociated from the connexion. Yet, if this unlinking *can* be effected, then—fast as the inscription upon the membrane is sinking into rubbish—the membrane itself is reviving in its separate importance; and, from bearing a ministerial value, the vellum has come at last to absorb the whole value.

Hence the importance for our ancestors that the separation *should* be effected. Hence it arose in the middle ages, as a considerable object for chemistry, to discharge the writing from the roll, and thus to make it available for a new succession of thoughts. The soil, if cleansed from what once had been hot-house plants, but now were held to be weeds, would be ready to receive a fresh and more appropriate crop. In that object the monkish chemists succeeded; but after fashion which seems almost incredible; incredible not as regards the extent of their success, but as regards the delicacy of restraints under which it moved; so equally adjusted was their success to the immediate interests of that period, and to the reverisinary interests of our own. They did the thing; but not so radically as to prevent us, their posterity, from *undoing* it. They expelled the writing sufficiently to leave a field for the new manuscript, and yet not sufficiently to make the traces of the elder manuscript irrecoverable for us. Could magic, could Hermes Trismegistus, have done more? What would you think, fair reader, of a problem such as this—to write a book which should be sense for your own generation, nonsense for the next, should revive into sense for the next after that, but again became nonsense for the fourth; and so on by alternate successions, sinking into night or blazing into day, like the Sicilian river Arethusa, and the English river Mole—or like the undulating motions of a flattened stone which children cause to skim the breast of a river, now diving below the water, now grazing its surface, sinking heavily into darkness, rising buoyantly into light, through a long vista of alternations? Such a problem, you say, is impossible. But really it is a problem not harder apparently than—to bid a generation kill, but so that a subsequent generation may call back into life; bury, but so that posterity may command to rise again. Yet *that* was what the rude chemistry of past ages effected when coming into combination with the reaction from the more refined chemistry of our own. Had *they* been better chemists, had *we* been worse—the mixed result, viz. that, dying for *them*, the flower should revive for *us*, could not have been effected: They did the thing proposed to them: they did it effectually; for they founded upon it all that was wanted: and yet ineffectually, since we unravelled their work; effacing all above which they had superscribed; restoring all below which they had effaced.

Here, for instance, is a parchment which contained some Grecian tragedy, the Agamemnon of Æschylus, or the Phœnissæ of Euripides. This had possessed a value almost inappreciable in the eyes of accomplished scholars, continually growing rarer through generations. But four centuries are gone by since the destruction of the Western Empire. Christianity, with towering grandeurs of another class, has founded a different empire; and some bigoted yet perhaps holy monk has washed away (as he persuades himself) the heathen's tragedy, replacing it with a monastic legend; which legend is disfigured with fables in its incidents, and yet, in a higher sense, is true, because interwoven with Christian morals and with the sublimest of Christian revelations. Three, four, five, centuries more find man still devout as ever; but the language has become obsolete, and even for Christian devotion a new era has arisen, throwing it into the channel of crusading zeal or of chivalrous enthusiasm. The *membrana* is wanted now for a knightly romance—for "my Cid," or Coeur de Lion; for Sir Tristrem, or Lybæus Disconus. In this way, by means of the imperfect chemistry known to the mediæval period, the same roll has served as a conservatory for three separate generations of flowers and fruits, all perfectly different, and yet all specially adapted to the wants of the successive possessors. The Greek tragedy, the monkish legend, the knightly romance, each has ruled its own period. One harvest after another has been gathered into the garners of man through ages far apart. And the same hydraulic machinery has distributed, through the same marble fountains, water, milk, or wine, according to the habits and training of the generations that came to quench their thirst.

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Such were the achievements of rude monastic chemistry. But the more elaborate chemistry of our own days has reversed all these motions of our simple ancestors, with results in every stage that to *them* would have realized the most fantastic amongst the promises of thaumaturgy. Insolent vaunt of Paracelsus, that he would restore the original rose or violet out of the ashes settling from its combustion—that is now rivalled in this modern achievement. The traces of each successive handwriting, regularly effaced, as had been imagined, have, in the inverse order, been regularly called back: the footsteps of the game pursued, wolf or stag, in each several chase, have been unlinked, and hunted back through all their doubles; and, as the chorus of the Athenian stage unwove through the antistrophe every step that had been mystically woven through the strophe, so, by our modern conjurations of science, secrets of ages remote from each other have been exorcised<sup>[9]</sup> from the accumulated shadows of centuries. Chemistry, a witch as potent as the Erictho of Lucan, (*Pharsalia*, lib. vi. or vii.,) has extorted by her torments, from the dust and ashes of forgotten centuries, the secrets of a life extinct for the general eye, but still glowing in the embers. Even the fable of the Phoenix—that secular bird, who propagated his solitary existence, and his solitary births, along the line of centuries, through eternal relays of funeral mists—is but a type of what we have done with Palimpsests. We have backed upon each

Phoenix in the long *regressus*, and forced him to expose his ancestral Phoenix, sleeping in the ashes below his own ashes. Our good old forefathers would have been aghast at our sorceries; and, if they speculated on the propriety of burning Dr Faustus, *us* they would have burned by acclamation. Trial there would have been none; and they could no otherwise have satisfied their horror of the brazen profligacy marking our modern magic, than by ploughing up the houses of all who had been parties to it, and sowing the ground with salt.

Fancy not, reader, that this tumult of images, illustrative or allusive, moves under any impulse or purpose of mirth. It is but the coruscation of a restless understanding, often made ten times more so by irritation of the nerves, such as you will first learn to comprehend (its *how* and its *why*) some stage or two ahead. The image, the memorial, the record, which for me is derived from a palimpsest, as to one great fact in our human being, and which immediately I will show you, is but too repellent of laughter; or, even if laughter *had* been possible, it would have been such laughter as often times is thrown off from the fields of ocean<sup>[10]</sup>—laughter that hides, or that seems to evade mustering tumult; foam-bells that weave garlands of phosphoric radiance for one moment round the eddies of gleaming abysses; mimicries of earth-born flowers that for the eye raise phantoms of gaiety, as oftentimes for the ear they raise echoes of fugitive laughter, mixing with the ravings and choir-voices of an angry sea.

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What else than a natural and mighty palimpsest is the human brain? Such a palimpsest is my brain; such a palimpsest, O reader! is yours. Everlasting layers of ideas, images, feelings, have fallen upon your brain softly as light. Each succession has seemed to bury all that went before. And yet in reality not one has been extinguished. And if, in the vellum palimpsest, lying amongst the other *diplomata* of human archives or libraries, there is any thing fantastic or which moves to laughter, as oftentimes there is in the grotesque collisions of those successive themes, having no natural connexion, which by pure accident have consecutively occupied the roll, yet, in our own heaven-created palimpsest, the deep memorial palimpsest of the brain, there are not and cannot be such incoherencies. The fleeting accidents of a man's life, and its external shows, may indeed be irrelate and incongruous; but the organizing principles which fuse into harmony, and gather about fixed predetermined centres, whatever heterogeneous elements life may have accumulated from without, will not permit the grandeur of human unity greatly to be violated, or its ultimate repose to be troubled in the retrospect from dying moments, or from other great convulsions.

Such a convulsion is the struggle of gradual suffocation, as in drowning; and, in the original Opium Confessions, I mentioned a case of that nature communicated to me by a lady from her own childish experience. The lady is still living, though now of unusually great age; and I may mention—that amongst her faults never was numbered any levity of principle, or carelessness of the most scrupulous veracity; but, on the contrary, such faults as arise from austerity, too harsh perhaps, and gloomy—indulgent neither to others nor herself. And, at the time of relating this incident, when already very old, she had become religious to asceticism. According to my present belief, she had completed her ninth year, when playing by the side of a solitary brook, she fell into one of its deepest pools. Eventually, but after what lapse of time nobody ever knew, she was saved from death by a farmer, who, riding in some distant lane, had seen her rise to the surface; but not until she had descended within the abyss of death, and looked into its secrets, as far, perhaps, as ever human eye *can* have looked that had permission to return. At a certain stage of this descent, a blow seemed to strike her—phosphoric radiance sprang forth from her eye-balls; and immediately a mighty theatre expanded within her brain. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, every act—every design of her past life lived again—arraying themselves not as a succession, but as parts of a coexistence. Such a light fell upon the whole path of her life backwards into the shades of infancy, as the light perhaps which wrapt the destined apostle on his road to Damascus. Yet that light blinded for a season; but hers poured celestial vision upon the brain, so that her consciousness became omnipresent at one moment to every feature in the infinite review.

This anecdote was treated sceptically at the time by some critics. But besides that it has since been confirmed by other experiences essentially the same, reported by other parties in the same circumstances who had never heard of each other; the true point for astonishment is not the *simultaneity* of arrangement under which the past events of life—though in fact successive—had formed their dread line of revelation. This was but a secondary phenomenon; the deeper lay in the resurrection itself, and the possibility of resurrection, for what had so long slept in the dust. A pall, deep as oblivion, had been thrown by life over every trace of these experiences; and yet suddenly, at a silent command, at the signal of a blazing rocket sent up from the brain, the pall draws up, and the whole depths of the theatre are exposed. Here was the greater mystery: now this mystery is liable to no doubt; for it is repeated, and ten thousand times repeated by opium, for those who are its martyrs.

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Yes, reader, countless are the mysterious handwritings of grief or joy which have inscribed themselves successively upon the palimpsest of your brain; and, like the annual leaves of aboriginal forests, or the undissolving snows on the Himalaya, or light falling upon light, the endless strata have covered up each other in forgetfulness. But by the hour of death, but by fever, but by the searchings of opium, all these can revive in strength. They are not dead, but sleeping. In the illustration imagined by myself, from the case of some individual palimpsest, the Grecian tragedy had seemed to be displaced, but was *not* displaced, by the monkish legend; and the monkish legend had seemed to be displaced, but was *not* displaced, by the knightly romance. In some potent convulsion of the system, all wheels back into its earliest elementary stage. The bewildering romance, light tarnished with darkness, the semi-fabulous legend, truth celestial

mixed with human falsehoods, these fade even of themselves as life advances. The romance has perished that the young man adored. The legend has gone that deluded the boy. But the deep deep tragedies of infancy, as when the child's hands were unlinked for ever from his mother's neck, or his lips for ever from his sister's kisses, these remain lurking below all, and these lurk to the last. Alchemy there is none of passion or disease that can scorch away these immortal impresses. And the dream which closed the preceding section, together with the succeeding dreams of this, (which may be viewed as in the nature of choruses winding up the overture contained in Part I.,) are but illustrations of this truth, such as every man probably will meet experimentally who passes through similar convulsions of dreaming or delirium from any similar or equal disturbance in his nature.<sup>[11]</sup>

#### LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW.

Oftentimes at Oxford I saw Levana in my dreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pretend to have leisure for very much scholarship, you will not be angry with me for telling you. Levana was the Roman goddess that performed for the newborn infant the earliest office of ennobling kindness—typical, by its mode, of that grandeur which belongs to man every where, and of that benignity in powers invisible, which even in Pagan worlds sometimes descends to sustain it. At the very moment of birth, just as the infant tasted for the first time the atmosphere of our troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. *That* might bear different interpretations. But immediately, lest so grand a creature should grovel there for more than one instant, either the paternal hand, as proxy for the goddess Levana, or some near kinsman, as proxy for the father, raised it upright, bade it look erect as the king of all this world, and presented its forehead to the stars, saying, perhaps, in his heart—"Behold what is greater than yourselves!" This symbolic act represented the function of Levana. And that mysterious lady, who never revealed her face, (except to me in dreams,) but always acted by delegation, had her name from the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian verb) *levare*, to raise aloft.

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This is the explanation of Levana. And hence it has arisen that some people have understood by Levana the tutelary power that controls the education of the nursery. She, that would not suffer at his birth even a prefigurative or mimic degradation for her awful ward, far less could be supposed to suffer the real degradation attaching to the non-development of his powers. She therefore watches over human education. Now, the word *educo*, with the penultimate short, was derived (by a process often exemplified in the crystallization of languages) from the word *edūco*, with the penultimate long. Whatsoever *educes* or develops—*educates*. By the education of Levana, therefore, is meant—not the poor machinery that moves by spelling-books and grammars, but that mighty system of central forces hidden in the deep bosom of human life, which by passion, by strife, by temptation, by the energies of resistance, works for ever upon children—resting not day or night, any more than the mighty wheel of day and night themselves, whose moments, like restless spokes, are glimmering<sup>[12]</sup> for ever as they revolve.

If, then, *these* are the ministries by which Levana works, how profoundly must she reverence the agencies of grief! But you, reader! think—that children generally are not liable to grief such as mine. There are two senses in the word *generally*—the sense of Euclid where it means *universally*, (or in the whole extent of the *genus*), and a foolish sense of this world where it means *usually*. Now I am far from saying that children universally are capable of grief like mine. But there are more than you ever heard of, who die of grief in this island of ours. I will tell you a common case. The rules of Eton require that a boy on the *foundation* should be there twelve years: he is superannuated at eighteen, consequently he must come at six. Children torn away from mothers and sisters at that age not unfrequently die. I speak of what I know. The complaint is not entered by the registrar as grief; but *that* it is. Grief of that sort, and at that age, has killed more than ever have been counted amongst its martyrs.

Therefore it is that Levana often communes with the powers that shake man's heart: therefore it is that she doats upon grief. "These ladies," said I softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, "these are the Sorrows; and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the Parcae are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always with colours sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black; the *Furies* are three, who visit with retributions called on the other side of the grave offences that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say *now*; but in Oxford I said—"one of whom I know, and the others too surely I *shall* know." For already, in my fervent youth, I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark background of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful sisters. These sisters—by what name shall we call them?

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If I say simply—"The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be understood of individual sorrow—separate cases of sorrow,—whereas I want term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersonations, that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them, therefore, *Our Ladies of Sorrow*. I know them thoroughly, and have walked in all their kingdoms. Three sisters they are, of one mysterious household; and their paths are wide apart; but of their dominion there is no end. Them I saw often conversing with Levana, and sometimes about myself. Do they talk, then? Oh, no! Mighty phantoms like these disdain the infirmities of language. They may utter voices

through the organs of man when they dwell in human hearts, but amongst themselves is no voice nor sound—eternal silence reigns in *their* kingdoms. *They* spoke not as they talked with Levana. *They* whispered not. *They* sang not. Though oftentimes methought they *might* have sung; for I upon earth had heard their mysteries oftentimes deciphered by harp and timbrel, by dulcimer and organ. Like God, whose servants they are, they utter their pleasure, not by sounds that perish, or by words that go astray, but by signs in heaven—by changes on earth—by pulses in secret rivers—heraldries painted on darkness—and hieroglyphics written on the tablets of the brain. *They* wheeled in mazes; *I* spelled the steps. *They* telegraphed from afar; *I* read the signals. *They* conspired together; and on the mirrors of darkness *my* eye traced the plots. *Theirs* were the symbols,—*mine* are the words.

What is it the sisters are? What is it that they do? Let me describe their form, and their presence; if form it were that still fluctuated in its outline; or presence it were that for ever advanced to the front, or for ever receded amongst shades.

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, when a voice was heard of lamentation—Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened for ever, which, heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtle, wild and sleepy by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds; oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard the sobbing of litanies or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than Papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sate all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with, whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the spring-time of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, he recalled her to himself. But her blind father mourns for ever over *her*; still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is *now* within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bedchamber of the Czar, bringing before his eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides a ghostly intruder into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honour with the title of "Madonna."

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The second sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops for ever; for ever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic; raging in the highest against heaven; and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamours, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in Mediterranean galleys, of the English criminal in Norfolk island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England, of the baffled penitent reverting his eye for ever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother, as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered;<sup>[13]</sup>—every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients;—every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsmen, whom God will judge;—every captive in every dungeon;—all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditional law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace—all these walk with "Our Lady of Sighs." She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third sister, who is also the youngest—! Hush! whisper, whilst we talk of *her*! Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybèle, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high, *might* be hidden by distance. But, being what they are, they cannot be

hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers—for noon of day or noon of night—for ebbing or for flowing tide—may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for, though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And her name is *Mater Tenebrarum*—Our Lady of Darkness.

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These were the *Semnai Theai*, or Sublime Goddesses<sup>[14]</sup>—these were the *Eumenides*, or Gracious Ladies, (so called by antiquity in shuddering propitiation)—of my Oxford dreams. MADONNA spoke. She spoke by her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to Our Lady of Sighs; and what she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this:—

"Lo! here is he, whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled, and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he become idolatrous; and through me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshipped the worm, and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness; saintly its corruption. Him, this young idolater, I have seasoned for thee, dear gentle Sister of Sighs! Do thou take him now to thy heart, and season him for our dreadful sister. And thou"—turning to the *Mater Tenebrarum*, she said—"wicked sister, that temptest and hatest, do thou take him from her. See that thy sceptre lie heavy on his head. Suffer not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope—with the relentings of love—scorch the fountains of tears: curse him as only thou canst curse. So shall he be accomplished in the furnace—so shall he see the things that ought *not* to be seen—sights that are abominable, and secrets that are unutterable. So shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths, fearful truths. So shall he rise again *before* he dies. And so shall our commission be accomplished which from God we had—to plague his heart until we had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."<sup>[15]</sup>

#### THE APPARITION OF THE BROCKEN.

Ascend with me on this dazzling Whitsunday the Brocken of North Germany. The dawn opened in cloudless beauty; it is a dawn of bridal June; but, as the hours advance, her youngest sister April, that sometimes cares little for racing across both frontiers of May, frets the bridal lady's sunny temper with sallies of wheeling and careering showers—flying and pursuing, opening, and closing, hiding and restoring. On such a morning, and reaching the summits of the forest-mountain about sunrise, we shall have one chance the more for seeing the famous Spectre of the Brocken.<sup>[16]</sup> Who and what is he? He is a solitary apparition, in the sense of loving solitude; else he is not always solitary in his personal manifestations, but on proper occasions has been known to unmask a strength quite sufficient to alarm those who had been insulting him.

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Now, in order to test the nature of this mysterious apparition, we will try two or three experiments upon him. What we fear, and with some reason, is, that as he lived so many ages with foul Pagan sorcerers, and witnessed so many centuries of dark idolatries, his heart may have been corrupted; and that even now his faith may be wavering or impure. We will try.

Make the sign of the cross, and observe whether he repeats it, (as, on Whitsunday,<sup>[17]</sup> he surely ought to do.) Look! he *does* repeat it; but the driving showers perplex the images, and *that*, perhaps, it is which gives him the air of one who acts reluctantly or evasively. Now, again, the sun shines more brightly, and the showers have swept off like squadrons of cavalry to the rear. We will try him again.

Pluck an anemone, one of these many anemones which once was called the sorcerer's flower,<sup>[18]</sup> and bore a part perhaps in his horrid ritual of fear; carry it to that stone which mimics the outline of a heathen altar, and once was called the sorcerer's altar<sup>[18]</sup>; then, bending your knee, and raising your right hand to God, say,—"Father, which art in heaven—this lovely anemone, that once glorified the worship of fear, has travelled back into thy fold; this altar, which once reeked with bloody rites to Cortho, has long been rebaptized into thy holy service. The darkness is gone—the cruelty is gone which the darkness bred; the moans have passed away which the victims uttered; the cloud has vanished which once sate continually upon their graves—cloud of protestation that ascended for ever to thy throne from the tears of the defenceless, and the anger of the just. And lo! I thy servant, with this dark phantom, whom, for one hour on this thy festival of Pentecost, I make *my* servant, render thee united worship in this thy recovered temple."

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Look, now! the apparition plucks an anemone, and places it on an altar; he also bends his knee, he also raises his right hand to God. Dumb he is; but sometimes the dumb serve God acceptably. Yet still it occurs to you, that perhaps on this high festival of the Christian Church, he may be overruled by supernatural influence into confession of his homage, having so often been made to bow and bend his knee at murderous rites. In a service of religion he may be timid. Let us try

him, therefore, with an earthly passion, where he will have no bias either from favour or from fear.

If, then, once in childhood you suffered an affliction that was ineffable; If once, when powerless to face such an enemy, you were summoned to fight with the tiger that couches within the separations of the grave; in that case, after the example of Judæa (on the Roman coins)—sitting under her palm-tree to weep, but sitting with her head veiled—do you also veil your head. Many years are passed away since then; and you were a little ignorant thing at that time, hardly above six years old; or perhaps (if you durst tell all the truth) not quite so much. But your heart was deeper than the Danube; and, as was your love, so was your grief. Many years are gone since that darkness settled on your head; many summers, many winters; yet still its shadows wheel round upon you at intervals, like these April showers upon this glory of bridal June. Therefore now, on this dovelike morning of Pentecost, do you veil your head like Judæa in memory of that transcendent woe, and in testimony that, indeed, it surpassed all utterance of words. Immediately you see that the apparition of the Brocken veils *his* head, after the model of Judæa weeping under her palm-tree, as if he also had a human heart, and that *he* also, in childhood, having suffered an affliction which was ineffable, wished by these mute symbols to breathe a sigh towards heaven in memory of that affliction, and by way of record, though many a year after, that it was indeed unutterable by words.

This trial is decisive. You are now satisfied that the apparition is but a reflex of yourself; and, in uttering your secret feelings to *him*, you make this phantom the dark symbolic mirror for reflecting to the daylight what else must be hidden for ever.

Such a relation does the Dark Interpreter, whom immediately the reader will learn to know as an intruder into my dreams, bear to my own mind. He is originally a mere reflex of my inner nature. But as the apparition of the Brocken sometimes is disturbed by storms or by driving showers, so as to dissemble his real origin, in like manner the Interpreter sometimes swerves out of my orbit, and mixes a little with alien natures. I do not always know him in these cases as my own parhelion. What he says, generally is but that which *I* have said in daylight, and in meditation deep enough to sculpture itself on my heart. But sometimes, as his face alters, his words alter; and they do not always seem such as I have used, or *could* use. No man can account for all things that occur in dreams. Generally I believe this—that he is a faithful representative of myself; but he also is at times subject to the action of the god *Phantasus*, who rules in dreams.

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Hailstone choruses<sup>[19]</sup> besides, and storms, enter my dreams. Hailstones and fire that run along the ground, sleet and blinding hurricanes, revelations of glory insufferable pursued by volleying darkness—these are powers able to disturb any features that originally were but shadow, and to send drifting the anchors of any vessel that rides upon deeps so treacherous as those of dreams. Understand, however, the Interpreter to bear generally the office of a tragic chorus at Athens. The Greek chorus is perhaps not quite understood by critics, any more than the Dark Interpreter by myself. But the leading function of both must be supposed this—not to tell you any thing absolutely new, *that* was done by the actors in the drama; but to recall you to your own lurking thoughts—hidden for the moment or imperfectly developed, and to place before you, in immediate connexion with groups vanishing too quickly for any effort of meditation on your own part, such commentaries, prophetic or looking back, pointing the moral or deciphering the mystery, justifying Providence, or mitigating the fierceness of anguish, as would or might have occurred to your own meditative heart—had only time been allowed for its motions.

The Interpreter is anchored and stationary in my dreams; but great storms and driving mists cause him to fluctuate uncertainly, or even to retire altogether, like his gloomy counterpart the shy Phantom of the Brocken—and to assume new features or strange features, as in dreams always there is a power not contented with reproduction, but which absolutely creates or transforms. This dark being the reader will see again in a further stage of my opium experience; and I warn him that he will not always be found sitting inside my dreams, but at times outside, and in open daylight.

#### FINALE TO PART I.—SAVANNAH-LA-MAR.

God smote Savannah-la-Mar, and in one night, by earthquake, removed her, with all her towers standing and population sleeping, from the steadfast foundations of the shore to the coral floors of ocean. And God said—"Pompeii did I bury and conceal from men through seventeen centuries: this city I will bury, but not conceal. She shall be a monument to men of my mysterious anger; set in azure light through generations to come: for I will enshrine her in a crystal dome of my tropic seas." This city, therefore, like a mighty galleon with all her apparel mounted, streamers flying, and tackling perfect, seems floating along the noiseless depths of ocean: and oftentimes in glassy calms, through the translucent atmosphere of water that now stretches like an air-woven awning above the silent encampment, mariners from every clime look down into her courts and terraces, count her gates, and number the spires of her churches. She is one ample cemetery, and *has* been for many a year; but in the mighty calms that brood for weeks over tropic latitudes, she fascinates the eye with a *Fata-Morgana* revelation, as of human life still subsisting in submarine asylums sacred from the storms that torment our upper air.

Thither, lured by the loveliness of cerulean depths, by the peace of human dwellings privileged from molestation, by the gleam of marble altars sleeping in everlasting sanctity, oftentimes in dreams did I and the dark Interpreter cleave the watery veil that divided us from her streets. We

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looked into the belfries, where the pendulous bells were waiting in vain for the summons which should awaken their marriage peals; together we touched the mighty organ keys, that sang no *jubilates* for the ear of Heaven—that sang no requiems for the ear of human sorrow; together we searched the silent nurseries, where the children were all asleep, and *had* been asleep through five generations. "They are waiting for the heavenly dawn," whispered the Interpreter to himself; "and, when *that* comes, the bells and the organs will utter a *jubilate* repeated by the echoes of Paradise." Then, turning to me, he said—"This is sad: this is piteous: but less would not have sufficed for the purposes of God. Look here: put into a Roman clepsydra one hundred drops of water; let these run out as the sands in an hourglass; every drop measuring the hundredth part of a second, so that each shall represent but the three-hundred-and-sixty-thousandth part of an hour. Now, count the drops as they race along; and, when the fiftieth of the hundred is passing, behold! forty-nine are not, because already they have perished; and fifty are not, because they are yet to come. You see, therefore, how narrow, how incalculably narrow, is the true and actual present. Of that time which we call the present, hardly a hundredth part but belongs either to a past which has fled, or to a future which is still on the wing. It has perished, or it is not born. It was, or it is not. Yet even this approximation to the truth is *infinitely* false. For again subdivide that solitary drop, which only was found to represent the present, into a lower series of similar fractions, and the actual present which you arrest measures now but the thirty-sixth millionth of an hour; and so by infinite declensions the true and very present, in which only we live and enjoy, will vanish into a mote of a mote, distinguishable only by a heavenly vision. Therefore the present, which only man possesses, offers less capacity for his footing than the slenderest film that ever spider twisted from her womb. Therefore, also, even this incalculable shadow from the narrowest pencil of moonlight, is more transitory than geometry can measure, or thought of angel can overtake. The time which *is*, contracts into a mathematic point; and even that point perishes a thousand times before we can utter its birth. All is finite in the present; and even that finite is infinite in its velocity of flight towards death. But in God there is nothing finite; but in God there is nothing transitory; but in God there *can* be nothing that tends to death. Therefore, it follows—that for God there can be no present. The future is the present of God; and to the future it is that he sacrifices the human present. Therefore it is that he works by earthquake. Therefore it is that he works by grief. Oh, deep is the ploughing of earthquake! Oh, deep," [and his voice swelled like a *sanctus* rising from the choir of a cathedral,]—"oh, deep is the ploughing of grief! But oftentimes less would not suffice for the agriculture of God. Upon a night of earthquake he builds a thousand years of pleasant habitations for man. Upon the sorrow of an infant, he raises oftentimes, from human intellects glorious vintages that could not else have been. Less than these fierce ploughshares would not have stirred the stubborn soil. The one is needed for earth, our planet—for earth itself as the dwelling-place of man. But the other is needed yet oftener for God's mightiest instrument; yes," [and he looked solemnly at myself,] "is needed for the mysterious children of the earth!"

#### END OF PART I.

#### FOOTNOTES:

[9] Some readers may be apt to suppose, from all English experience, that the word *exorcise* means properly banishment to the shades. Not so. Citation *from* the shades, or sometimes the torturing coercion of mystic adjurations, is more truly the primary sense.

[10] "*Laughter from the fields of ocean.*"—Many readers will recall, though at the moment of writing my own thoughts did *not* recall, the well-known passage in the Prometheus—

—ωονλιων τε κυματων  
Ανηζιθμον ζελασμα

"Oh multitudinous laughter of the ocean billows!" It is not clear whether *Aeschylus* contemplated the laughter as addressing the ear or the eye.

[11] This, it may be said, requires a corresponding duration of experience; but, as an argument for this mysterious power lurking in our nature, I may remind the reader of one phenomenon open to the notice of every body, viz. the tendency of very aged persons to throw back and concentrate the light of their memory upon scenes of early childhood, as to which they recall many traces that had faded even to *themselves* in middle life, whilst they often forget altogether the whole intermediate stages of their experience. This shows that naturally, and without violent agencies, the human brain is by tendency a palimpsest.

[12] "*Glimmering.*"—As I have never allowed myself to covet any man's ox nor his ass, nor any thing that is his, still less would it become a philosopher to covet other people's images, or metaphors. Here, therefore, I restore to Mr Wordsworth this fine image of the revolving wheel, and the glimmering spokes, as applied by him to the flying successions of day and night. I borrowed it for one moment in order to point my own sentence; which being done, the reader is witness that I now pay it back instantly by a note made for that sole purpose. On the same principle I often borrow their seals from young ladies—when closing my letters. Because there is sure to be some tender sentiment upon them about "memory," or "hope," or "roses," or "reunion:" and my correspondent must be a sad brute who is not touched by the eloquence of the seal, even if his taste is so bad that he remains deaf to mine.

[13] This, the reader will be aware, applies chiefly to the cotton and tobacco States of North

America; but not to them only: on which account I have not scrupled to figure the sun, which looks down upon slavery, as *tropical*—no matter if strictly within the tropics, or simply so near to them as to produce a similar climate.

- [14] "*Sublime Goddesses.*"—The word σεμνος is usually rendered *venerable* in dictionaries; not a very flattering epithet for females. But by weighing a number of passages in which the word is used pointedly, I am disposed to think that it comes nearest to our idea of the *sublime*; as near as a Greek word *could* come.
- [15] The reader, who wishes at all to understand the course of these Confessions, ought not to pass over this dream-legend. There is no great wonder that a vision, which occupied my waking thoughts in those years, should re-appear in my dreams. It was in fact a legend recurring in sleep, most of which I had myself silently written or sculptured in my daylight reveries. But its importance to the present Confessions is this—that it rehearses or prefigures their course. This FIRST part belongs to Madonna. The THIRD belongs to the "Mater Suspiriorum," and will be entitled *The Pariah Worlds*. The FOURTH, which terminates the work, belongs to the "Mater Tenebrarum," and will be entitled *The Kingdom of Darkness*. As to the SECOND, it is an interpolation requisite to the effect of the others; and will be explained in its proper place.
- [16] "*Spectre of the Brocken.*"—This very striking phenomenon has been continually described by writers, both German and English, for the last fifty years. Many readers, however, will not have met with these descriptions: and on *their* account I add a few words in explanation; referring them for the best scientific comment on the case to Sir David Brewster's "Natural Magic." The spectre takes the shape of a human figure, or, if the visitors are more than one, then the spectres multiply; they arrange themselves on the blue ground of the sky, or the dark ground of any clouds that may be in the right quarter, or perhaps they are strongly relieved against a curtain of rock, at a distance of some miles, and always exhibiting gigantic proportions. At first, from the distance and the colossal size, every spectator supposes the appearance to be quite independent of himself. But very soon he is surprised to observe his own motions and gestures mimicked; and wakens to the conviction that the phantom is but a dilated reflection of himself. This Titan amongst the apparitions of earth is exceedingly capricious, vanishing abruptly for reasons best known to himself, and more coy in coming forward than the Lady Echo of Ovid. One reason why he is seen so seldom must be ascribed to the concurrence of conditions under which only the phenomenon can be manifested: the sun must be near to the horizon, (which of itself implies a time of day inconvenient to a person starting from a station as distant as Elbingerode;) the spectator must have his back to the sun; and the air must contain some vapour—but *partially* distributed. Coleridge ascended the Brocken on the Whitsunday of 1799, with a party of English students from Goettingen, but failed to see the phantom; afterwards in England (and under the same three conditions) he saw a much rarer phenomenon, which he described in the following eight lines. I give them from a corrected copy: (the apostrophe in the beginning must be understood as addressed to an ideal conception):—

"And art thou nothing? Such thou art as when  
The woodman winding westward up the glen  
At wintry dawn, when o'er the sheep-track's maze  
The viewless snow-mist weaves a glist'ning haze,  
Sees full before him, gliding without tread,  
An image with a glory round its head:  
This shade he worships for its golden hues,  
And *makes* (not knowing) that which he pursues."

- [17] "*On Whitsunday.*"—It is singular, and perhaps owing to the temperature and weather likely to prevail in that early part of summer, that more appearances of the spectre have been witnessed on Whitsunday than on any other day.
- [18] "*The sorcerer's flower,*" and "*the sorcerer's altar.*"—These are names still clinging to the anemone of the Brocken, and to an altar-shaped fragment of granite near one of the summits; and it is not doubted that they both connect themselves through links of ancient tradition with the gloomy realities of Paganism, when the whole Hartz and the Brocken formed for a very long time the last asylum to a ferocious but perishing idolatry.
- [19] "*Hailstone choruses.*"—I need not tell any lover of Handel that his oratorio of "Israel in Egypt" contains a chorus familiarly known by this name. The words are—"And he gave them hailstones for rain; fire, mingled with the hail, ran along upon the ground."

## HANNIBAL. [20]

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Two thousand one hundred years ago [21] a boy was born at Carthage, whose name and exploits have rendered his country immortal. His character stands forth with unparalleled lustre even on the bright pages of ancient story. It is hard to say whether he was greater as a patriot, statesman, or a general. Invincible in determination, inexhaustible in resources, fertile in stratagem, patient of fatigue, cautious in council, bold in action, he possessed also that singleness of purpose, that unity of object, which more than all is the foundation of great achievements. Love of his country was his one and ruling principle. Hatred of its enemies his lasting and indelible passion. To these objects he devoted throughout life his great capacity: for this he lived, for this he died. From the time that he swore hatred to the Romans, while yet a boy,

on the altars of Carthage, he never ceased to watch their designs, to contend with their forces, to resist their ambition. Alone of all his countrymen he measured the extent of the danger with which his fatherland was threatened by the progress of their power. Alone he stood forth with the strength of a giant to combat it. But for the shameful desertion of his victorious army, by the jealousy of the rival faction at Carthage, he would have crushed the power of the legions, and given to Carthage, not Rome, the empire of the world. As it was, he brought them to the brink of ruin, and achieved triumphs over their armies greater than all other nations put together. After he was overthrown, it was comparatively an easy task to conquer the world. For this he received in life exile, disgrace, and death: for this he has since obtained immortality. At his name the heart of the patriot has thrilled through every subsequent age. To illustrate his virtues, genius and learning have striven in every succeeding country; and the greatest praise which the world can yet bestow on warriors is to compare them to Hannibal.

No name, even in the majestic annals of Roman victories, stands forth with lustre equal to that of the Carthaginian hero. They were made by their countrymen, but his countrymen were made by him. Scipio, Pompey, Cæsar himself, did not evince equal capacity: they had lesser difficulties to contend with; they owed more to the support of others, and did not do so much by the strength of their individual arm, by the energy of their individual will. The institutions, the laws, the ideas, the manners, the very language of the Romans, were made for conquest: they sprang up from the earth a race of armed men. Virtue with them was derived from "manly valour:" an army was designated by a word which signified "exercised:"<sup>[22]</sup> their generals were borne aloft to conquest on the shields of the legions. Such was the spirit of the soldiers, that they were fairly compelled to victory by the presence which urged them on; such the determination of the people, that the armies were pressed forward to the conquest of the world as by a supernatural power. The purposes of Providence, mysterious at the time, apparent afterwards, never were more clearly evinced than in the peculiar impress communicated to the Roman institutions. But the Carthaginians were a race, not of warriors, but of colonists. They rose to greatness, not by their military spirit, but by their commercial prosperity; their outposts were, not the fortified camp, but the smiling seaport. Extending as far as the waters of the Mediterranean roll, they spread inwards from the sea-coast, not outwards from the camp; the navy was the arm of their strength, not their land forces. Their institutions, habits, national spirit, and government, were all adapted to the extension of commerce, to the growth of manufactures, to the spread of a colonial empire. What, then, must have been the capacity of the man who could, by his single efforts, alter the character of a whole people; chain victory at land to the standards of a maritime republic; and bow down to the earth, on their own territory, that rival power, whose legions ere long triumphed over the armies of all the military monarchies of the world?

The auxiliaries formed a considerable part, in point of numbers, of the Roman forces; but the strength of the legions was to be found in the Roman citizens. It was that indomitable body of men, ever flowing out, yet ever full, animated with fiery passions, but directed by consummate prudence, panting for rapine and conquest, but patient of all the toils by which they were to be attained, which constituted the strength of the armies which conquered the world. But the Carthaginians had no body of citizens capable of forming such a force. They were nothing but a great and powerful seaport town, with its adjacent villas spreading along the coast of Africa. The people of Dido had not, like those of Romulus, established off-shoots in the interior. No three-and-thirty colonies awaited the commands of the senate of Carthage, as they did of the consuls in the time of Fabius, to recruit the national armies. Twenty thousand native citizens was all, at its last extremity at Zama, that this mighty republic, which had so nearly achieved the conquest of the Capitol, could fit out to defend their country. The strength of the Punic armies consisted in what was merely an accessory to the Roman, the auxiliaries. It was the Numidian horse, the Balearic slingers, the Spanish infantry, the Gaulish broadswords, which proved so formidable in the ranks of Hannibal. It was literally, as Livy says, a "colluvies omnium gentium," which rolled down from the Alps, under his direction, to overwhelm the Romans on their own hearths. Twenty different languages, Polybius tells us, were not unfrequently spoken at the same time in the Carthaginian camp. What, then, must have been the capacity of the general who could still the jealousies, and overcome the animosities, and give unity to the operations of a vast army, composed of so many different tribes and people, and mould them all into so perfect a form, that, for fifteen years that he remained in Italy after the first great defeats, the consuls never once ventured to measure their strength with him in a pitched battle?

If there is any thing more astonishing than another in the history of the Roman Republic, it is the unconquerable spirit, the persevering energy, the invincible determination with which, under every calamity, and often in the very extremity of adverse fortune, they combined to struggle for the superiority, and at length attained it—not so much by conquering as by wearing out their adversaries. In no period of their long and glorious annals was this transcendent quality more strikingly evinced than in the second Punic War, when, after the battle of Cannæ, Capua, the second city of Italy, yielded to the influence of Hannibal, and nearly a half of the Roman colonies, worn out by endless exactions in men and money, refused to send any further succours. The heroic spirit the Roman senate then evinced, the extraordinary sacrifices they made, may, without exaggeration, be pronounced without parallel in the annals of mankind, if we reflect on the length of time during which these sacrifices were required. But while this invincible spirit augments our admiration of the Roman character, and makes us feel that they indeed deserved that mighty dominion which they afterwards attained, it takes much from the merit of their individual commanders. It was almost impossible to avoid ultimate success with such armies to lead, and so heroic a people to sustain the efforts and furnish the muniments of war. But the case

was very different at Carthage. So vehement was the spirit of party which had seized upon its inhabitants, in consequence of the great accession of democratic power which had been conceded, fatally for the state, as Polybius tells us, a short time before to the people, that Hannibal could rely on no assistance on his own government. Though he brought the Romans to the very brink of ruin, and placed final victory within the grasp, as it were, of his country, yet they would not put out their hand to snatch it. They were more jealous of him than afraid of their enemies. Though he descended to the southern extremity of Italy, and drew near to Sicily, in order to obtain from the African shores the necessary succours to recruit his armies, wasted by the very number of his victories; and though they had during great part of the time the superiority at sea—yet he received no supplies of men or money from home during the fifteen years he carried on the war in Italy, with the exception of the army which his brother Hamilcar raised in Spain, and led across the Pyrenees and the Alps to perish on the Metaurus. What he did, he did by himself, and by his own unaided efforts. It was the contributions levied on the cities he conquered, which furnished his supplies; it was the troops who flocked to his standard from the provinces he wrested from the Romans, which filled up the chasms in the ranks he led from Saguntum. Not more than twenty-six thousand men descended with him from the Alps; of forty-eight thousand who fought at Cannæ, thirty thousand were Gaulish auxiliaries. There is no example recorded in history of a general doing things so great with means so small, and support from home so inconsiderable.

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Every great commander of whom we read in military annals, possessed in a considerable degree the art of securing the affections and inspiring the confidence of his soldiers. Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Charles XII., Napoleon, exercised this ascendancy in the highest degree. The anecdotes preserved in the pages of Plutarch, and which every schoolboy knows by heart, prove this beyond a doubt of the heroes of the ancient world; the annals of the last century and our own times demonstrate that their mantle had descended to the Swedish and French heroes. The secret of this marvellous power is always to be found in one mental quality. It is magnanimity which entrances the soldier's heart. The rudest breasts are accessible to emotion, from the display of generosity, self-denial, and loftiness of purpose in their commanders. When Alexander in the deserts of Arabia, on his return from India, poured the untasted water on the sand, he assuaged the thirst of a whole army; when Cæsar addressed the Tenth Legion in mutiny by the title of "Quirites," the very word, which told them they were no longer the comrades of their general, subdued every heart; when Charles XII., on his officers declaring themselves unable to undergo the fatigue of further watching, desired them to retire to rest, for he would go the rounds himself, he silenced every murmur in his army; when Napoleon yielded up his carriages to the wounded in the Russian retreat, or drew aside his suite to salute, uncovered, the Austrian wounded conveyed from Austerlitz, and said, "Honour to the brave in misfortune!" he struck a chord which vibrated in every heart of his vast array. No general, ancient or modern, possessed this key to the generous affections in a higher degree than Hannibal; and none ever stood so much, or so long, in need of its aid. In truth, it was the secret of his success; the magic power which so long held together his multifarious array. We have few anecdotes indicating this ascendancy; for the historians of the Romans, or their subjects the Greeks, were in no hurry to collect traits to illustrate the character of their enemy. But decisive evidence of its existence, and almost supernatural power, is to be found in the fact, that without the aid of reinforcements, and scarce any remittances, from Carthage, he maintained the war in the heart of Italy with mercenary troops collected from every country of the earth, against the native soldiers of the bravest and most warlike people on the earth. We read of no mutinies or disobedience of orders among his followers. It were hard to say whether the fiery Numidian, the proud and desultory Spaniard, the brave but inconstant Gaul, or the covetous Balearic, was most docile to his direction, or obedient to his will. Great indeed must have been the ascendancy acquired by one man over such various and opposite races of men, usually the prey of such jealousies and divisions; and whom the most powerful coalition in general finds so much difficulty in retaining in subjection.

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Of Hannibal's political wisdom and far-seeing sagacity, ancient history is full. Alone of all his contemporaries, he clearly, and from his very infancy, perceived the extent of the danger which threatened his country from the insatiable ambition and growing power of the Romans; alone he pointed out the only mode in which it could be successfully combated. He was at once the Burke, the Pitt, and the Wellington of his country. Beyond all doubt, if his advice had been followed, and his enterprises duly supported, Carthage would have been victorious in the second Punic War. It was because his countrymen were not animated with his heroic spirit, nor inspired with his prophetic foresight, that they failed. They were looking after gain, or actuated by selfish ambition, while he was straining every nerve to avert danger. When he swore hatred to the Roman on the altar at nine years of age, he imbibed a principle which the judgment of his maturer years told him was the only means of saving his country. To the prosecution of this object he devoted his life. From his first entrance into public duty till his last hour, when he swallowed poison to avoid being delivered up to the Romans, he never ceased to combat their ambition with all the powers of his gigantic intellect. If history had preserved no other proof of his profound political discernment, it would be sufficiently established by the memorable words he addressed to the senate of Carthage on the probable fate of Rome:—"Nulla magna civitas diu quiescere potest. Si fores hostem non habet, domi invenit; ut prævalida corpora ab externis causis tutæ videntur, sed suis ipsa viribus conficiuntur. Tantum nimirum ex publicis malis sentimus quantum ad res privatas attinet, nec in eis quidquam acrius quam pecuniae damnum stimulat." If anyone doubts the truth and profound wisdom of these remarks, let him reflect on the exact demonstration of these truths which was afforded two thousand years after, in the

He constantly affirmed that it was in Italy alone that Rome was vulnerable, and that by striking hard and often there, she might be conquered. He did not despair of effecting the deliverance of the world by a conflict on their own shores, even after the battle of Zama had to all appearance decisively settled the conflict in favour of the Capitol, and nothing remained to combat the legions but the unwarlike soldiers of the Eastern monarch. His own campaigns demonstrate that he was right: the Gauls and the Carthaginians in different ages brought the Romans to the brink of ruin; but it was by victories on the Tiber that Brennus and Hannibal penetrated to their gates. Nor is it difficult to see to what cause this comparative weakness at home of so great a military power was owing. Rome was not merely a powerful state, but the head of a great military confederacy; the resources which, partly by force, partly by inclination, and the natural appetite of mankind for victory and plunder, were ranged on her side, were in great part derived from foreign states. When she carried the war into foreign states, this formidable mass of auxiliaries doubled the strength of her legions; when she was assailed at home, one half of them were lost, or appeared in the ranks of her enemies. The same cause appeared at a subsequent period in the campaigns of Napoleon: his armies were innumerable, his force irresistible, as long as he headed the forced confederacy of western Europe, and he invaded Russia with five hundred thousand men; but when the disaster of Moscow, and the resurrection of Germany, brought the Russians into France, the boasted strength of the empire disappeared, its allies passed over to the other side, and the mighty conqueror was reduced to a painful defensive with fifty thousand men on the plains of Champagne.

The Roman historians affirm that these great military virtues were balanced by corresponding vices. Every scholar knows the inimitable description of his character drawn by Livy. "Has tantas viri virtutes ingentia vitia æquabant:—inhumana crudelitas; perfidia plusquam Punica; nihil veri, nihil sancti; nullus deorum metus, nullum jusjurandum, nulla religio." This, however, was his character as drawn by his enemies; and by enemies who had suffered so much from his ability, that they were incapable of forming a correct judgment on the subject. But the truth of modern history has dispelled the illusion, and gathered facts sufficient even from their prejudiced sources to demonstrate that the moral virtues of Hannibal equalled his intellectual capacity. Certain it is, by their own admission, that his generosity on several important occasions afforded a example which the Romans would have done well to imitate, but which they shewed themselves incapable of following. It was the judicious clemency which he showed to the allies, which at length won over so many of the Italian states to his side; and if this is to be ascribed to policy, what are we to say to the chivalrous courtesy which prompted him to send back the dead body of his inveterate enemy Marcellus, surprised and slain by his Numidian horsemen, to obtain the honours of sepulture from his countrymen? The Romans complained of his cruelty; but men feel cruelty keenly when it is exercised on themselves; and there are no instances recorded of his exceeding the established and universal customs, ruthless as they were, of ancient warfare. Certain it is, that nothing he ever did equalled the savage and cold-blooded atrocity with which they tortured and massacred the citizens of Capua and Syracuse, when they were again subdued by their arms. Hannibal's disposition appears to have been gay and cheerful; there are many instances recorded of his indulgence, in presence of danger, in a gaiety of temper more akin to that of Henry IV. than the usual stern determination of ancient warriors. On one memorable occasion, when his army was in danger, and the spirit of his troops unusually depressed, he indulged in mirth and jests to such an extent in his tent, that he set his whole officers in a roar of laughter; and these joyful sounds, heard by the soldiers without, restored confidence to the army, from the belief that no anxious thoughts clouded the brows of their chiefs. Hannibal, it is known, preserved a diary, and wrote a history of his campaigns, which was extant at a very late period in the ancient world. What an inestimable treasure would the journal of the private thoughts of such a man have been! Modern times have no more irreparable loss to mourn.

The just pride and elegant flattery of the French historians has often led them to compare Napoleon's passage of the Great St Bernard to Hannibal's passage of the Pennine Alps: but without detracting from the well-earned fame of the French general, it may safely be affirmed that his achievement will bear no sort of comparison with that of the Carthaginian hero. When Napoleon began the ascent of the Alps from Martigny, on the shores of the Rhone, above the lake of Geneva, he found the passage of the mountains cleared by the incessant transit of two thousand years. The road, impracticable for carriages, was very good for horsemen and foot passengers, and was daily traversed by great numbers of both in every season of the year. Comfortable villages, on the ascent and the descent, afforded easy accommodation to the wearied soldiers both by night and by day; the ample stores of the monks at the summit, and the provident foresight of the French generals, had provided a meal to every man and horse that passed. No hostile troops opposed their passage: the guns were drawn up in sledges made of hollowed firs; and in four days from the time that they began the ascent from the banks of the Rhone, the French troops, without losing a man, stood on the Doria Baltea, the increasing waters of which flowed towards the Po, amidst the gardens and vineyards, and under the sun of Italy. But the case was very different, when Hannibal crossed from the shores of the Durance to the banks of the Po. The mountain sides, not yet cleared by centuries of laborious industry, presented a continual forest, furrowed at every hollow by headlong Alpine torrents; bridges there were none to cross these perpetually recurring obstacles; provisions, scanty at all times in those elevated solitudes, were then nowhere to be found, having been hid by the affrighted inhabitants on the approach of the invaders; and a powerful army of mountaineers occupied the entrance of the defiles, defended with desperate valour the gates of their country, and, when dispersed by the superior discipline and arms of Hannibal's soldiers, still beset the ridges above their line of

March, and harassed his troops by continual hostility. When the woody region was passed, and the vanguard emerged into the open mountain pastures, which lead to the verge of perpetual snow, fresh difficulties awaited them. The turf, from the gliding down of newly fallen snow on those steep declivities, was so slippery, that it was often scarcely possible for the men to keep their feet; the beasts of burden lost their footing at every step, and rolled down in great numbers into the abysses beneath; the elephants became restive amidst privations and a climate to which they were totally unaccustomed; and the strength of the soldiers, worn out with incessant marching and fighting, began to sink before the continued toil of the ascent. Horrors, formidable to all, but in an especial manner terrible to African soldiers, awaited them at the summit. It was now the end of October; winter in all its severity had already set in on those lofty solitudes; the mountain sides, silent and melancholy even at the height of summer, when enamelled with flowers and dotted with flocks, presented then an unbroken sheet of snow; the blue lakes which are interspersed over the level valley at their feet, were frozen over, and undistinguishable from the rest of the dreary expanse, and a boundless mass of snowy peaks arose on all sides, presenting apparently an impassable barrier to their further progress.

But it was then that the greatness of Hannibal shone forth in all its lustre. "That great general," says Arnold, "who felt that he now stood victorious on the ramparts of Italy, and that the torrent which rolled before him was carrying its waters to the rich plains of Cisalpine Gaul, endeavoured to kindle his soldiers with his own spirit of hope. He called them together; he pointed out the valley beneath, to which the descent seemed the work of a moment. 'That valley,' he said, 'is Italy; it leads us to the country of our friends the Gauls, and yonder is our way to Rome!' His eyes were eagerly fixed on that point of the horizon, and as he gazed, the distance between seemed to vanish, till he could almost fancy that he was crossing the Tiber and assailing the Capitol<sup>[23]</sup>." Such were the difficulties of the passage and the descent on the other side, that Hannibal lost thirty-three thousand men from the time he left the Pyrenees till he entered the plains of Northern Italy; and he arrived on the Po with only twelve thousand Africans, eight thousand Spanish infantry, and six thousand horse. Napoleon's army which fought at Marengo was only twenty-nine thousand, but he had lost no men in the passage of the Alps, and only a few in the difficult passage across the precipices of Mont Albaredo, opposite the fort of Bard, in the valley of the Doria Baltea. It is ridiculous, after this, to compare the passages of the Alps by Napoleon to their crossing by Hannibal. The French emperor has many other titles, too well founded, to warrant a comparison with the Carthaginian hero, to render it necessary to recur to one which is obviously chimerical.

It is a question which has divided the learned since the revival of letters, by what pass Hannibal crossed the Alps. The general opinion of those who have studied the subject, inclines to the opinion that he crossed by the Little St Bernard; and to this opinion Arnold inclines. He admits, however, with his usual candour, that, "in some respects, also, Mont Cenis suits the description of the march better than any other pass<sup>[24]</sup>." After having visited and traversed on foot both passes, the author of this paper has no hesitation in expressing his decided conviction, that he passed by Mont Cenis. His reasons for this opinion are these:—1. It is mentioned by Polybius, that Hannibal reached the summit of the Alps on the *ninth* day after he had left the plains of Dauphiné. This period coincides well with what might have then been required to ascend, as the country was, on the neighbourhood of Grenoble or Echelles; while the ascent to the summit of the Little St Bernard, would not require more than half the time. 2. The narrow defile of St Jean de Maurienne, which leads from the plain of Montmelian to the foot of Mont Cenis, corresponds much more closely with the description, given both in Livy<sup>[25]</sup> and Polybius<sup>[26]</sup>, of that in which the first serious engagement took place between Hannibal and the Mountaineers, two days after they had left the plains of Dauphiné, than the comparatively open valley which leads to the foot of the Little St Bernard. 3. From the summit of the Little St Bernard you can see nothing of Italy, nor any thing approaching to it; a confused sea of mountains alone meets the eye on every side. Whereas, from the southern front of the summit of Mont Cenis, *not only the plains of Piedmont are distinctly visible* at the opening of the lower end of the valley of Susa, which lies at your feet, *but the Appenines beyond them can be seen*. To settle this important point, the author made a sketch of both on the spot, on the 24th October, the very time of Hannibal's passage, which is still in his possession. How precisely does this coincide with the emphatic words of Hannibal, as recorded by Polybius, showing to them the plains around the Po, ("τα περι τον Παδον πεδια,") and, reminding them of the good disposition of the Gauls who dwelt there, he further showed them the situation of Rome itself.<sup>[27]</sup> The Appenines, beyond the plain of Piedmont, seen from Mont Cenis, might correctly be taken as the direction, at least, where Rome lay. 4. The steep and rocky declivity by which the *old* road formerly descended to the valley of Susa, and where the travellers descended in sledges, till Napoleon's magnificent *chaussée* was formed, which makes great circuit to the westward, corresponds perfectly to the famous places mentioned both by Livy and Polybius, where the path had been torn away by a recent avalanche, and the fabulous story of the vinegar was placed. This place in Mont Cenis is immediately below the summit of the pass, and may now be seen furrowed by a roaring torrent, amidst dark ledges of rock; the corresponding chasm on the southern side of the Little St Bernard is *below* the reach of avalanches.<sup>[28]</sup> 5. On the summit of Mont Cenis is still to be seen a "*white rock*" called the "Roche Blanche," which answers to the "*λευκοπέτρου*," mentioned by Polybius, on the summit of the Alps which Hannibal crossed, whereas there is nothing like it on the Little St Bernard, at least of such magnitude as to have formed a place of night refuge to Hannibal. 6. What is perhaps most important of all, it is expressly mentioned by Polybius, that "*in one day's time* the chasm in the mountain sides was repaired, so that there was room for the horses and beasts of burden to

descend. They were immediately conducted down, *and having gained* the plains, were sent away to pasture in places where no snow had fallen. \* \* \* \* \* Hannibal then descended last, with all the army, and thus, on the *third day*, gained the plains<sup>[29]</sup>. " This description of the distances tallies perfectly with the passage by Mont Cenis, for it is only half a day's journey to descend from the summit of that pass to Susa, at the head of the wide and open valley of the same name, where ample pasturage is to be found; and short day's journey more brings the traveller to the plain of Piedmont. But it is utterly irreconcilable with the idea that the Carthaginians passed by the Little St Bernard; for from its summit to the plains of Ivrea is four days' hard marching for an army, through the narrow valley of Aosta, destitute for the most part of forage. 7. This valley of Aosta is very rocky and narrow, and affords many positions where a handful of men can arrest an army; in one of which, that of Bard, a small Austrian garrison stopped Napoleon for twenty-four hours; yet Polybius and Livy concur in stating, that after he descended the mountains, the Carthaginians experienced no molestation on their way to the Insubrians, their allies, on the banks of the Po. This is inexplicable if they were struggling for three days through the narrow and rocky defiles of the valley of Aosta, but perfectly intelligible if they were traversing in half a day the broad and open valley of Susa, offering no facilities to the attacks of the mountaineers.

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But if Napoleon's passage of the St Bernard can never be compared to that of Hannibal over Mont Cenis, it is impossible to deny that there is a marked and striking similarity, in some respects, between the career of the two heroes. Both rose to eminence, for the first time, by the lustre of their Italian campaigns; the most brilliant strokes of both were delivered almost on the same ground, immediately after having surmounted the Alps; both headed the forces of the democratic party in the country whose warriors they led, and were aided by it in those which they conquered; both had a thorough aversion for that party in their hearts; both continued, by their single genius, for nineteen years in hostility against a host of enemies; both were overthrown at last, in a single battle, on a distant shore, far from the scene of their former triumphs; both were driven into exile by the hatred or apprehensions of their enemies; both, after having reached the summit of glory, died alone and unbefriended in a distant land; both have left names immortal in the rolls of fame. It is no wonder that such striking similarities should have forcibly struck the imaginations of men in every land. It is remarkable that many of the greatest patriots who ever existed have died in exile, after having rendered inestimable services to their country, by which they were persecuted or betrayed. Themistocles, Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, Belisarius, Napoleon, belong to this bright band. It is not difficult to see that the cause of it is to be found in their very greatness itself. They were too powerful to be tolerated by their countrymen: they were too formidable to be endured by their enemies.

It is hard to say whether Hannibal's military capacity appeared most strongly in strategy, that is, the general direction of a campaign, or in tactics, that is, the management of troops on the field of battle. In both he was unrivalled in ancient times. His wonderful ability in strategy, and in preparing his multifarious forces for the grand enterprise for which they were destined, appears from the very outset of his military career. Devoted to the destruction of Rome from his youth upwards, and steady in the determination to over-threw that inveterate enemy to his country, he had yet the difficult and apparently hopeless task of accomplishing this by land warfare, when Carthage had no native born army in the slightest degree commensurate to its execution. To form such an army was his first object, and this he accomplished by his successes in Spain, before the second Punic War began. In the interval between the first and the second of those dire contests, he was assiduously employed in conquering, organizing, and disciplining the forces by which his great object was to be effected; and such was his capacity, that, notwithstanding the untoward issue of the first Punic War, the Carthaginians gradually regained the ascendant in the Peninsula, while his manners were so winning, that ere long he attracted all its military strength to his standard. The Roman influence was limited to the narrow and broken territory which lies between the Ebro and the Pyrenees, and forms the modern province of Catalonia, while all the rest of the Peninsula obeyed the orders of Hannibal. It was in Spain that he formed that great military force which so soon after shook to its foundation the solid fabric of Roman power; he there erected the platform on which his engines of assault were placed. When he began his triumphant march from Saguntum to attempt the conquest of Rome, after surmounting both the Pyrenees and the Alps, he was at the head of a splendid army of ninety thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse, with forty elephants; the most powerful array, if the quality and discipline of the troops is taken into account, which Europe had yet seen. Of this great force, not more than a fourth part were Carthaginian soldiers; so mightily had the military force of Hannibal increased with the prosperous issue of his Peninsular campaigns.

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Had the Carthaginian general succeeded in reaching the banks of the Tiber with the half even of this force, the fate of Rome was sealed, and the glories of the Capitol were extinguished for ever. But he had innumerable difficulties to contend with—physical, warlike, and moral—before he reached the Italian plains. His march from the Ebro to the Po was a continued combat. The mountain tribes of Catalonia, celebrated in every age for their obstinate and persisting hostility, were then firm in the Roman interest. The mountain strength of the Pyrenees; the rapid currents of the Rhone; the cruel warfare, and yet more dangerous peace of the Gauls; the desperate valour of the inhabitants of the Alps; the inclemency of the weather on their snowy summits, all required to be overcome, and they thinned his ranks more than all the swords of the legions. Instead of ninety thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse, with which he broke up from Saguntum, he brought only twenty thousand infantry, and six thousand horse to the fields of Piedmont. No less than seventy-six thousand men had been lost or left to preserve the communications, since they left the Valencian plains. So slender was the force with which this great commander commenced,

on its own territory, the conflict with a power which ere three years had elapsed, carried on the war with fourteen legions, numbering an hundred and seventy thousand combatants, between the auxiliaries and Roman soldiers. It is in the magnitude of this disproportion, and the extremely small amount of the reinforcement which he received from home during the next fifteen years that the war lasted, that the decisive proof of the marvellous capacity of the Carthaginian general is to be found. It is a similar disproportion which has marked the campaigns of Napoleon in Italy in 1796, and in France in 1814, with immortality.

The first necessity was to augment his numbers, and fill up the wide chasm in his ranks, by fresh enrolments in the territory in which he had entered. The warlike habits and predatory dispositions of the Cisalpine Gauls afforded the means of obtaining this necessary succour. The victory over the Roman horse on the Ticino, when the superiority of the Numidian cavalry was first decisively displayed, had an immediate effect in bringing a crowd of Gaulish recruits to his standard. The Carthaginian general was careful in his first engagement to hazard only his cavalry, in which arm he was certain of his superiority. The battle of the Trebia which followed, and which first broke the strength of the legions, excited an unbounded ferment in Lombardy, and brought the Gaulish youths in crowds, to follow the career of plunder and revenge under his victorious standards. Recruits speedily were not awanting; the only difficulty was to select from the crowds which presented themselves for enrolment. It was like the resurrection of Prussia in 1813, against the tyrannic domination of the French emperor. Winter was spent in organizing these rude auxiliaries, and reducing them to something like military discipline; and so effective was their co-operation, and so numerous the reinforcements which their zeal brought to his standard, that in the following spring he crossed the Apennines, and traversed the marshes of Volterra, at the head of nearly fifty thousand men, of whom above one half were Gaulish recruits. And when the Consul Flaminius attempted to stop him on the margin of the Thrasymene Lake, where the stream still called "*Sanguinetto*" murmurs among the old oaks, the children of the soil, the total defeat of his army with the loss of thirty thousand men, lost the Romans the whole north of Italy, and carried consternation to the gates of the Capitol.

After so great a victory within a few days' march of the Tiber, and no considerable army intervening to arrest the advance of the conqueror, it may seem extraordinary that Hannibal did not advance straight to the capital, and terminate the war by its destruction: still more inexplicable does it at first sight appear, that, instead of doing so, he should have turned to the left, and passing Rome, moved into the south of Italy; thus losing in a great measure his communication with Lombardy, which had hitherto proved so invaluable a nursery for his army. But it was in these very movements, more perhaps than in any others of his life, that the wisdom and judgment of this great general's conduct were conspicuous. The chief difficulty he had now to contend with in Italy was the reduction of its fortified towns. The innumerable wars which had so long prevailed in the southern parts of the Peninsula, between the Etruscans, the Romans, and the Samnites, had studded the declivities of the Apennines with castles and fortified burghs, the walls of which in great part still remain, and constitute not the least of the many interesting objects which Italy presents to the traveller. Towards the reduction of those cities, the tumultuary array of the Gauls, numerous and efficient as they were in the field, could not afford any assistance. Engines for assault or the reduction of walls they had none; funds for the maintenance of a protracted methodical warfare were not to be looked for, in their savage and half-cultivated plains. The communication with Spain by the circuitous route of the Pyrenees and Alps, had been found, by dear-bought experience, to be difficult in the extreme. It could only be opened again, by an army nearly as powerful as that which had first penetrated through it, under the guidance of his energetic will. It was in the south of the Peninsula, amidst its opulent cities and long-established civilization, that the resources for a war of sieges could alone be looked for. It was there, too, that the most direct, the shortest, and in fact the only secure channel of communication with Carthage could be opened: to a Punic as to a British army, the true base of operations is the sea, the worst possible base for that of any other military power. Beyond all question, it was to the judicious choice of the south of Italy as his stronghold, and the combined skill and policy by which he contrived to detach a large part of its rich republics, with their harbours and places of strength, from the Roman alliance, that the subsequent protraction of the war for fifteen years is to be ascribed.

Such, however, was the terror of the Roman arms, and the influence acquired by the combined steadiness and severity of their rule, that this irruption into the south of Italy was not at first attended with the desired effect. In vain he had, in all preceding engagements sent back all the prisoners from the allies without any ransom, and treated them in the most generous manner; in vain, in all preceding marches, he had cautiously abstained from pillaging or laying waste their lands. Still the Roman influence was predominant. Not one state in alliance had revolted: not one Roman colony had failed in its duty to the parent state. The Gauls alone, who now formed half his army, had repaired in crowds to his standard since he had descended from the Alps. A long season of inactivity followed, during which the Romans were too prudent to hazard a conflict with Hannibal in the field, and he was too weak in siege artillery to attempt the reduction of any of their fortified cities. But the time was not lost by that indefatigable commander, and the following passage from Arnold will both show how it was employed, and serve as a fair specimen of the style of that powerful and lamented writer:—

"Never was Hannibal's genius more displayed than during this long period of inactivity. More than half of his army consisted of Gauls, of all barbarians the most impatient and uncertain in their humour, whose fidelity, it was said, could only be secured by an ever open hand; no man was their friend any longer than he could

gorge them with pay or plunder. Those of his soldiers who were not Gauls, were either Spaniards or Africans; the Spaniards were the newly conquered subjects of Carthage, strangers to her race and language, and accustomed to divide their lives between actual battle and the most listless bodily indolence; so that when one of their tribes first saw the habits of a Roman camp, and observed the centurions walking up and down before the prætorium for exercise, the Spaniards thought them mad, and ran up to guide them to their tents, thinking that he who was not fighting could do nothing but lie at his ease and enjoy himself. Even the Africans were foreigners to Carthage; they were subjects harshly governed, and had been engaged within the last twenty years in a war of extermination with their masters. Yet the long inactivity of winter quarters, trying to the discipline of the best national armies, was borne patiently by Hannibal's soldiers; there was neither desertion nor mutiny amongst them; even the fickleness of the Gauls seemed spell-bound; they remained steadily in their camp in Apulia, neither going home to their own country, nor over to the enemy. On the contrary, it seems that fresh bands of Gauls must have joined the Carthaginian army after the battle of Thrasymenus, and the retreat of the Roman army from Ariminum. For the Gauls and the Spaniards and the Africans were overpowered by the ascendancy of Hannibal's character; under his guidance they felt themselves invincible; with such a general the yoke of Carthage might seem to the Africans and Spaniards the natural dominion of superior beings; in such a champion the Gauls beheld the appointed instrument of their country's gods to lead them once more to assault the Capitol."—Vol. iii. 131-132.

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It was the battle of Cannæ which first shook the fidelity of the Roman allies, and by opening to the Carthaginians the gates of Capua, gave them the command of a city in the south of Italy, second only to Rome herself in wealth and consideration. Of this great and memorable battle, when upwards of eighty thousand Romans fell, and their power was, to all appearance, irrecoverably broken, Arnold give the following interesting account:—

"The skirmishing of the light-armed troops preluded as usual to the battle; the Balearian slingers slung their stones like hail into the ranks of the Roman line, and severely wounded the consul Æmilius himself. Then the Spanish and Gaulish horse charged the Romans front to front, and maintained a standing fight with them, many leaping off their horses and fighting on foot, till the Romans, outnumbered and badly armed, without cuirasses, with light and brittle spears, and with shields made only of ox-hide, were totally routed and driven off the field. Hasdrubal, who commanded the Gauls and Spaniards, followed up his work effectually; he chased the Romans along the river, till he had almost destroyed them, and then, riding off to the right, he came up to aid the Numidians, who, after their manner, had been skirmishing indecisively with the cavalry of the Italian allies. These, on seeing the Gauls and Spaniards advancing, broke away and fled; the Numidians, most effective in pursuing a flying enemy, chased them with unweariable speed, and slaughtered them unsparingly; while Hasdrubal, to complete his signal services on this day, charged fiercely upon the rear of the Roman infantry.

"He found its huge masses already weltering in helpless confusion, crowded upon one another, totally disorganized, and fighting each man as he best could, but struggling on against all hope, by mere indomitable courage. For the Roman columns on the right and left, finding the Gaulish and Spanish foot advancing in a convex line or wedge, pressed forwards to assail what seemed the flanks of the enemy's column; so that, being already drawn up with too narrow a front by their original formation, they now became compressed still more by their own movements, the right and left converging towards the centre, till the whole army became one dense column, which forced its way onwards by the weight of its charge, and drove back the Gauls and Spaniards into the rear of their own line. Meanwhile, its victorious advance had carried it, like the English column at Fontenoy, into the midst of Hannibal's army; it had passed between the African infantry on its right and left, and now, whilst its head was struggling against the Gauls and Spaniards, its long flanks were fiercely assailed by the Africans, who, facing about to the right and left, charged it home, and threw it into utter disorder. In this state, when they were forced together into one unwieldy crowd, and already falling by thousands, whilst the Gauls and Spaniards, now advancing in their turn, were barring further progress in front, and whilst the Africans were tearing their mass to pieces on both flanks, Hasdrubal, with his victorious Gaulish and Spanish horsemen, broke with thundering fury upon their rear. Then followed a butchery such as has no recorded equal, except the slaughter of the Persians in their camp, when the Greeks forced it after the battle of Plataea. Unable to fight or fly, with no quarter asked or given, the Romans and Italians fell before the swords of their enemies, till, when the sun set upon the field, there were left, out of that vast multitude, no more than three thousand men alive and unwounded, and these fled in straggling parties, under cover of the darkness, and found a refuge in the neighbouring towns. The consul Æmilius, the proconsul Cn. Servilius, the late master of the horse M. Minucius, two quæstors, twenty-one military tribunes, eighty senators, and eighty thousand men, lay dead on the field of battle. The consul Varro, with seventy horsemen, had escaped from the rout of the allied

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cavalry on the right. The loss of the victors was only six thousand men."—ARNOLD,  
iii. 140-143.

The dreadful battle of Cannæ bears a close resemblance in many important particulars to two of the most important which have been fought in modern times—those of Agincourt and Aspern. The close agglomeration of legionary soldiers in the Roman centre, the tempest of stones which fell on their ranks from the slings of the Balearic marksmen, and the laying bare of the huge unwieldy mass by the defeat of the cavalry on their flanks was precisely the counterpart of what occurred in the army of Philippe of Valois in the first of these memorable fields, when the French men-at-arms, thirty-two deep, were thrown into confusion by the incessant discharges of the English archers, their flanks laid open by the repulse of the vehement charge of their horse by Henry V., and their dense columns slaughtered where they stood, unable alike to fight or to fly, by the general advance of the English billmen. Still closer, perhaps, is the resemblance to the defeat of the French centre under Lannes, which penetrated in a solid column into the centre of the Austrian army at Aspern. Its weight, and the gallantry of the leading files, brought the huge mass even to the reserves of the Archduke; but that gallant prince at length stopped their advance by six regiments of Hungarian grenadiers; the German artillery and musketry tore their flanks by an incessant discharge on either side; and at length the formidable column was forced back like an immense wild beast bleeding at every pore, but still combating and unsubdued, to the banks of the Danube. The repulse of the formidable English column, fourteen thousand strong, which defeated in succession every regiment in the French army except the last reserve of two regiments of guards at Fontenoy, and the still more momentous defeat of the last attack of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, also bear a striking and interesting resemblance to the rout of the Roman centre after it had penetrated the Carthaginian line at the battle of Cannæ. In truth, the attack in column, formidable beyond measure if not met by valour and combated with skill, is exposed to the most serious dangers if the line in its front is strong and resolute enough to withstand the impulse, till its flanks are overlapped and enveloped by a cross fire from the enemies' lines, converging inwards, as Colborne and Maitland did at Waterloo on the flank of the Old Guard; and thence it is that the French attack in column, so often victorious over the other troops in Europe, has never succeeded against the close and destructive fire of the English infantry; guided by the admirable dispositions with which Wellington first repelled that formidable onset.

Arnold, whose account of Hannibal's campaigns in Italy is by much the best which has been given in modern times to the world, and more scientific and discriminating than either of the immortal narratives of the ancient historians, has clearly brought out two important truths from their examination. The first is, that it was Hannibal's superiority in cavalry, and, above all, the incomparable skill and hardihood of his Numidian horse, which gave him what ere long proved an undisputed superiority in the field; the second, that it was the strength of the towns in the Roman alliance in the south of Italy, and the want of siege artillery on the side of the Carthaginian general, which proved their salvation. So undisputed did the superiority of the invading army become, that, after the battle of Cannæ, it was a fixed principle with the Roman generals, during the thirteen subsequent campaigns that ensued in Italy, never on any occasion, or with any superiority of force whatever, to hazard a general battle. Such was their terror of the African horse, that the sight of a few Numidian uniforms in the fields was sufficient to make a whole consular army stand to its arms. So paralysed was the strength of Rome by the slaughter of Cannæ, that Capua soon after revolted and became the headquarters of Hannibal's army; and, out of the thirty Roman colonies, no less than twelve sent in answer to the requisitions of the consuls, that they had not a man or a penny more to send, and that Rome must depend on its own resources. Never, not even when the disasters of Thrasyrnene and Cannæ were first heard, was such consternation apparent in Rome, as when that mournful resolution was communicated in the Forum.

In truth, such was the prostration of the strength of Rome by these terrible defeats, that the republic was gone but for the jealousy of the Carthaginian government, which hindered them from sending any efficient succours to Hannibal, and the unconquerable spirit of the Roman aristocracy, which rose with every disaster which ensued, and led them to make efforts in behalf of their country which appear almost superhuman, and never have been equalled by any subsequent people on earth. Republican as he is in his ideas, Arnold, with his usual candour as to facts, admits, in the strongest manner, those prodigious efforts made by the patricians of Rome on this memorable occasion; and that the issue of the contest, and with it the fate of the civilized world, depended on their exertions. Out of 270,000 men, of whom the citizens of Rome consisted before the war, no less than seventy thousand were in arms in its fourth year. No such proportion, has ever since been heard of in the world. One in a hundred of the whole population is the utmost which experience has shown a state is capable of bearing, for any length of time, in her regular army. "As Hannibal," says he, "utterly eclipses Carthage, so, on the contrary, Fabius, Marcellus, Claudius Nero, even Scipio himself, are as nothing when compared to the spirit, and wisdom, and power of Rome. The senate, which voted its thanks to its political enemy Varro, 'because he had not despaired of the commonwealth,' and which disdained either to solicit, or to reprove, or to threaten, or in any way to notice the twelve colonies which had refused to send their accustomed supplies of men for the army, is far more to be honoured than the conqueror of Zama. Never was the wisdom of God's providence more manifest than in the issue of the struggle between Rome and Carthage. It was clearly for the good of mankind that Hannibal should be conquered; his triumph would have stopped the progress of the world. For great men can only act permanently by forming great nations, and no one man, even though it were Hannibal himself, can, in one generation, effect such a work. But where the nation has been merely

enkindled for a while by a great man's spirit, the light passes away with him who communicated it; and the nation, when he is gone, is like a dead body to which magic power had for a moment given an unnatural life; when the charm has ceased, the body is cold and stiff as before. He who grieves over the battle of Zama, should carry on his thoughts to a period thirty years later, when Hannibal must, in the course of nature, have been dead; and consider how the isolated Phœnician city of Carthage was fitted to receive and to consolidate the civilization of Greece, or by its laws and institutions to bind together barbarians of every race and language into an organized empire, and prepare them for becoming, when that empire was dissolved, the free members of the commonwealth of Christian Europe."<sup>[30]</sup>

Such was Hannibal; a man capable by his single capacity of arresting and all but overturning a nation, destined by Providence for such mighty achievements, such lasting services to the human race. His combat with Rome was not that of a general with a general, of an army with an army; it was like the subsequent contest between Napoleon and England, the contest of a man with a nation; and in both cases, the nation, after being reduced to the most grievous straits, proved victorious over the man. But Hannibal was not supported as the French emperor was during the great part of his splendid career; no nation with forty millions of souls laid its youth at his feet; no obsequious senate voted him two millions of men in fifteen years; he did not march with the military strength of the half of Europe at his back. Alone, unaided, unbefriended, with the Roman legions in front, and the jealous Carthaginian senate in rear, without succour, reinforcements, or assistance from home, he maintained the contest for fifteen years in Italy, against the might, the energy, and the patriotism of Rome. Such was the terror inspired by his name and exploits, that it rendered even the fierce plebeians of Rome, usually so jealous of patrician interference with their rights, obsequious even in the comitia to their commands. "Go back," said Fabius, when the first centuries had returned consuls of their own choice, whom he knew to be unfit for the command, "and bid them recollect that the consuls must head the armies, and that Hannibal is in Italy." The people succumbed, the votes were taken anew, and the consuls whom he desired were returned.

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After the battle of Cannæ had rendered hopeless any further contest in the field, the war in Italy degenerated into a mere succession of attempts to gain possession of fortified towns. Hannibal's total want of siege artillery left him no resource for this but stratagem or internal assistance, and in gaining both his great capacity was eminently conspicuous. Capua, Beneventum, Tarentum, and a great many others, were successively wrested or won from the Romans; and it at one period seemed exceedingly doubtful whether, in this war of posts and stratagems, the Carthaginian would not prevail over them, as he had done in the field. This war, and from the influence of the same necessity in both cases, much resembled the wars of the League and Henry IV. in France; and the military conduct of Hannibal bore alternately a striking resemblance to the skill and resources of the chivalrous king of Navarre, and the bold daring of the emperor Napoleon. The gallant irruption, in particular, of the Carthaginian general, by which he relieved Capua when closely besieged by the Roman forces, bears, as Arnold has observed, the most remarkable resemblance to the similar march of Napoleon from Silesia to relieve Dresden, when beset by the Allied armies under the command of Schwartzenberg in 1813. Nor did the admirable skill of the consul Nero—who took advantage of his interior line of communication, and brought a decisive superiority of force from the frontiers of Apulia to bear on the army which Hamilcar had led across the Pyrenees and the Alps, to aid his brother in the south of Italy, and thus decide the war in Italy—bear a less striking analogy to Napoleon's cross marches from Rivoli to the neighbourhood of Mantua in 1796, to the able movement of the Archduke Charles on the Bavarian plains to the banks of the Maine, which proved the salvation of Germany in 1796, or to the gallant irruption of Napoleon, first into the midst of Blucher's scattered columns on the plains of Champagne, and then against the heads of Schwartzenberg's weighty columns at the bridge of Montereau in 1814, during his immortal campaign in France.

Eight years have now elapsed since we had the gratification of reviewing, on its publication, the first volume of Arnold's Rome; and we then foretold the celebrity which that admirable writer was qualified to attain.<sup>[31]</sup> The publication since that period of two additional volumes has amply verified that prediction; and augmented the bitterness of the regret which, in common with all his countrymen, we felt at his untimely death. It is clear that he was qualified beyond any modern writer who has yet undertaken the glorious task, to write a history of the Rise and Progress of the Roman Republic. What a work would eight volumes such as that before us on Hannibal have formed, in conjunction with Gibbon's immortal Decline and Fall! His ardent love of truth, his warm aspiration after the happiness of the human race, his profound and yet liberal religious feeling, as much gave him the spirit requisite for such an undertaking, as his extensive scholarship, his graphic power, his geographical eye, and brilliant talents for description, fitted him for carrying it into execution. It is one of the most melancholy events of our times, which has reft one of the brightest jewels from the literary crown of England, that such a man should have been cut off at the zenith of his power, and the opening of his fame. Arnold was a liberal writer; but what then? We love and respect an honest opponent. He was candid, ingenuous, and truth-loving; and if a historian is such, it matters not what his political opinions are, for he cannot avoid stating facts that support the conservative side. His errors, as we deem them, in politics, arose from the usual causes which mislead men on human affairs, generosity of heart and inexperience of mankind. He could not conceive, with an imagination warmed by the heroes of antiquity, what a race of selfish pygmies the generality of men really are. No man of such an elevated cast can do so, till he is painfully taught it by experience. Arnold died of a disease of the heart, which physicians have named by the expressive words "*angina pectoris*." They were right: it was anxiety of the heart which brought him to an untimely grave. He died of disappointed hope, of chilled

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religious aspirations, of mortified political expectations of social felicity. Who can estimate the influence, on so sensitive and enthusiastic a disposition, of the heart-rending anguish which his correspondence proves he felt at the failure of his long-cherished hopes and visions of bliss in the Reform Bill, and all the long catalogue of political and social evils, now apparent to all, it has brought in its train?

#### FOOTNOTES:

- [20] *History of Rome*. By THOMAS ARNOLD, D.D. London: 1843. Vol. 3.
- [21] Hannibal was born in the year 247 before Christ, or 2092 before this time.
- [22] *Virtus* from *vir—exercitus* from *exerceo*.
- [23] Arnold, iii. 89.
- [24] *Ibid.* iii. 486, note.
- [25] Livy, xxi. 33.
- [26] Polybius, iii. 52.
- [27] *Ibid.* iii. 54.
- [28] "The way on every side was utterly impassable, through an accident of a peculiar kind, which is peculiar to the Alps. The snows of the former years *having remained* unmelted upon the mountains, were now covered over by that which had fallen in the present autumn, and when the soldiers feet went through the latter they fell, and slid down with great violence."—POLYBIUS, iii. 54. This shows the place was within the circle of perpetual snow; whereas that on the Little St Bernard is much below it, and far beneath any avalanches.
- [29] Polybius, iii. 54.
- [30] Arnold, iii. 64, 65
- [31] See Arnold's Rome, Blackwood's Magazine, July 1837.

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## STANZAS WRITTEN AFTER THE FUNERAL OF ADMIRAL SIR DAVID MILNE, G.C.B.

BY DELTA.

Another, yet another! year by year,  
As time progresses with resistless sweep,  
Sever'd from life, the patriots disappear,  
Who bore St George's standards o'er the deep;—

Heroic men, whose decks were Britain's trust,  
When banded Europe scowl'd around in gloom;  
Nor least, though latest Thou, whose honour'd dust  
Our steps this day live follow'd to the tomb.

Yet, gallant Milne, what more could'st thou desire,  
Replete in fame, in years, and honours, save  
To wrap thy sea-cloak round thee, and expire,  
Where thou had'st lived in glory, on the wave?

From boyhood to thy death-day, 'mid the scenes  
Where love is garner'd, or the brave have striven,  
With scarce a breathing-time that intervenes,  
Thy life was to our country's service given.

A British sailor! 'twas thy proud delight  
Up glory's rugged pathway to aspire;  
Ready in council, resolute in fight,  
And Spartan coolness temper'd Roman fire!

Yes; sixty years have pass'd, since, in thy prime,  
Plunging from off the shatter'd Blanche, o'erboard  
Amid the moonlight waves, twas thine to climb  
La Pique's torn side, and take the Frenchman's sword.

And scarcely less remote that midnight dread,  
Or venturous less that daring, when La Seine  
Dismay'd, dismasted, cumber'd with her dead,  
Struck to the ship she fled—and fought in vain.

And veterans now are all, who, young in heart,  
Burn'd as they heard, how o'er the watery way,  
Compell'd to fight, yet eager to depart,  
The Vengeance battled through the livelong day—

Battled with thee, who, steadfast, on her track,  
Not to be shaken off, untiring bent;  
And how awhile the fire from each grew slack,  
The shatter'd masts to splice, and riggings rent,—

And how, at dawn, the conflict was renew'd,  
Muzzle to muzzle, almost hand to hand,  
Till useless on the wave, and carnage-strew'd,  
The foe lay wreck'd on St Domingo's strand,—

And how huzza'd his brave triumphant crew!  
And how the hero burn'd within his eye,  
When Milne beheld upon the staff, where flew  
The Tricolor, the flag of Britain fly!!

And yet once more thy country calls!—beneath  
The towers and demi-lune of dark Algiers  
The Impregnable is anchor'd, in the teeth  
Of bomb-proof batteries, frowning, tiers on tiers.

Another day of triumph for the right,—  
Of laurels fresh for Exmouth and for thee,—  
When Afric's Demon, palsied at the sight  
Of Europe's Angel, bade the slave go free!

But when away War's fiery storms had burn'd,  
And Peace re-gladden'd Earth with skies of blue,  
Thy sword into the pruning-hook was turn'd,  
And Cæsar into Cincinnatus grew.

The poor's protector, the unbiass'd judge,  
'Twas thine with warm unwearied zeal to lend  
Time to each duty's call, without a grudge;  
The Christian, and the Patriot, and the Friend.

Farewell! 'tis dust to dust within the grave;  
But while one heart beats high to Scotland's fame,  
Best of the good, and bravest of the brave,  
The name of Milne shall be an honour'd name.

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## STANZAS TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS HOOD.

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BY B. SIMMONS.

### I.

Take back into thy bosom, Earth,  
This joyous, May-eyed morrow,  
The gentlest child that ever Mirth  
Gave to be rear'd by Sorrow.  
'Tis hard—while rays half green, half gold,  
Through vernal bowers are burning,  
And streams their diamond-mirrors hold  
To Summer's face returning—  
To say, We're thankful that His sleep  
Shall never more be lighter,  
In whose sweet-tongued companionship  
Stream, bower, and beam grew brighter!

### II.

But all the more intensely true  
His soul gave out each feature  
Of elemental Love—each hue  
And grace of golden Nature,  
The deeper still beneath it all  
Lurk'd the keen jags of Anguish;  
The more the laurels clasp'd his brow,  
Their poison made it languish.  
Seem'd it that like the Nightingale

Of his own mournful singing<sup>[32]</sup>,  
The tenderer would his song prevail  
While most the thorn was stinging.

III.

So never to the Desert-worn  
Did fount bring freshness deeper,  
Than that his placid rest this morn  
Has brought the shrouded sleeper.  
That rest may lap his weary head  
Where charnels choke the city,  
Or where, mid woodlands, by his bed  
The wren shall wake its ditty:  
But near or far, while evening's star  
Is dear to hearts regretting,  
Around that spot admiring Thought  
Shall hover unforgetting.

IV.

And if *this* sentient, seething world  
Is, after all ideal,  
Or in the Immaterial furl'd  
Alone resides the Real,  
FREED ONE! there's wail for thee this hour  
Through thy loved Elves' dominions<sup>[33]</sup>;  
Hush'd is each tiny trumpet-flower,  
And droopeth Ariel's pinions;  
Even Puck, dejected, leaves his swing<sup>[34]</sup>,  
To plan, with fond endeavour,  
What pretty buds and dews shall keep  
Thy pillow bright for ever.

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V.

And higher, if less happy, tribes—  
The race of earthly Childhood,  
Shall miss thy Whims of frolic wit,  
That in the summer wild-wood,  
Or by the Christmas hearth, were hail'd  
And hoarded as a treasure  
Of undecaying merriment  
And ever-changing pleasure.  
Things from thy lavish humour flung,  
Profuse as scents are flying  
This kindling morn, when blooms are born  
As fast as blooms are dying.

VI.

Sublimer Art own'd thy control,  
The minstrel's mightiest magic,  
With sadness to subdue the soul,  
Or thrill it with the Tragic.  
How, listening Aram's fearful dream,  
We see beneath the willow,  
That dreadful THING,<sup>[35]</sup> or watch him steal,  
Guilt-lighted, to his pillow.<sup>[36]</sup>  
Now with thee roaming ancient groves,  
We watch the woodman felling  
The funeral Elm, while through its boughs  
The ghostly wind comes knelling.<sup>[37]</sup>

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VII.

Dead Worshipper of Dian's face,  
In solitary places  
Shalt thou no more steal, as of yore,  
To meet her white embraces?<sup>[38]</sup>  
Is there no purple in the rose  
Henceforward to thy senses?  
For thee has dawn, and daylight's close  
Lost their sweet influences?  
No!—by the mental might untamed  
Thou took'st to Death's dark portal,  
The joy of the wide universe  
Is now to thee immortal!

### VIII.

How fierce contrasts the city's roar  
With thy new-conquer'd Quiet!  
This stunning hell of wheels that pour  
With princes to their riot,—  
Loud clash the crowds—the very clouds  
With thunder-noise are shaken,  
While pale, and mute, and cold, afar  
Thou liest, men-forsaken.  
Hot Life reeks on, nor recks that One  
—The playful, human-hearted—  
Who lent its clay less earthiness  
Is just from earth departed.

### FOOTNOTES:

[32] In his beautiful *Ode to Melancholy*; originally published in Blackwood's Magazine.

[33] See his *Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*, a poem perfectly unrivalled for the intimate sense of nature, tender fancy, and pathetic playfulness displayed in it.

[34] "Pity it was to hear the Elfin's wail  
Rise up in concert from their mingled dread,  
Pity it was to see them all so pale  
Gaze on the grass as for a dying bed.  
But Puck was seated on a spider's thread  
That hung between two branches of a brier,  
And 'gan to swing and gambol, heels o'er head,  
Like any Southwark tumbler on a wire,  
For him no present grief could long inspire."  
*Plea of the Midsummer Fairies.*

[35] Witness the terror of Aram *after* his victim lies dead before him—(we quote from memory.)

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone  
That could not do me ill!  
And yet I fear'd him all the more  
For lying there so still;  
*There was a manhood in his look*  
*That murder could not kill."*  
*Dream of Eugene Aram.*

[36] "For Guilt was my grim chamberlain  
Who lighted me to bed,  
And drew my midnight curtains round  
With fingers bloody red."  
*Dream of Eugene Aram.*

[37] See his impressive poem on *The Elm-Tree*. It appeared, a couple of years back, in *The New Monthly Magazine*.

[38] "Before I lived to sigh,  
Thou wert in Avon, and a thousand rills,  
Beautiful Orb! and so, *whene'er I lie*  
*Trodden*, thou wilt be gazing from thy hills.  
Blest be thy loving light, where'er it spills,  
And blessed be thy face, O Mother Mild!"  
*Ode to the Moon*, published likewise in *Blackwood*, 1829.

## NORTH'S SPECIMENS OF THE BRITISH CRITICS.

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### No. V.

#### DRYDEN ON CHAUCER.—*Concluded.*

Dryden's poetical power appears most of all, perhaps, in his translations; and his translation of the most vulgar renown is that which unites his name to that of the great Roman epopeist; but it is not his greatest achievement. The tales modernized and paraphrased from Chaucer, and those filled up into poetical telling from Boccacio, as they are the works of Dryden's which the most fasten themselves with interest upon a mind open to poetry and free from preconceived literary opinion, so do they seem to us to be, after all, those which a versed critic must distinguish as stamped, beyond the others, with the skilled ease, the flow as of original composition, the sustained spirit, and force, and fervour—in short, by the mastery, and by the keen zest of Writing. They are the works of his more than matured mind—of his waning life; and they show a rare

instance of a talent so steadfastly and perseveringly self-improved, as that, in life's seventh decennium, the growth of Art overweighed the detriment of Time. But, in good truth, no detriment of time is here perceptible; youthful fire and accomplished skill have the air of being met in these remarkable pieces. Chaucer, in his last and greatest labour, the *Canterbury Tales*, first effectually creating his own style, and his translator, Dryden, at about the same years, excelling himself to infuse renovated life into the *Canterbury Tales*—are brought singularly together.

The age of Chaucer was widely and variously different from that of Dryden. Knowledge, taste, art, had advanced with strides between the two dates; and the bleak and stormy English political atmosphere of the fourteenth century had changed, notwithstanding the commotion of the later civil war, into a far milder and more settled element when the seventeenth drew towards close. Genius, likewise, in the two poets, was distinguished by marked differences. Strength, simplicity, earnestness, human affection, characterize Chaucer. Dryden has plenty of strength, too, but it shows itself differently. The strength of Chaucer is called out by the requisition of the subject, and is measured to the call. Dryden bounds and exults in his nervous vigour, like a strong steed broke loose. Exuberant power and rejoicing freedom mark Dryden versifying—a smooth flow, a prompt fertility, a prodigal splendour of words and images. Old Chaucer, therefore, having passed through the hands of Dryden, is no longer old Chaucer—no longer Chaucer. But the well-chosen, and well-disposed, and well-told tale, full of masculine sense, lively with humour, made present with painting—for all this Chaucer brings to Dryden—becomes, by nothing more than the disantiquating and the different hand, a new poem.

Place the two side by side, and whilst you feel that a total change has been effected, you shall not always easily assign the secret of the change wrought. There then comes into view, it must be owned, something like an unpractised awkwardness in the gait of the great elder bard, which you less willingly believe, or to which you shut your eyes, when you have him by himself to yourself. The step of Dryden is rapid, and has perfect decision. He knows, with every spring he takes, where he shall alight. Now Chaucer, you would often say, is retarded by looking where he shall next set down his foot. The old poetry details the whole series of thinking. The modern supposes more. That is the consequence of practice. Writer and reader are in better intelligence. A hint goes further—that which is known to be meant needs not be explicitly said. Style, as the art advances, gains in dispatch. There is better keeping, too, in some respects. The dignity of the style—the purpose of the Beautiful—is more considerately maintained. And perhaps one would be justified in saying, that if the earnestness of the heart, which was in the old time the virtue of virtues, is less—the glow of the fancy, the tone of inspiration, is proportionally more. And if anywhere the thought is made to give way to the straits of the verse, the modern art more artfully hides the commission.

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In our preceding paper, in which we spoke at large of the genius of Chaucer, we gave some very noble extracts from Dryden's version of the Knight's Tale. But we did not then venture to quote any long passages from the original, unassured how they might look on our page to the eyes of Young Britain. Having good reason to know that Young Britain desires some veritable Chaucer from the hands of Maga, we shall now indulge her with some specimens; and as we have been given to understand that Dryden's versions of the same passages will be acceptable for comparison, they shall be now produced, while the wishes of Young Britain shall be further gratified with an occasional running commentary from our popular pen on both poets. We shall confine ourselves to the Knight's Tale, with which all who love us are by this time familiar.

Let us lead off with one or two short specimens, and be not frightened, Fair-eyes, with the seemingly strange, mayhap obsolete-looking, words of the ancient bard. Con them over a few times, and they will turn into letters of light.

#### CHAUCER.

Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day,  
Till it felle onès in a morwe of May,  
That Emelie, that fayrer was to sene  
Than is the lylie upon the stalkè grene,  
And fressher than the May with flourès newe  
(For with the rosè colour strof hire hewe;  
I n'ot which was the finer of hem two)  
Er it was day, as she was wont to do,  
She was arisen, and all redy dight,  
For May wol have no slogardie a-night.  
The seson priketh every gentil herte,  
And maketh him out of his slepe to sterte,  
And sayth 'arise, and do thin observance.'

This maketh Emelie have remembrance  
To don honour to May, and for to rise.  
Yclothed was she fresshe for to devise.  
Hire yelwe here was broided in a tresse,  
Behind hire back, a yerdè long I guess.  
And in the garden at the sonne uprist  
She walketh up and down where as hire list.  
She gathereth flourès, partie white and red,

To make a sotel gerlond for hire hed,  
And as an angel hevenlich she sang, &c.

DRYDEN.

Thus year by year they pass, and day by day,  
Till once—'twas on the morn of cheerful May—  
The young Emilia, fairer to be seen  
Than the fair lily on the flowery green,  
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new,  
For with the rosy colour strove her hue,  
Waked, as her custom was, before the day,  
To do the observance due to sprightly May;  
For sprightly May commands our youth to keep  
The vigils of her night, and breaks their sluggard sleep;  
Each gentle breast with kindly warmth she moves,  
Inspires new flames, revives extinguish'd loves.

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In this remembrance, Emily, ere day,  
Arose, and dress'd herself in rich array;  
Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair,  
Adown her shoulders fell her length of hair;  
A ribband did the braided tresses bind,  
The rest was loose, and wanton'd in the wind:  
Aurora had but newly chased the night,  
And purpled o'er the sky with blushing light,  
When to the garden-walk she took her way,  
To sport and trip along in cool of day,  
And offer maiden vows in honour of the May.

At every turn she made a little stand,  
And thrust among the thorns her lily hand  
To draw the rose; and every rose she drew,  
She shook the stalk, and brush'd away the dew;  
Then party-colour'd flowers of white and red  
She wove, to make a garland to her head.  
This done, she sung and caroll'd out so clear,  
That men and angels might rejoice to hear.  
Even wondering Philomel forgot to sing,  
And learn'd from her to welcome in the spring.

What can you wish more innocently beautiful than Chaucer's—what more graceful than Dryden's Emelie? And now look at Arcite—how he, too, does his observance of the May.

CHAUCER.

The besy lark, the messenger of day,  
Saleweth in hire song the morwè gray;  
And firy Phœbus riseth up so bright  
That all the orient laugheth of the sight,  
And with his stremès drieth in the greves  
The silver dropès hanging on the leves,  
And Arcite that is in the court real  
With Theseus the squier principal,  
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day.  
And for to don his observance to May,  
Remembryng on the point of his desire  
He on his courser, sterting as the fire,  
Is ridden to the feldès him to play,  
Out of the court, were it a mile or tway.  
And to the grove of which that I you told,  
By aventure his way he 'gan to hold,  
To maken him a gerlond of the greves,  
Were it of woodbind or of hawthorn leves,  
And loud he song agen the sonnè shene.

O May, with all thy flourès and thy grene,  
Right welcome be thou fairè freshè May,  
I hope that I some grene here getten may.

DRYDEN.

The morning lark, the messenger of day,  
Saluted, in her song, the morning gray;  
And soon the sun arose with beams so bright,  
That all the horizon laugh'd to see the joyous sight.

He, with his tepid rays, the rose renews,  
And licks the drooping leaves, and dries the dews;  
When Arcite left his bed, resolved to pay  
Observance to the month of merry May:  
Forth, on his fiery steed, betimes he rode,  
That scarcely prints the turf on which he trode:

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At ease he seem'd, and prancing o'er the plains,  
Turn'd only to the grove his horse's reins,  
The grove I named before, and lighting there  
A woodbine garland sought to crown his hair;  
Then turn'd his face against the rising day,  
And raised his voice to welcome in the May:—  
For thee, sweet month, the groves green liveries wear,  
If not the first, the fairest of the year:  
For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours,  
And Nature's ready pencil paints the flowers:  
When thy short reign is past, the feverish sun  
The sultry tropic fears, and moves more slowly on.  
So may thy tender blossoms fear no blight,  
Nor goats, with venom'd teeth, thy tendrils bite.  
As thou shalt guide my wandering feet to find  
The fragrant greens I seek my brows to bind.

In Chaucer, Arcite's address to the "mery May" is but of three plain lines, and they suffice; in Dryden, of ten ornate, and they suffice too—"alike, but oh! how different!" The plain three are more in character, for Arcite was thinking of Emelie all the while—but the ornate ten are in season now, for summer has come at last, and recite them to yourself and Amaryllis in the shade.

But now for a loftier strain. Palamon and Arcite are about to fight for Emelie—and lo and behold their auxiliar kings!

Ther maist thou se coming with Palamon  
Licurge himself, the gretè king of Trace:  
Blake was his berd, and manly was his face.  
The cercles of his eyen in his head  
They gloweden betwixen yelwe and red,  
And like a griffon loked he about,  
With kemped herès on his browès stout;  
His limmès gret, his brawnès hard and stronge,  
His sholdres brode, his armès round and longe.  
And as the guisè was in his countree,  
Full high upon a char of gold stood he,  
With fourè whitè bollès in the traïs.  
Instead of cote-armure on his harnais,  
With naylès yelwe, and bright as any gold,  
He had a berès-skin, cole-blake for old.  
His longè here was kempt behind his bak,  
As any ravenes fether it shone for blake.  
A wreth of gold arm-gret, of hugè weight,  
Upon his hed sate ful of stonès bright,  
Of finè rubins and of diamants.  
About his char ther wenten white alauns  
Twenty and mo, as great as any stere,  
To hunten at the leon or the dere,  
And folwed him, with mosel fast ybound,  
Colored with gold, and torettes filed round.  
A hundred lordès had he in his route,  
Armed full wel with hertès sterne and stoute.

With Arcite, in stories as men find,  
The gret Emetrius, the King of Inde,  
Upon a stedè bay, trapped in stele,  
Covered with cloth of gold diaperèd well,  
Came riding like the god of armès, Mars.  
His cote-armure was of a cloth of Tars,  
Couched with perlès, white, and round, and grete.  
His sadel was of brent gold new ybete:  
A mantelet upon his sholdres hanging,  
Bret-ful of rubies red, as fire sparkling.  
His crispè here like ringès was yronne,  
And that was yelwe, and glittered as the sonne.  
His nose was high, his eyen bright eitrin,  
His lippès round, his colour was sanguin,  
A fewè fraknes in his face yspreint,  
Betwixen yelwe and blake somdel ymeint,

[Pg 775]

And as a leon he his loking caste.  
Of five-and-twenty yere his age I caste.  
His berd was wel begonnen for to spring;  
His vois was as a trompè thondering.  
Upon his hed he wered of laurer grene  
A gerlond fresshe, and lusty for to sene.  
Upon his hond he bare for his deduit  
An egle tame, as any lily whit.  
An hundred lordès had he with him there  
All armed save hir hedes in all hir gere,  
Full richèly in allè manere thinges.  
For trusteth wel, that erlès, dukès, kinges,  
Were gathered in this noble compagnie,  
For love, and for encrease of chevalrie.  
About this king ther ran on every part  
Full many a tame leon and leopard.

What a plenitude of brilliant and powerful description! Every verse, every half verse, adds a characterizing circumstance, a vivifying image. And what an integrity and self-completeness has the daring and large conception of either martial king! And how distinguishably the two stand apart from each other! But above all, what a sudden and rich addition to our stock of heroic poetical portraiture! Here is no imitation. Neither Lycurge nor Emetrius is any where in poetry but here. Not in the *Iliad*-not in the *Aeneid*. You cannot compose either of them from the heroes of antiquity. Each is original—new—self-subsisting. The monarch of Thrace is invested with more of uncouth and savage terror. He is bigger, broader. Might for destroying is in his bulk of bone and muscle. Bulls draw him, and he looks taurine. A bear-skin mantles him; and you would think him of ursine consanguinity. The huge lump of gold upon his raven-black head, and the monster hounds, bigger than the dog-kind can be imagined to produce, that gambol about his chariot, all betoken the grosser character of power—the power that is in size—material. The impression of the portentous is made without going avowedly out of the real. His looking is resembled to that of a griffin, because in that monster imagined at or beyond the verge of nature, the ferocity of a devouring, destroying creature can be conceived as more wild, and grim, and fearful than in nature's known offspring, in all of whom some kindlier sparkles from the heart of the great mother, some beneficently-implanted instincts are thought of as tempering and qualifying the pure animal fierceness and rage.

The opposed King of Inde has also of the prodigious, within the limits of the apparently natural. He is also a tremendous champion; but he has more fire, and less of mere thewes, in the furnishing of his warlike sufficiency. There is more of mind and fancy about him. His fair complexion at once places him in a more gracious category of death-doers. Compare to the car drawn by four white bulls, the gallant bay charger barded with steel, and caparisoned with cloth of gold. Compare to that yellow-nailed, swart bear-skin, the coat-armour made with cloth of Tars, the mantelet thick-sown with rubies; for the locks like the raven's plumage, the curls like Apollo's tresses. He is in the dazzling prime of youth. Black Lycurge, without question, has more than twice his years. The beard that yet springs, joined close to the voice that is like a trumpet, is well found for raising the expression of native power in that thundering voice. The laurel wreath for the ponderous golden diadem—the white eagle on the wrist for the snowy alauns, are all studied to carry through the same opposition. Emetrius is a son of chivalry; Lycurge might be kin or kith, with a difference for the better, of that renowned tyrant Diomedes, who put men's limbs for hay into his manger, and of whom Hercules had, not so long ago, ridded the world. *His* looking, too, is paralleled away from humanity, but it is by the kingly and generous lion. Observe that the companions of the two kings are described, whether through chance or choice, in terms correspondingly opposite. The Thracian leads a hundred lords, with hearts stern and stout. The Indian's following, earls, dukes, kings, have thronged to him, for the love and increment of chivalry. The lions and leopards, too, that run about him have been tamed. They finish the Indian picture.

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How does Dryden acquit himself here? Grandly.

DRYDEN.

With Palamon, above the rest in place,  
Lycurgus came, the surly king of Thrace;  
Black was his beard, and manly was his face:  
The balls of his broad eyes roll'd in his head,  
And glared bewixt a yellow and a red;  
He look'd a lion with a gloomy stare,  
And o'er his eye-brows hung his matted hair;  
Big-boned, and large of limbs, with sinews strong,  
Broad-shoulder'd, and his arms were round and long.  
Four milk-white bulls (the Thracian use of old,)  
Were yoked to draw his car of burnish'd gold.  
Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield,  
Conspicuous from afar, and overlook'd the field.  
His surcoat was a bear-skin on his back;  
His hair hung long behind, and glossy raven-black.

His ample forehead bore a coronet  
With sparkling diamonds, and with rubies set;  
Ten brace, and more, of greyhounds, snowy fair,  
And tall as stags, ran loose, and coursed around his chair,  
A match for pards in flight, in grappling for the bear.  
With golden muzzles all their mouths were bound,  
And collars of the same their necks surround.  
Thus through the field Lycurgus took his way;  
His hundred knights attend in pomp and proud array.

To match this monarch, with strong Arcite came  
Emetrius, king of Inde, a mighty name!  
On a bay courser, goodly to behold,  
The trappings of his horse emboss'd with barbarous gold.  
Not Mars bestrode a steed with greater grace;  
His surcoat o'er his arms was cloth of Thrace,  
Adorn'd with pearls, all orient, round, and great;  
His saddle was of gold, with emeralds set;  
His shoulders large a mantle did attire,  
With rubies thick, and sparkling as the fire;  
His amber-coloured locks in ringlets run,  
With graceful negligence, and shone against the sun.  
His nose was aquiline, his eyes were blue,  
Ruddy his lips, and fresh and fair his hue;  
Some sprinkled freckles on his face were seen,  
Whose dusk set off the whiteness of the skin.  
His awful presence did the crowd surprise,  
Nor durst the rash spectator meet his eyes,  
Eyes that confess'd him born for kingly sway,  
So fierce, they flash'd intolerable day.  
His age in nature's youthful prime appear'd,  
And just began to bloom his yellow beard.  
Whene'er he spoke, his voice was heard around,  
Loud as a trumpet, with a silver sound;  
A laurel wreath'd his temples, fresh and green,  
And myrtle sprigs, the marks of love, were mix'd between.  
Upon his fist he bore, for his delight,  
An eagle well reclaim'd, and lily white.

His hundred knights attend him to the war,  
All arm'd for battle, save their heads were bare.  
Words and devices blazed on every shield,  
And pleasing was the terror of the field.  
For kings, and dukes, and barons you might see,  
Like sparkling stars, though different in degree,  
All for the increase of arms, and love of chivalry.  
Before the king tame leopards led the way,  
And troops of lions innocently play.  
So Bacchus through the conquer'd Indies rode,  
And beasts in gambols frisk'd before the honest god.

[Pg 777]

Dryden, you will have noticed, smooths down, in some places, a little the savagery of the Thracian. He has let go the fell gryphon, borrowing instead the lion's glances of Emetrius. For the more refined poetical invention of the advanced world, the opposition of the two animals for contrasting the two heroes, had possibly something of the burlesque. To Chaucer it was simply energetic. Or Dryden perhaps had not taken up a right view of the gryphon's looking, or he thought that his readers would not. He compensates Emetrius with plainly describing his eyes, in four very animated verses. Lycurge's combed eye-brows are a little mitigated, as is his ferocious bear-skin; and the ring of gold, as thick as a man's arm, has become merely a well-jewelled coronet. The spirit of the figure is, notwithstanding, caught and given. Dryden intends and conveys the impression purposed and effected by Chaucer.

If the black and sullen portrait loses a little grimness under the rich and harmonious pencil of Dryden, the needful contradistinction of the two royal auxiliars is maintained by heightening the favour of the more pleasing one. Throughout, Dryden with pains insists upon the more attractive features which we have claimed for the King of Inde. Grace is twice attributed to his appearance. He has gained blue eyes. His complexion is carefully and delicately handled, as may be especially seen in the management of the freckles. The *blooming* of his yellow beard, the thundering of the trumpet changed into a silvery sound, the myrtle sprigs mixed amongst the warlike laurel—all unequivocally display the gracious intentions of Dryden towards Emetrius—all aid in rendering effective the opposition which Chaucer has deliberately represented betwixt the two kings. Why the surly Thracian should be rather allied to the knight who serves Venus, and the more gallant Emetrius to the fierce Arcite, the favourite of the War-god, is left for the meditation of readers in all time to come.

The two opposed pictures are perhaps as highly finished as any part of the version. The words fall

into their own places, painting their objects. The verse marches with freedom, fervour, and power. Translation has then reached its highest perfection when the suspicion of an original vanishes. The translator makes the matter his own, and writes as if from his own unassisted conception. The allusion to Bacchus is Dryden's own happy addition.

Now read with us—perhaps for the first time—the famous recital of the death of Arcite.

CHAUCER.

Nought may the woful spirit in myn herte  
Declare o point of all my sorwès smerte  
To you, my lady, that I lovè most;  
But I bequeethe the service of my gost  
To you aboven every creature,  
Sin that my lif ne may no longer dure.  
Alas the wo! alas the peinès stronge  
That I for you have suffered, and so longe!  
Alas the deth! Alas min Emilie!  
Alas departing of our compagnie!  
Alas min hertès quene! alas my wif!  
My hertès ladie, ender of my lif!  
What is this world? what axen men to have?  
Now with his love, now in his coldè grave  
Alone withouten any compagnie.  
Farewel my swete, farewel min Emilie,  
And softè take me in your armès twey,  
For love of God, and herkeneth what I sey.

[Pg 778]

I have here with my cosin Palamon  
Had strif and rancour many a day agon  
For love of you, and for my jealousie.  
And Jupiter so wis my soulè gie,  
To speken of a servant proprely,  
With allè circumstancè trewèly,  
That is to sayn, trouth, honour, and knighthede,  
Wisdom, humblesse, estat, and high kinrede,  
Fredom, and all that longeth to that art,  
So Jupiter have of my soulè part,  
As in this world right now ne know I non  
So worthy to be loved as Palamon,  
That serveth you, and wol don all his lif.  
And if that ever ye shal ben a wif,  
Foryete not Palamon, the gentil man.

And with that word his speech faillè began.  
For from his feet up to his brest was come  
The cold of death, which had him overnome.  
And yet moreover in his armès two,  
The vital strength is lost, and all ago.  
Only the intellect, withouten more,  
That dwelled in his hertè sike and sore,  
Gan faillen, whan the hertè feltè deth;  
Dusked his eyen two, and failed his breth.  
But on his ladie yet cast he his eye;  
His lastè word was: Mercy, Emilie!  
His spirit changed hous, and wentè ther,  
As I came never I cannot tellen wher.  
Therefore I stent, I am no divinistre;  
Of soulès find I not in this registre.  
Ne me lust not th' opinions to telle  
Of hem, though that they writen wher they dwelle.  
Arcite is cold, ther Mars his soulè gie.  
Now wol I speken forth of Emilie.

Shright Emilie, and houleth Palamon,  
And Theseus his sister toke anon  
Swouning, and bare hire from the corps away.  
What helpeth it to tarien forth the day,  
To tellen how she wep both even and morwe?  
For in swiche cas wimmen haven swiche sorwe,  
Whan that hir housbondes ben fro hem ago,  
That for the morè part they sorwen so,  
Or ellès fallen in swiche maladie,  
That attè lastè certainly they die.

Infinite ben the sorwes and the teres

Of oldè folk, and folk of tendre years  
In all the toun for deth of this Theban:  
For him, ther wepeþ bothè child and man:  
So gret a weping was there non certain,  
When Hector was ybrought, all fresh yslain  
To Troy: alas! the pitee that was there,  
Cratching of chekès, rending eke of here.  
Why woldest thou be ded? the women crie,  
And haddest gold enough, and Emelie.

[Pg 779]

The death of Arcite is one of the scenes for which the admirers of Chaucer feel themselves entitled to claim, that it shall be judged in comparison with analogous passages of the poets that stand highest in the renown of natural and pathetic delineation. The dying words of the hero are as *proper* as if either great classical master of epic propriety—the Chian or the Mantuan—had left them to us. They are thoroughly sad, thoroughly loving, and supremely magnanimous. They have a perfect simplicity of purpose. They take the last leave of his Emelie; and they find for her, if ever she shall choose to put off her approaching estate of unwedded widowhood, a fit husband. They have answerable simplicity of sentiment and of language. He is unable to utter any particle of the pain which he feels in quitting her; but since the service which living he pays her, draws to an end, he pledges to her in the world whither he is going, the constant love-fealty of his disembodied spirit. He recalls to her, with a word only, the long love-torments he has endured for her, exchanged, in the hour when they should have been crowned with possession, for the pains of death. He heaps endearing names upon her. He glances at the vanity of human wishes imaged in himself, and he bids her farewell. That is his first heart-offering towards herself. Can a death-severed heart's elocution be imitated more aptly, more touchingly? He then turns to praising his rival. The jealousy, which had so long been the madness of both, filling the two kindred, brotherly, once-affectionate bosoms with hate, has, in his, melted away with life, thence melting away; and Arcite, with his last intelligible breath, describes Palamon briefly, point by point, as he knew him when he best loved him. He does not implore Emelie to remain for his sake single. He does not pretend, if she shall marry, to govern her choice; but he simply requests her, if the season shall ever arrive of such a choice, that she will not "forget Palamon." But the death-frost creeps on—his eyes darken—and the suspiration which finally wafts the soul from the body, beseeches the favour of her, only to earn whose favour he lived, and with earning whose favour he dies. Her name leaves his lips last. Could Shakspeare have helped Chaucer? The whole speech is admirably direct and short. We shall presently have to deal with one from the same poem, which wants that virtue.

The clamorous outbreak that follows, first of the private, and, supervening upon that, of the public grief, if not altogether couched in Homeric phraseology or numbers, has an air, however, of the Homeric painting. But, indeed, neither is the language deficient in fanciful significancy, nor the measure in good old melody.

DRYDEN.

No language can express the smallest part  
Of what I feel, and suffer in my heart,  
For you, whom best I love and value most:  
But to your service I bequeath my ghost;  
Which, from this mortal body when untied,  
Unseen, unheard, shall hover at your side;  
Nor fright you waking, nor your sleep offend,  
But wait officious, and your steps attend.  
How I have loved—excuse my faltering tongue!  
My spirit's feeble and my pains are strong:  
This I may say I only grieve to die,  
Because I lose my charming Emily.  
To die when heaven had put you in my power!  
Fate could not choose a more malicious hour.  
What greater curse could envious fortune give,  
Than just to die when I began to live?  
Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we crave,  
Now warm in love, now withering in the grave!  
Never, O never more to see the sun!  
Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone!  
This fate is common; but I lose my breath  
Near bliss, and yet not bless'd, before my death.  
Farewell! but take me dying in your arms,  
'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms:  
This hand I cannot but in death resign;  
Ah, could I live! but while I live 'tis mine.  
I feel my end approach, and thus embraced,  
Am pleased to die; but hear me speak my last.  
Ah, my sweet foe! for you, and you alone,  
I broke my faith with injured Palamon:  
But love the sense of right and wrong confounds;

[Pg 780]

Strong love and proud ambition have no bounds.  
And much I doubt, should Heaven my life prolong,  
I should return to justify my wrong;  
For, while my former flames remain within,  
Repentance is but want of power to sin.  
With mortal hatred I pursued his life,  
Nor he, nor you, were guilty of the strife;  
Nor I, but as I loved; yet all combined,  
Your beauty, and my impotence of mind;  
And his concurrent flame that blew my fire;  
For still our kindred souls had one desire.  
He had a moment's right, in point of time;  
Had I seen first, then his had been the crime.  
Fate made it mine, and justified his right;  
Nor holds this earth a more deserving knight,  
For virtue, valour, and for noble blood,  
Truth, honour, all that is comprised in good;  
So help me Heaven, in all the world is none  
So worthy to be loved as Palamon.  
He loves you, too, with such a holy fire,  
As will not, cannot, but with life expire;  
Our vow'd affections both have often tried,  
Nor any love but yours could ours divide.  
Then, by my love's inviolable band,  
By my long-suffering, and my short command,  
If e'er you plight your vows when I am gone,  
Have pity on the faithful Palamon.

This was his last; for Death came on amain,  
And exercised below his iron reign.  
Then upward to the seat of life he goes;  
Sense fled before him, what he touch'd he froze:  
Yet could he not his closing eyes withdraw,  
Though less and less of Emily he saw;  
So, speechless for a little space he lay;  
Then grasp'd the hand he held, and sigh'd his soul away.  
But whither went his soul, let such relate  
Who search the secrets of the future state:  
Divines can say but what themselves believe;  
Strong proofs they have, but not demonstrative;  
For, were all plain, then all sides must agree,  
And faith itself be lost in certainty.  
To live uprightly, then, is sure the best;  
To save ourselves, and not to damn the rest.  
The soul of Arcite went where heathens go,  
Who better live than we, though less they know.

In Palamon a manly grief appears;  
Silent he wept, ashamed to show his tears.  
Emilia shriek'd but once; and then, oppress'd  
With sorrow, sunk upon her lover's breast:  
Till Theseus in his arms convey'd, with care,  
Far from so sad a sight the swooning fair.  
'Twere loss of time her sorrow to relate;  
Ill bears the sex a youthful lover's fate,  
When just approaching to the nuptial state:  
But, like a low-hung cloud, it rains so fast,  
That all at once it falls, and cannot last.  
The face of things is changed, and Athens now,  
That laugh'd so late, becomes the scene of woe:  
Matrons and maids, both sexes, every state,  
With tears lament the knight's untimely fate.  
Nor greater grief in falling Troy was seen  
For Hector's death, but Hector was not then.  
Old men with dust deform'd their hoary hair;  
The women beat their breasts, their cheeks they tear:  
Why wouldst thou go, (with one consent they cry,)  
When thou hadst gold enough, and Emily?

[Pg 781]

Dryden, you observe, exhibits various changes. Are they for the better or the worse? In the first place, he introduces a new motive into the conduct of Arcite—remorse of conscience. When fate has declared against him, and he finds that he cannot enjoy the possession of the prize which he has wrongfully won, his eyes open upon his own injustice, and he acknowledges the prior right of Palamon, who first had seen Emilie.

Does this innovation make good an ethical want in the rough and unschooled original? Or does it perplex the old heroic simplicity with a modern and needless refinement? By right of arms, by gift of the king, with her own gentle consent, Emelie was Arcite's. Death unsinews the hand that held her against the world. Let a few winged moments fleet, and she is his no more. He bows, conquered by all-conquering, alone unconquerable necessity. His love, which had victoriously expelled his cousin's from the field of debate, he carries with him to the melancholy Plutonic kingdom, and leaves the field of debate still—Palamon victor, and Emelie free. Really there seems to be something not only simpler in art, but more pathetic, and even morally greater, in the humble submission of the fierce and giant-like spirit to inevitable decree—in the spontaneous return of the pristine fraternal appreciation when death withdraws the disturbing force of rivalry—and in his voluntarily appointing, so far as he ventures to appoint, his brother in arms and his bride to each other's happiness—than in the inventive display of a compunction for which, as the world goes, there appears to be positively no use, and hardly clear room. Loftily viewing the case, a wrong has been intended by Arcite to Palamon, but no wrong done. He has been twice hacked and hewed a little—that is all; and it cannot be said that he has been robbed of her who would not have been his. Indeed, the current of destiny has so run, that the quarrel of the two noble kinsmen has brought, as apparently it alone could bring, the survivor to wedlock with his beloved. We suspect, then, that the attribution of the motive is equally modern with the style of the not ill-contrived witticism which accompanies the first mention of it—

"Conscience, that of all physick works the last,  
Caused him to send for Emily in haste."

But that which, upon the general comparison of the two speeches, principally strikes us, is the great expansion, by the multiplying of the thoughts to which expression is given, by Dryden. With old Geoffrey, the weight of death seems actually to lie upon the tongue that speaks in few interrupted accents. Dryden's Moribund runs on, quite at his ease, in eloquent disquisition. Another unsatisfactory difference is the disappearing of that distinct, commanding purpose or plan, and the due proportion observed upon in the original. That mere cleaving desire to Emelie, felt through the first half in word after word gushing up from a heart in which life, but not love, ebbs, gets bewildered in the modern version among explications of the befallen unhappiness, and lost in a sort of argumentative lamentation. And do but just look how that "in his coldè grave," the only word, one may say, in the whole allocution which does not expressly appertain to Emelie, and yet half belongs to her by contrast—is extended, in Dryden, as if upon recollection of Claudio's complaint in "Measure for Measure," until, like that complaint, it becomes selfish.

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But there is small pleasure in picking out the poetical misses of John Dryden. It was to be foreseen that he would be worsted in this place of the competition; for the pathetic was not his *forte*, and was Chaucer's. So, too, instead of the summary and concise commendation of his happier cousin to the future regard of the bereaved bride, so touching in Chaucer, there comes in, provoked by that unlucky repentance, an expatiating and arguing review of the now extinct quarrel, showing a liberty and vigour of thought that agree ill with the threatening cloud of dissolution, and somewhat overlay and encumber the proper business to which the dying man has now turned himself—made imperative by the occasion—the formal and energetic eulogy on Palamon. The praise, however, is bestowed at last, and handsomely.

Have we, think ye, gentle lovers of Chaucer, rightly understood the possibly somewhat obscure intention of the two verses at the beginning of our extract—

"But I bequeathe the service of my gost  
To you?"

We have accepted "service" in the sense which, agreeably to our erudition, it eminently holds the old love-vocabulary—homage, devotion, LOVE; the pure and entire dedication by the lover of his whole being to his lady. In this meaning, the heart continually *serves*, if there should be no opportunity of rendering any useful offices. You will see that Dryden has taken the word in what strikes us as an inferior sense—namely, available service; but then his verses are exquisite. And why, gentle lovers of Chaucer, why think ye does the expiring Arcite, at that particular juncture of his address, crave of his heart's queen softly to take him in her arms? Is it not that he is then about pouring out into her ear his dying design for her happiness? Received so, the movement has great originality and an infinite beauty. His heart yearns the more towards her as he is on the point of giving utterance to his generous proposal. He will, by that act of love upon her part, and that mutual attitude of love, deepen the solemnity, truth, power, impression of his unexpected request. Will he perchance, too, approach her ear to his voice, that grows weaker and weaker?

The two verses appear by their wording to intimate something like all this.

"And softè take me in your armès twey,  
For love of God, *and herkeneth what I sey.*"

If Chaucer had any such meaning, it vanishes wholly in Dryden's version.

On re-surveying the matter at last, we feel the more that the passing over of Emelie from the dead Arcite to the living Palamon, in Chaucer, is by much more poetical when viewed as the voluntary concession and gift of the now fully heroic Arcite, than as, in Dryden, the recovered right of the fortunate survivor. However, the speech, as Dryden has it, is vigorous, numerous, spirited, eloquent, touched with poetry, and might please you very well, did you not compare it

with the singular truth, feeling, fitness of Chaucer's—that unparalleled picture of a manly, sorely-wrung, lovingly-provident spirit upon its bed of untimely death.

The process of dying has been considerably delineated by Chaucer. Death creeps from the feet upwards to the breast—it creeps up and possesses the arms. But the intellect which dwelled in the heart 'gan fail only when the very heart felt death. Then dimness fell upon the eyes, and the breath faltered. One more look—one more word—and the spirit has forsaken its tenement. Dryden generalizes all this particularity—and therein greatly errs. But the last four flowing verses of the death-scene are in his more inspired manner, and must be held good for redeeming a multitude of peccadilloes and some graver transgressions. Read them over again—

"Yet could he not his closing eyes withdraw,  
Though less and less of Emily he saw;  
So, speechless for a little space he lay;  
Then grasp'd the hand he held, and sigh'd his soul away."

[Pg 783]

When years rolling have in a manner exhausted the tears due to the remembrance of the heroic Arcite, a parliament, held upon matters of public interest, gives occasion to Theseus of requiring the attendance of Palamon from Thebes to Athens. The benign monarch, however, is revolving affairs of nearer and more private concern. The national council is assembled; Palamon is in his place, and Emelie has been called into presence. His majesty puts on a very serious countenance, fixes his eyes, heaves a sigh, and begins unburthening his bosom of its concealed purposes. He "begins from the beginning" in this fashion:—

"When the First Mover established the great chain of love, in which he bound the four elements, the mighty ordering proceeded of high wisdom. The same author, himself inaccessible to alteration, has appointed to all natural things the law of transiency and succession. The kinds endure; the individuals pass away. Nature examples us with decay. Trees, rivers, mighty towns, wax and wane—much more we. All must die—the great and the small: and the wish to live is an impiety. Better it is to fall in the pride of strength and in the splendour of renown, than to droop through long years into the grave; and the friend who survives should rejoice in his friend's happy and honourable departure. Wherefore, then, shall we longer mourn for Arcite?" This is the copious preamble. The conclusion is more briefly dispatched. Emelie must accept the hand of her faithful servant Palamon. He wants no persuasion; and the knot of matrimony happily ties up at last their destinies, wishes, and expectations, which the Tale in its progress has spun.

The royal harangue is long; and marked, doubtless, with a sort of artificial solemnity. However, it has a deliberative stateliness and a certain monarchal tone. We do not now, in the Speeches from the Throne, begin regularly from the Creation—but that is a refinement. There has been eloquence of which Chaucer's deep display of philosophy and high deduction of argument is no ill-conceived representation. There is a grandeur in the earthly king's grounding his counsels in those of the heavenly King; and in his blending his own particular act of exerted kingly sway into the general system of things in the universe. The turn from the somewhat magniloquent dissertation to the parties immediately interested—the gentle disposing, between injunction and persuasion, of Emelie's will, and the frank call upon Palamon to come forward and take possession of his happiness, are natural, princely, and full of dramatic grace. Thus,—

#### CHAUCER.

Lo the oke that hath so long a norishing  
Fro the time that it ginneth first to spring,  
And hath so long a lif, as ye may see,  
Yet at the lastè wasted is the tree.  
Considereth eke, how that the hardè stone  
Under our feet, on which we trede and gon,  
It wasteth as it lieth by the way;  
The brodè river some time waxeth dry;  
The gretè tounès see we wane and wende;  
Then may ye see that all things hath an end.  
Of man and woman see we wel also,  
That nedès in on of the termès two,  
That is to sayn, in youth or ellès age,  
He mote be ded, the king as shall a page;  
Som on his bed, some on the depè see,  
Som in the largè field, as ye may see;  
Ther helpeth nought, all goth that ilkè wey;  
Than may I say that allè things mote dey.  
What maketh this but Jupiter the king?  
The which is prince, and cause of alle thing,  
Converting alle unto his propre will,  
From which it is derived, soth to telle.  
And herè againes no creature on live  
Of no degree availeth for to strive.  
Then is it wisdom, as it thinketh me,  
To maken virtue of necessite,  
And take it wel, that we may not eschewe,

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And namèly that to us all is dewe.  
And who so grutcheth ought, he doth folie,  
And rebel is to him that all may gie.  
And certainly a man hath most honour  
To dien in his excellence and flour,  
Whan he is siker of his goodè name.  
Than hath he don his friend, ne him, no shame;  
And glader ought his friend been of his deth  
Whan with honour is yelden up his breath,  
Than whan his name appalled is for age;  
For all foryetten is his vassalagè  
Than is it best, as for a worthy fame,  
To dien when a man is best of name.  
The contrary of all this is wilfulness.  
Why grutchen we? Why have we heaviness,  
That good Arcite, of chivalry the flour,  
Departed is, with dutee and honour,  
Out of this foulè prison of this lif?  
Why grutchen here his cosin and his wif  
Of his welfare, that loven him so wel?  
Can he hem thank? Nay, God wot, never a del,  
That both his soule, and eke himself offend,  
And yet they mow hir lustres not amend.

What may I conclude of this longè serie,  
But after sorwe I rede us to be merie,  
And thanken Jupiter of all his grace,  
And er that we departen from this place,  
I redè that we make of sorwes two  
O parfit joyè lasting evermo;  
And loketh now wher most sorwe is herein,  
Ther wol I firste amenden and begin.

Sister (quod he) this is my full assent,  
With all the avis here of my parlement,  
That gentil Palamon, your owen knight,  
That serveth you with will, and herte and might,  
And ever hath done, sin ye first him knew,  
That ye shall of your grace upon him vew,  
And taken him for husbond and for lord:  
Lene me your hand, for this is oure accord.

Let see now of your womanly pitee.  
He is a kingè's brother's sone pardee,  
And though he were a pourè bachelere,  
Sin he hath served you so many a yere,  
And had for you so gret adversitie,  
It mostè ben considered, leveth me.  
For gentil mercy oweth to passen right.

Then sayd he thus to Palamon the knight:  
I trow ther nedeth little sermoning  
To maken you assenten to this thing.  
Cometh ner, and take your lady by the hond.

Betwixen hem was maked anon the bond,  
That highte matrimoine or mariage,  
By all the conseil of the baronage.  
And thus with allè blisse and melodie  
Hath Palamon ywedded Emilie.  
And God, that all this widè world hath wrought,  
Send him his love, that hath it dere ybought.  
For now is Palamon in allè wele,  
Living in blisse, in richisse, and in hele,  
And Emelie him loveth so tendrely,  
And he hire serveth all so gentilly,  
That never was ther no word hem betwene  
Of jalouzie, ne of non other tene.

Thus endeth Palamon and Emilie  
And God save all this fayrè compagnie.

The whole oration is rendered by Dryden with zealous diligence in bringing out the sense into further effect, and with a magnificent sweep of composition. If there is in the fine original any thing felt as a little too stiffly formal, this impression is wholly obliterated or lost in the streaming poetry of the translator. Dryden may not, on his own score, have been much of a philosopher; but

he handles a philosophical thought in verse with a dexterity that is entirely his own. The sharpness and swiftness of intellectual power concurring in him, join so much ease with so much brevity, that the poetical vein flows on unhindered, even when involved with metaphysical notions and with scholastic recollections. The comparison of the following noble strain with the original now quoted, decisively and successfully shows the character of an embellishing transformation, which we have all along attributed to Dryden's treatment of Chaucer. The full thought of the original is often but as the seed of thought to the version, or at least the ungrown plant of the one throws out the luxuriance and majesty of leaves, blossoms, and branches in the other. The growth and decay of the oak in the two, and still more of the human being, are marked instances. Dryden does not himself acknowledge the bold license which he has used in regenerating; he does himself less than justice. The worth of his work is not the giving to modern England her ancient poet, without the trouble of acquiring his language, or of learning to sympathize with his manner. It would almost seem as if that were an enterprise which there is no accomplishing. Rightly to speak, it was not Dryden's. He really undertook, from a great old poem lying before him, to write a great modern poem, which he has done; and in the new Knight's Tale, we see Dryden, the great poet—we do not see Chaucer, the greater poet. But we see in it presumptive proof that the old poem worked from was great and interesting; and we must be lazy and unprofitable students if we do not, from the proud and splendid modernization, derive a yearning and a craving towards the unknown simple antique. Unknown to us, in our first studies, as we read upward from our own day into the past glories of our vernacular literature; but which, when, with gradually mounting courage, endeavour, and acquirement, we have made our way up so far, we find

"Worthy to have not remain'd so long unknown."

So, Dryden has done honour and rendered service to his mighty predecessor—truer honour and better service—not by superseding, but by guiding and impelling towards the knowledge of the old Knight's Tale.

DRYDEN.

The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,  
Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees;  
Three centuries he grows, and three he stays,  
Supreme in state, and in three more decays:  
So wears the paving pebble in the street,  
And towns and towers their fatal periods meet:  
So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie,  
Forsaken of their springs and leave their channels dry:  
So man, at first a drop, dilates with heat;  
Then form'd the little heart begins to beat;  
Secret he feeds, unknowing in the cell;  
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the shell,  
And struggles into breath, and cries for aid;  
Then helpless in his mother's lap is laid.  
He creeps, he walks, and, issuing into man,  
Grudges their life, from whence his own began;  
Retchless of laws, affects to rule alone,  
Anxious to reign, and restless on the throne;  
First vegetive, then feels, and reasons last;  
Rich of three souls, and lives all three to waste.  
Some thus, but thousands more, in flower of age,  
For few arrive to run the latter stage.  
Sunk in the first, in battle some are slain,  
And others whelm'd beneath the stormy main.  
What makes all this but Jupiter the king,  
At whose command we perish, and we spring?  
Then 'tis our best, since thus ordain'd to die,  
To make a virtue of necessity;  
Take what he gives, since to rebel is vain;  
The bad grows better, which we well sustain;  
And could we choose the time, and choose aright,  
'Tis best to die, our honour at the height.  
When we have done our ancestors no shame,  
But served our friends, and well secured our fame,  
Then should we wish our happy life to close,  
And leave no more for fortune to dispose.  
So should we make our death a glad relief  
From future shame, from sickness, and from grief;  
Enjoying, while we live, the present hour,  
And dying in our excellence and flower.  
Then round our death-bed every friend should run,  
And joyous of our conquest early won;  
While the malicious world, with envious tears,  
Should grudge our happy end, and wish it theirs.

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Since then our Arcite is with honour dead,  
Why should we mourn that he so soon is freed,  
Or call untimely what the gods decreed?  
With grief as just, a friend may be deplored,  
From a foul prison to free air restored,  
Ought he to thank his kinsman or his wife,  
Could tears recal him into wretched life?  
Their sorrow hurts themselves; on him is lost;  
And worse than both, offends his happy ghost.  
What then remains, but after past annoy,  
To take the good vicissitude of joy;  
To thank the gracious gods for what they give,  
Possess our souls, and while we live, to live?  
Ordain we then two sorrows to combine,  
And in one point the extremes of grief to join;  
That thence resulting joy may be renew'd,  
As jarring notes in harmony conclude.  
Then I propose, that Palamon shall be  
In marriage join'd with beauteous Emily;  
For which already I have gain'd the assent  
Of my free people in full parliament.  
Long love to her has borne the faithful knight,  
And well deserved, had fortune done him right;  
'Tis time to mend her fault, since Emily,  
By Arcite's death, from former vows is free.—  
If you, fair sister, ratify the accord,  
And take him for your husband and your lord,  
'Tis no dishonour to confer your grace  
On one descended from a royal race;  
And were he less, yet years of service past,  
From grateful souls, exact reward at last.  
Pity is heaven's and your's; nor can she find  
A throne so soft as in a woman's mind—

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He said: she blush'd; and, as o'erawed by might,  
Seem'd to give Theseus what she gave the knight.  
Then, turning to the Theban, thus he said:—  
Small arguments are needful to persuade  
Your temper to comply with my command:  
And, speaking thus, he gave Emilia's hand.  
Smiled Venus to behold her own true knight  
Obtain the conquest, though he lost the fight;  
And bless'd, with nuptial bliss, the sweet laborious night.  
Eros and Anteros, on either side,  
One fired the bridegroom, and one warm'd the bride;  
And long-attending Hymen, from above,  
Shower'd on the bed the whole Idalian grove.  
All of a tenor was their after-life,  
No day discolour'd with domestic strife;  
No jealousy, but mutual truth believed  
Secure repose, and kindness undeceived.  
Thus Heaven, beyond the compass of his thought,  
Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.

So may the Queen of Love long duty bless,  
And all true lovers find the same success.

The time is come in which a curious and instructive chapter in English criticism—a long one too, possibly—might be written on the Versification of Chaucer, and upon the history of opinions respecting it. Tyrwhitt laid the basis, in his edition of the *Canterbury Tales*—the only work of the ancestral poet that can yet fairly be said to have found an editor—by a text, of which the admirable diligence, fidelity, skill, and sound discretion, wrung energetic and unqualified praise from the illaudatory pen of Ritson. But the Grammar of Chaucer has yet to be fully drawn out. The profound labours of the continental scholars, late or living, on the language that was immediate mother to our own, the Anglo-Saxon, makes that which was in Tyrwhitt's day a thing impossible to be done, now almost an easy adventure. Accomplished, it would at once considerably rectify even Tyrwhitt's text. The Rules of the Verse, which are many, and evince a systematic and cautious framing, no less than a sensitive musical ear in the patriarch, would follow of themselves. In the mean time, a few observations, for which the materials lie at hand, are called for in this place, by the collision of the two great names, Chaucer and Dryden. Dryden says—

"The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us, but it is like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus istius temporis accommodata*. They who lived with him, and some time after him, thought it

musical; and it continues so, even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lidgate and Gower, his contemporaries:—there is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, though not perfect. It is true, I cannot go so far as he who published the last edition of him; for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine; but this opinion is not worth confuting; it is so gross and obvious an error, that common sense (which is a rule in every thing but matters of faith and revelation) must convince the reader that equality of numbers, in every verse which we call heroic, was either not known, or not always practised in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronunciation can make otherwise. We can only say, that he lived in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at first. We must be children before we grow men. There was an Ennius, and in process of time a Lucilius and a Lucretius, before Virgil and Horace; even after Chaucer there was a Spenser, a Harrington, a Fairfax, before Waller and Denham were in being; and our numbers were in their nonage till these last appeared."

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Strange to say, by the changing pronunciation of the language, there grew with time upon the minds of men a doubt, whether or no the Father of our Poetry *wrote verse!* The tone of Dryden, in the above passage, when animadverting upon Speght, shows that that editor, in standing up for ten syllables, put forth an unusual opinion; whilst the poet, in alleging the deficiency, manifestly agrees with the opinion of the antique versification that had become current in the world. *He taxes Chaucer*, it will be observed, with going wrong on the side of deficiency, not of excess; nor does he blame the interchange even of deficiency and excess, as if the syllables were often nine and often eleven. His words leave no room for misconception of their meaning. They are as definite as language can supply. "Thousands of the verses are lame for want of half a foot, or of a whole one." In this sense, then, he intends: "That equality of numbers, in every verse which we call heroic, was either not known, or not always practised in Chaucer's age."

But as Dryden has been severely taken to task by some insignificant writers of our day for the above passage, let us, not for his vindication, but excuse, take a moment's glance at Speght's edition (1602,) which, in Dryden's day, was in high esteem, and had been at first published on the recommendation of Speght's "assured and ever-loving friend," the illustrious Francis Beaumont. In his preface, Speght says—"and his verses, although in divers places they may seem to us to stand of unequal measures, yet a skilful reader that can scan them in their nature, shall find it otherwise. And if a verse here and there fal out a sillable shorter or longer than another, I rather aret it to the negligence and rape of Adam Scrivener, that I may speak as Chaucer doth, than to any unconning or oversight in the Author. For how fearful he was to have his works miswritten, or his verse mismeasured, may appear in the end of his fifth book of Troilus and Cresside, where he writeth thus:—

'And for there is so great diversitie,  
In English and in writing of our tongue,  
So pray I God, that none miswrite thee,  
Ne thee mismetre for default of tongue'" &c.

How Speght made up the measure to his own satisfaction does not appear; nor what those methods of pronunciation may have been which Dryden tried, and which left some thousand verses deficient by half a foot, or a foot.

But believing Speght's text to be accurate, Dryden could not but believe in the artlessness and irregularity of Chaucer's versification. Speght's text is most inaccurate, and altogether undeserving of his own very high opinion, thus expressed in the Dedication to Sir Robert Cecil—"Now, therefore, that both by old written copies, and by Master William Thynn's praiseworthy labours, I have reformed the whole worke, whereby Chaucer for the most part is restored to his owne antiquie." In *his Chaucer*, Dryden met every where such lines as these—

"When that April with his shours sote."

"And small foules maken melodie  
That slepen all night with open eie."

"It befell that season on a day."

"Ready to wend in my pilgrimage."

"That toward Canterbury would ride—  
The chambres and stables weren wide."

"To tell you all the condition."

"Full worthy was he in his lords warre."

"Aboven all nations in Pruce."

"For to tell you of his array."

We suspect that there was all along a lingering tradition amongst the learned about the virtue of the Mute E's. Vestiges of the use occur in the poets of Elizabeth's time. Wallis, the celebrated grammarian, says, that "with our early poets it is found that that (final) E did or did not constitute an additional syllable, just as the stricture of the verse required it." Urry, whose edition of Chaucer was published, not long after his death, in 1721, knows for vocal the termination in ES, of genitive singular and of the plural—also the past tense and participle in ED, which, however, can hardly be thought much of, as it is a power over one mute E that we retain in use to this day. The final E, too, he marks for a syllable where he finds one wanted, but evidently without any grammatical reason. Urry was an unfortunate editor. Truly does Tyrwhitt say of him, that "his design of restoring the metre of Chaucer by a collation of MSS., was as laudable as his execution of it has certainly been unsuccessful." The natural causes of this ill success are thus severely and distinctly stated, "The strange license in which he appears to have indulged himself, of lengthening and shortening Chaucer's words according to his own fancy, and of even adding words of his own, without giving his readers the least notice, has made the text of Chaucer in his edition by far the worst that was ever published." One is not surprised when Tyrwhitt, the model of gentlemanly and scholarly editor, a very pattern of temperate, equitable, and merciful criticism, cannot refrain from closing his preface with this extinguishing censure of his wilful predecessor—"Mr Urry's edition should never be opened by any one for the purpose of reading Chaucer."

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Morell, a scholar, published in 1737 the Prologue and the Knight's Tale—and he, too, marked at need the Mute E's in his text, but by what rule Tyrwhitt does not intimate, nor do we now distinctly recollect. He courageously holds that the numbers of Chaucer "are always musical, whether they want or exceed the complement." But that cannot well be; for except in very peculiar cases—such, for example, as the happy line, "Gingling in the whistling wind full clear"—if the MS. have it so—a line of nine syllables only must be a *lame* one—and their frequent recurrence would be the destruction of all music.

Tyrwhitt urges the reason of pronouncing the final E; namely, that it remains to us from a language in which it formed a syllable. So from the Norman French we have *fac-E*, *host-E*, *chang-E*, &c. This is basing the matter on its true ground. It must, however, be acknowledged with some sorrow, that this well-schooled, clear-minded, and most laborious editor did not feel himself bound, for the behoof of his author, to master, as far as the philology of the day might have enabled him, the Saxon tongue itself, and learn from the fountain what might, and what could not be—the language of Chaucer. Imperfect as the study of the Anglo-Saxon then was, he would thus have possessed a needful mastery over the manuscripts, upon which, as it was, he wholly depended; and he would have been saved from some unguarded philological assertions and whimsical speculations. Wanting this guidance, the work, so well executed as it is, is a monument only the more to be wondered at of his indefatigable industry and extraordinary good sense.

Upon any where opening Chaucer, of the many seemingly defective verses, (Dryden in saying thousands may have exaggerated the number even in Speght,) by far the greater part will be found recoverable to measure by that restitution of the Mute E which we since, too exclusively perhaps, connect with the name of Tyrwhitt. The confidence felt in his text, however—the only one upon which a metrical scholar dares work—in some sort justifies the honour. Meanwhile, this metrical theory, from his time, has been generally received; and the renown of the founder of our poetry settled on all the wider and firmer basis, when he appears as the earliest skilled artificer of the verse itself—the ten-syllabled or now national verse, of Shakspeare, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Pope.

One starts, therefore, to find a name of such distinction as the late Laureate's formally opposed to Tyrwhitt, and committed to the opinion which may seem to have been Dryden's, that the verse of Chaucer is "rhythymical, not metrical." This hardly self-explicating distinction of Dr Geo. Fred. Nott's, Southey in his Life of Cowper has explained in set terms—a verse for which the number of beats or accents is ruled is rhythmical—for example, the verse of Coleridge's *Christabel*. In that beautiful poem, the verse is fixed at four beats or accents, but is free syllabled, having six, seven, ten, twelve, or fourteen. Southey cannot believe that the prudent and practical Chaucer would have placed his verse, intended for general reception, in the jeopardy of a reader's discretion for determining when the verse required the sounding, and when the silence, of a vowel, by its nature free to be sounded or left silent, as exigency might require. But he misapprehends the proposed remedy; and the discretion which he supposes is not given. In the two languages from which ours is immediately derived, the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman-French, there are found many final syllables, entirely dropped in our pronunciation, and many of them in our writing, but which in the time of Chaucer were all still written, and all with the same vowel E. The metrical hypothesis, to which Tyrwhitt's labours gave a lustre, much heightened by the Anglo-Saxon studies abroad and at home of the present century, bears—first, that in the language of Chaucer's day these syllables were still audible; and secondly, that Chaucer consequently employed them in his verse, like any other syllables, with the due metrical value:—herein not, as the Laureate thought, overruling, but conforming himself to the use of his mother tongue. To this more than plausible view, which, if the late studies that have been taken in the intelligence of Alfred's speech had been made in Tyrwhitt's day, would not have waited till now for its full establishment, no objection has yet been raised that seems to deserve the slightest attention. The Laureate's vanish upon the mere statement. For Dr Nott, on whom he triumphantly builds, and whose proofs he seems to adopt—he is the weakest and most wrongheaded of all possible prosers; and, what is more, his opinions, if they deserve the name, differ *toto caelo* from Southey's. For we have seen that Southey's ground of distinction is the number of syllables unrestrained or varying, as in

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*Christabel*. But Nott says repeatedly, that the number of syllables is fixed, namely, to ten; and of the five beats he says not a word.

To extricate Nott's argument (in his edition of Surrey) from entanglement would not repay a tithe of the trouble; suffice it to say that he holds that as English verse, before Chaucer, was rhythmical, it is not likely that Chaucer all at once made it metrical. We answer first—the question is of a fact offering its own evidence, not of an anterior likelihood. Secondly—Tyrwhitt's theory that Chaucer, from his intimacy with the more advanced French and Italian poetry, adopted their measure, and stamped art upon a poetry till then rude and helpless, has high natural probability, and agrees to the vehement early extollings of Chaucer as sovereign master of art. Thirdly—we desire a better proof and explanation of the difference between rhythmical and metrical verse than Dr Nott has given, who has placed some extracts from these anterior poets at the side of some from Chaucer, which prove just nothing. Fourthly, there *was* metrical verse in England before Chaucer, eight-syllabled and fifteen-syllabled—if no others. Mr Hallam (*Introduction to the Literature of Europe*) writes with more commendation of Dr Nott's accomplishments than they merit; but in the following excellent passage he shows his usual knowledge of his subject, and his usual judgment.

"It had been supposed to be proved by Tyrwhitt, that Chaucer's lines are to be read metrically, in ten or eleven syllables, like the Italian, and, as I apprehend, the French of his time. For this purpose, it is necessary to presume that many terminations, now mute, were syllabically pronounced; and where verses prove refractory after all our endeavours, Tyrwhitt has no scruple in declaring them corrupt. It may be added, that Gray, before the appearance of Tyrwhitt's essay on the versification of Chaucer, had adopted without hesitation the same hypothesis. But, according to Dr Nott, the verses of Chaucer, and of all his successors down to Surrey, are merely rhythmical, to be read by cadence, and admitting of considerable variety in the number of syllables, though ten may be the more frequent. In the manuscripts of Chaucer, the line is always broken by a cæsura in the middle, which is pointed out by a virgule; and this is preserved in the early editions down to that of 1532. They come near, therefore, to the short Saxon line, differing chiefly by the alternate rhyme, which converts two verses into one. He maintains that a great many lines of Chaucer cannot be read metrically, though harmonious as verses of cadence. This rhythmical measure he proceeds to show in Hoccleve, Lydgate, Hawes, Barclay, Skelton, and even Wyatt; and thus concludes, that, it was first abandoned by Surrey, in whom it very rarely occurs. This hypothesis, it should be observed, derives some additional plausibility from a passage in Gascoyne's 'Notes of instruction concerning the making of verse or rhyme in English,' printed in 1575. 'Whosoever do peruse and well consider his (Chaucer's) works, he shall find that, although his lines are not always of one selfsame number of syllables, yet being read by one that hath understanding, the longest verse, and that which hath most syllables in it, will fall (to the ear) correspondent unto that which hath fewest syllables; and likewise that which hath fewest syllables shall be found yet to consist of words that have such natural sound, as may seem equal in length to a verse which hath many more syllables of lighter accents.'

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"A theory so ingeniously maintained, and with so much induction of examples, has naturally gained a good deal of credit. I cannot, however, by any means concur in the extension given to it. Pages may be read in Chaucer, and still more in Dunbar, where every line is regularly and harmoniously decasyllabic; and though the cæsura may perhaps fall rather more uniformly than it does in modern verse, it would be very easy to find exceptions, which could not acquire a rhythmical cadence by any artifice of the reader. The deviations from the normal type, or decasyllable line, were they more numerous than, after allowance for the license of pronunciation, as well as the probable corruption of the text, they appear to be, would not, I conceive, justify us in concluding that it was disregarded. These aberrant lines are much more common in the dramatic blank verse of the seventeenth century. They are, doubtless, vestiges of the old rhythmical forms; and we may readily allow that English versification had not, in the fifteenth or even sixteenth centuries, the numerical regularity of classical or Italian metre. In the ancient ballads, Scots and English, the substitution of the anapaest for the iambic foot, is of perpetual recurrence, and gives them a remarkable elasticity and animation; but we never fail to recognize a uniformity of measure, which the use of nearly equipollent feet cannot, on the strictest metrical principles, be thought to impair."

Mr. Guest, in his work, of which we hope ere long to give an account, brings to the story of English verse far more extensive research than had hitherto been bestowed upon it; and that special scholarship which was needed—the Anglo-Saxon language, learned in the new continental school of Rask and Grimm. His examination of our subject merges in a general history of the Language, viewed as a metrical element or material; and hence his exposition, which we rapidly collect *seriatim*, is plainly different in respect of both order and fulness from what it would have been, had the illustration of Chaucer been his main purpose. He follows down the gradual Extinction of Syllables; and in this respect, our anciently syllabled, now mute E, takes high place, and falls first under his consideration.

This now silent or vanished Vowel occurred heretofore, with metrical power, in adopted FRENCH Substantives, as—eloquenc-E, maladi-E; and in their plurals, as—maladi-ES. And in Adjectives of the same origin, as—larg-E.

It remained from several parts of the ANGLO-SAXON grammar.—From A, E, U, endings of Anglo-Saxon substantives—as nam-A, nam-E; tim-A, tim-E; mon-A, (the moon,) mon-E; sunn-E, (the sun,) sonn-E; heort-E, (the heart,) hert-E; ear-E, (the ear,) er-E; scol-U, (school,) scol-E; luf-U, lov-E; sceam-U, sham-E; lag-A, law-E; sun-U, (a son,) son-E; wud-U, (a wood,) wod-E.—(To Mr Guest's three vowels, add O:—as bræd-o (breadth) bred-E.)—From the termination THE; as—streng-THE; yow-THE.—From a few adjectives ending in E; as—getrew-E, trew-E; new-E, new-E.—From adverbs, formed by the same vowel from adjectives; as from beorht, (bright,) is made, in Anglo-Saxon, beorht-E, (brightly,) remaining with Chaucer, as bright-E.—Inflexion produces the final E. In substantives, the prevalent singular dative of the mother speech was in E. Chaucer, now and then, seems to present us with a dative; as in the second verse of the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales, from rot, (root,) rot-E. And Mr Guest thinks that he has found ONE instance of a genitive plural E from A; namely, from the earlier ath, (an oath,) genitive plural, ath-A; with Chaucer—oth, oth-E.

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The German family of languages exhibits a fine and bold peculiarity—a double declension of its Adjectives, depending on a condition of syntax. The Anglo-Saxon adjective, in its ordinary (or, as grammarians have called it, Indefinite) declension, makes the nominative plural for all the genders in E; and this remains as the regular plural termination of the adjective to Chaucer. Thus we have, in the more ancient language—eald; plural, eald-E; with Chaucer—old; plural, old-E, &c.

The rule of the extraordinary (or Definite) declension, is thus generally given by Mr Guest for Chaucer. "When the adjective follows the definite article, or the definite pronoun, *this*, *that*, or any one of the possessive pronouns—*his*, *her*, &c.—it takes what is called its definite form."—(Vol. i. p. 32.) From the Anglo-Saxon definite declension (running through three genders, five cases, and two numbers,) remains, to the language that arose after the Conquest, ONE final E. *E.g.* Indefinite—strong; definite, strong-E;—indefinite—high; definite—high-E.

The Verb ends the first person singular, and the three persons plural, of the present tense, and makes imperative and infinitive, in E. The past tense generally ends in DE or EDE; (Mr Guest has forgotten TE;) sometimes in ED.

As for those two principal endings, the genitive singular in ES, which is the Anglo-Saxon termination retained, and the plural in ES, which is the Anglo-Saxon ending obscured—they happen hardly to fall under Mr Guest's particular regard; but it is easily understood that the Anglo-Saxon hlaford, (lord,) gen. sing. hlaford-ES, had, in Chaucer's day, become lord, lord-ES;—and that scur, (shower,) plural scur-AS, of our distant progenitors had bequeathed to his verse—shour, shour-ES.

Legitimate scepticism surely ceases when it thus appears that ignorance alone has hastily understood that this vowel, extant in this or that word, with a quite alien meaning and use, (—e.g. for lengthening a foregoing vowel—softening an antecedent consonant,)—or with none, and through the pure casualty of negligence or of error, might at any time be pressed irregularly into metrical service. Assuredly Chaucer never used such blind and wild license of straightening his measure; but an instructed eye sees in the Canterbury Tales—and in all his poetry of which the text is incorrupt—the uniform application of an intricate and thoroughly critical rule, which fills up by scores, by hundreds, or by thousands, the time-wronged verses of "the Great Founder" to true measure and true music.

To sum up in a few words our own views—First, if you take NO account of the mute E, the great majority of Chaucer's verses in the only justifiable text—Tyrwhitt's Canterbury Tales—are in what we commonly call the TEN-syllabled Iambic metre.

Secondly, if you take account of the metrical E, the great majority of them appear, if you choose so to call them, as ELEVEN-syllabled Iambic verses, or as the common heroic measure with a supernumerary terminal syllable.

Thirdly, if you take NO account of the disputed E, a very large number of the verses, but less apparently than the majority, appear as wanting internally one or two syllables.

Fourthly, if you take account of the said troublesome E, almost universally these deficient measures become filled up to the due complement—become decasyllabic or hendecasyllabic, as the case may be.

Fifthly, if you consent to take account of this grammatical metrical E, no inconsiderable number of the verses—ten-syllabled or eleven-syllabled, by technical computation—acquire one or two supernumerary syllables distributed, if one may so speak, *within* the verse—and to be viewed as enriching the harmony without distorting or extending the measure, after the manner of the *Paradise Lost*.

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Finally, (for the present,) whether the verses in general fall under our usual English scheme of the one-syllabled ending, or end, as the Italian for the most part do, dissyllabically, has been disputed by those who agree in the recognition of the metrical E. To wit—shall the final E of Mr Guest's rule, ending the verse, and where it would, consequently, make a hypercatalectic eleventh syllable, still be pronounced—as Tyrwhitt, although not anxiously, contends? If the grammatical rule is imperative within the verse, as much, one would think, must it be so at its

termination. That Chaucer admits the doubled ending we see by numerous unequivocal instances from all moods of the verse, mirthful and solemn; these show a versification friendly to the doubled ending; and must go far to remove any scruple of admitting Tyrwhitt's conception of it as generally hendecasyllabic.

Let the position of Chaucer in the history of his art be considered, and it will be seen that those who maintain a systematic art in him have a relief from objections greater than those who should enquire concerning perhaps any other poet. In the formation of his verse, and the lifting up of a rude language, more than Dante himself, a creator! What wonder, then, if he should sometimes make mistakes, and that some inconsistencies remain at last irreducible? If the method undertaken draws the irreducible cases into a narrower and a narrower compass, that sufficiently justifies the theory of the method against all gainsayers.

This copious, and, possibly, tedious grammatical display of this once active metrical element, was forced from us as the only proper answer to the doubt revived in our own day on the versification of Chaucer. We are too prone to believe that our forefathers were as rude as their speech, and their speech as they; but this multitude of grammatical delicacies, retained for centuries after the subjection of the native language by conquest, and systematically applied in the versification of the great old poet, shows a feeling of language, and an authentic stamp of art, that claim the most genial and sympathizing respect of a refined posterity, to their not wholly unrefined, more heroic ancestors.

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