The Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe, James Albert Harrison

THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

EDGAR ALLAN POE

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COMPLETE WORKS
OF
EDGAR ALLAN POE

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Essays
Miscellanies
Literati
Autography

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CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

About one-fourth of the Essays and Miscellanies contained in this section will be found new even to the Poe specialist, never having been reprinted before, and the remainder will be found new in their close adherence to the originals, not deviating (except in the case of obvious misprints and typographical errors) from the form in which Poe left them. Many of Poe's original titles have been restored to their rightful position, and now introduce the papers as he wrote them, and as they are found in this volume. Nothing has been "normalized" to suit the taste of the age or the editor; the orthographic idiosyncrasies of two or three generations ago have been preserved as an interesting part of the history of the times; conflicting systems of spelling have not been reconciled or made consistent; Poe, marvellously accurate in ear and judicious in perception, has been allowed to punctuate, capitalize, and paragraph for himself, and no educated modern reader can sensibly find fault with his singular fastidiousness of taste along these lines. His MS. to-day would form a model, inimitable for clearness, beauty, and correctness, to contemporary writers, and affords one excuse the less for tampering with his text.

The earliest of the dated Essays in the present volume is the one on "Palestine," not signed in the

Literary Messenger, but indexed as by "Edgar A. Poe" in the table of contents for 1836. Its character is of a kind in which Poe rarely indulged — the compilatory, but one which is illustrated further on by the papers on "Stonehenge," "Street-Paving," and parts of "Maelzel's Chess-Player." Perfunctory work of this sort was not to his liking, and he made use of it generally only in the papers on "Sports and Pastimes" in some of the earlier magazines with which he was connected. Yet, distasteful as mere compilation was to Poe, he always contrived to invest his compilations with the singular charm of his style, so cameo-clear in its distinction and so absolutely free from the verbal ambiguities for which he did not hesitate to rate even Macaulay. This charm of style throws a lasting interest about Poe's papers of this type and justifies us in rescuing them from oblivion. "Stonehenge" and "Street-Paving" are entirely new, and will be found excellent specimens of the author's manner in the "information" article.

The "Pinakidia" opens another instructive window into the soul of this curiously constructed being, revealing his ant-like habit of storing up granules of intellectual food for future use, — quotations from the poets, aphorisms from the philosophers, lines and *memorabilia* from the men of literary generations gone by. The habit was perhaps an intellectually noxious one, for Poe continually used the same quotations — especially the French ones — to garnish some trite context or give an air of superior learning to some insignificant critique. He evidently took it for granted that the circulation of the *Messenger* (in whose pages for August, 1836, "Pinakidia" appeared) would not be great enough to prevent his using this store-house of

quotations whenever he wished, and he therefore did not hesitate to return to it again and again for its scraps of epigrammatic thought and its striking bits of wit and wisdom. The collection is psychologically interesting as showing Poe's wide reading at twenty-seven, the cast of his mind, and his incidental industrious habits in holding on to what he once had gained, afterwards so remarkably shown in his "Marginalia," in which he exemplified the French habit of self-quotation, La Bruyère-like characterization, and autograph epigram after the fashion of Pascal and La Rochefoucauld.

"Pinakidia" appears in the present edition unabbreviated, just as Poe printed it when he was editor of the *Messenger*, type errors alone excepted.

The article commonly printed under the title "Cryptography" has here restored to it the name under which it originally appeared in *Graham's Magazine* for July, 1841: "A Few Words on Secret Writing," with the further important additions of the interesting correspondence that accompanied the publication and the three Supplements which Poe appended to the August, October, and December numbers. The reader is thus made entirely familiar with this celebrated discussion, which had gone on also in *Alexander's Weekly Messenger*, and excited, like the "Autography" and the "Literati" articles, vehement discussion *pro* and *con*. "The Gold-Bug," embodying his cryptographic principles in concrete artistic form, made the cryptogram fashionable in literature and gave birth to the Jules Verne school of pseudo-scientific "literarians."

The reader will also find printed here Poe's more difficult cryptograms, which have been ignored by other editions.

The other papers of this volume of Essays and Miscellanies have been subjected likewise to faithful restoration, in every detail, to their original form, the accretions, additions, and overlying *débris* cast upon them by previous workers having been carefully removed.

ESSAYS AND MISCELLANIES.

PALÆSTINE.

[Text: *Southern Literary Messenger*, February, 1836.]

PALÆSTINE derives its name from the Philistæi, who inhabited the coast of Judæa. It has also been called "The Holy Land," as being the scene of the birth, sufferings, and death of our Redeemer. It was bounded on the north by Syria, on the east by Arabia Deserta, on the south by Arabia Petræa, and on the west by the Mediterranean. The principal divisions of the country were Galilea in the north, Samaria in the middle, and Judæa in the south. This country is at present under the Turkish yoke; and the oppression which it now experiences, as well as the visible effects of the divine displeasure, not only during the reign of Titus, and afterwards in the inundations of the northern barbarians, but also of the Saracens and Crusaders, are more than sufficient to have reduced this country, which has been extolled by Moses, and even by Julian the Apostate, for its fecundity, to its present condition of a desert. Galilea, the northern division, is divided by Josephus into Upper Galilea, called Galilea of the Gentiles — because inhabited by heathen nations — and Lower Galilea, which was adjacent to the sea of Tiberias, and which contained the tribes of Zebulon and Ashur. Galilea was a very populous country, containing, according to Josephus, two hundred and four

cities and towns, and paying two hundred talents in tribute.

The middle district, Samaria, had its origin in a division of the people of Israel into two distinct kingdoms, during the reign of Jeroboam. One of these kingdoms, called Judah, consisted of such as adhered to the house of David, comprising the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The other ten tribes retained the name of Israelites under Jeroboam. Their capital was Samaria, which also became the name of their country. The Samaritans and people of Judæa were bitter enemies. The former differed in many respects from the strictness of the Mosaic law. Among the Judæans, the name of Samaritan was a term of reproach.

The southern division, Judæa, did not assume that name until after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity — though it had been called long before "the kingdom of Judah" in opposition to that of Israel. After the return, the tribe of Judah settled first at Jerusalem; but afterwards spreading over the whole country, gave it the name of "Judæa."

The only rivers of any note in Palæstine are the Jordanes, and the Leontes, which latter passes through the northern extremity of Galilea. The Jordan, according to a curious story of Philip the Tetrarch, has its origin in a lake called Phiala, about ten miles north of Cæsarea of Samochon. This is said to have been ascertained by throwing into the lake some straw which came out where the river emerges from the ground, after having run fifteen miles beneath the surface of the earth. Mannert, the German, thinks this fabulous, and places the source of the river in Mount Panceas, in the province of Dan. The Jordan holds a southwesterly

course — flows through the lake Samochon, or Samochonites, or as it is called in the Bible, Merom; after which, proceeding onwards till received by the sea of Tiberias, or lake of Genesareth, it emerges from this, and is finally lost in the Dead Sea. In ancient times it overflowed its banks annually, about the period of early harvest; and thus differing from most other rivers, which generally swell in the winter, it was supposed to have a subterraneous communication with the Nile. But now, we can perceive no rise, which is probably owing to the channel having been deepened by the swiftness of the current. The name is supposed to be derived from the Hebrew "Jarden," on account of the river's rapid *descent* through the country.

The Dead Sea, called also Asphaltites, from the "asphaltos" or bitumen, which it throws up, is situated in Judæa, and near one hundred miles long and twenty-five broad: but it is called by Tacitus "Lacus immenso ambitu." Its waters are extremely salt; but the vapours exhaled from them are found not to be so pestilential as they have been usually represented. It is supposed that the thirteen cities, of which Sodom and Gomorrah, as mentioned in the Bible, are the chief, were destroyed by a volcano, and once occupied the site of the Dead Sea. Earthquakes are now frequent in the country. Volumes of smoke are observed to issue from the lake, and new crevices are daily found on its margin.

The country is mountainous. The range of Libanus, so named on account of their snowy summits, from the Hebrew "Lebanon," *white*, is imperfectly defined. The principal part of them lies towards the north of Galilea, but the name of Libanus is sometimes given to several chains, which run through the whole

extent of Palæstine. Between two of these ranges lay a valley so beautiful that some have called it a terrestrial Paradise; though situated in a much higher region than the greater part of the country, it enjoys perpetual spring — the trees are always green, and the orchards full of fruit. Libanus has been famed for its cedars. Mount Carmel is a celebrated mountain, properly belonging to Samaria, but on which the Syrians had an altar, *but not a temple*, dedicated to their god Carmelus. A priest of this deity, according to Tacitus, (Lib. 2, cap. 78,) foretold the accession of Vespasian to the throne.

The principal towns in Galilea were Dio-Cæsarea, Jotapata or Gath, Genesareth, and Tiberias. Tiberias was built by Herod, near the lake of the same name, and called after the emperor. After the taking of Jerusalem, there was at Tiberias a succession of Hebrew judges, till about the time of the abdication of Diocletian and Maximianus. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, says that a Hebrew copy of St. John, and the Acts of the Apostles, was kept in this city.

The chief cities of Samaria were Neapolis, Antipatris, Archelais, Apollonia, Samaria, and Cæsarea. Cæsarea was the principal, and was anciently called "Turris Stratonis." It was much embellished by Herod, who named it Cæsarea in honour of Augustus — and was the station of the Roman governors. Samaria was situated on Mount Sameron, and was the residence of the kings of Israel, from the time of Omri, its founder, to the overthrow of the kingdom.

In Judæa, were the cities of Engedi, Herodium, Hebron, Beersheba, Jericho, and Jerusalem. Jericho was in the tribe of Benjamin, near the river Jordan; and is called by Moses the city of palm-trees, from the

palms in the adjacent plain, which are also noticed by Tacitus. It was destroyed by Joshua, but afterwards rebuilt. Jerusalem, the capital, was anciently called Salem, or Jebus, by the Jebusites, who were in possession of it till the time of David; but it was then called by the Hebrews Jeruschalaim, signifying "the possession of the inheritance of peace." The Greeks and Romans called it by the name of Hierosolyma. It was built on several hills, of which Mount Sion, in the southern part of the city, was the largest. To the north was Acra, called the "second," or "lower city" — on the east of which was Solomon's temple, built on Mount Moriah. North-east of this was the Mount of Olives, and north of it Mount Calvary, the place of the crucifixion. This city was taken by Pompey, who thence derived his name of Hierosolymarius. It was also taken and destroyed by Titus, (in the year of our Lord 71, by the account of Tacitus — but according to Josephus,) on the 8th of Sept. A.D. 70 — 2177 years after its foundation.

In this siege 110,000 persons are said to have perished, and 97,000 to have been made prisoners, and as Josephus relates, sold as slaves, or thrown to the wild beasts for the sport of the conquerors.

NOTE. — This paper is signed "P." and is entered in the Index of the S. L. M. for 1836 as by Edgar A. Poe. — ED.

MAELZEL'S CHESS-PLAYER.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, April, 1836.]

PERHAPS no exhibition of the kind has ever elicited so general attention as the Chess-Player of Maelzel. Wherever seen it has been an object of intense curiosity, to all persons who think. Yet the question of its *modus operandi* is still undetermined. Nothing has been written on this topic which can be considered as decisive — and accordingly we find everywhere men of mechanical genius, of great general acuteness, and discriminative understanding, who make no scruple in pronouncing the Automaton a *pure machine*, unconnected with human agency in its movements, and consequently, beyond all comparison, the most astonishing of the inventions of mankind. And such it would undoubtedly be, were they right in their supposition. Assuming this hypothesis, it would be grossly absurd to compare with the Chess-Player, any similar thing of either modern or ancient days. Yet there have been many and wonderful automata. In Brewster's Letters on Natural Magic, we have an account of the most remarkable. Among these may be mentioned, as having beyond doubt existed, firstly, the coach invented by M. Camus for the amusement of Louis XIV. when a child. A table, about four feet square, was introduced into the room appropriated for the exhibition. Upon this table was placed a carriage six inches in length, made of wood, and drawn by two horses of the same material. One window being down, a lady was seen on the back

seat. A coachman held the reins on the box, and a footman and page were in their places behind. M. Camus now touched a spring; whereupon the coachman smacked his whip, and the horses proceeded in a natural manner, along the edge of the table, drawing after them the carriage. Having gone as far as possible in this direction, a sudden turn was made to the left, and the vehicle was driven at right angles to its former course, and still closely along the edge of the table. In this way the coach proceeded until it arrived opposite the chair of the young prince. It then stopped, the page descended and opened the door, the lady alighted, and presented a petition to her sovereign. She then re-entered. The page put up the steps, closed the door, and resumed his station. The coachman whipped his horses, and the carriage was driven back to its original position.

The magician of M. Maillardet is also worthy of notice. We copy the following account of it from the *Letters* before mentioned of Dr. B., who derived his information principally from the Edinburgh Encyclopædia.

"One of the most popular pieces of mechanism which we have seen, is the Magician constructed by M. Maillardet, for the purpose of answering certain given questions. A figure, dressed like a magician, appears seated at the bottom of a wall, holding a wand in one hand, and a book in the other. A number of questions, ready prepared, are inscribed on oval medallions, and the spectator takes any of these he chooses, and to which he wishes an answer, and having placed it in a drawer ready to receive it, the drawer shuts with a spring till the answer is returned. The magician then arises from his seat, bows his head, describes cir-

cles with his wand, and consulting the book as if in deep thought, he lifts it towards his face. Having thus appeared to ponder over the proposed question, he raises his wand, and striking with it the wall above his head, two folding doors fly open, and display an appropriate answer to the question. The doors again close, the magician resumes his original position, and the drawer opens to return the medallion. There are twenty of these medallions, all containing different questions, to which the magician returns the most suitable and striking answers. The medallions are thin plates of brass, of an elliptical form, exactly resembling each other. Some of the medallions have a question inscribed on each side, both of which the magician answers in succession. If the drawer is shut without a medallion being put into it, the magician rises, consults his book, shakes his head, and resumes his seat. The folding doors remain shut, and the drawer is returned empty. If two medallions are put into the drawer together, an answer is returned only to the lower one. When the machinery is wound up, the movements continue about an hour, during which time about fifty questions may be answered. The inventor stated that the means by which the different medallions acted upon the machinery, so as to produce the proper answers to the questions which they contained, were extremely simple."

The duck of Vaucanson was still more remarkable. It was of the size of life, and so perfect an imitation of the living animal that all the spectators were deceived. It executed, says Brewster, all the natural movements and gestures, it ate and drank with avidity, performed all the quick motions of the head and throat which are peculiar to the duck, and like it muddled the water which it drank with its bill. It produced also the

sound of quacking in the most natural manner. In the anatomical structure the artists exhibited the highest skill. Every bone in the real duck had its representative in the automaton, and its wings were anatomically exact. Every cavity, apophysis, and curvature was imitated, and each bone executed its proper movements. When corn was thrown down before it, the duck stretched out its neck to pick it up, swallowed, and digested it.[1]

But if these machines were ingenious, what shall we think of the calculating machine of Mr. Babbage? What shall we think of an engine of wood and metal which can not only compute astronomical and navigation tables to any given extent, but render the exactitude of its operations mathematically certain through its power of correcting its possible errors? What shall we think of a machine which can not only accomplish all this, but actually print off its elaborate results, when obtained, without the slightest intervention of the intellect of man? It will, perhaps, be said in reply, that a machine such as we have described is altogether above comparison with the Chess-Player of Maelzel. By no means — it is altogether beneath it — that is to say provided we assume (what should never for a moment be assumed) that the Chess-Player is a *pure machine*, and performs its operations without any immediate human agency. Arithmetical or algebraical calculations are, from their very nature, fixed and determinate. Certain *data* being given, certain results necessarily and inevitably follow. These results have dependence upon nothing, and are influenced by nothing but the *data*

[1] Under the head *Androides* in the Edinburgh Encyclopædia may be found a full account of the principal automata of ancient and modern times.

originally given. And the question to be solved proceeds, or should proceed, to its final determination, by a succession of unerring steps liable to no change, and subject to no modification. This being the case, we can without difficulty conceive the *possibility* of so arranging a piece of mechanism, that upon starting it in accordance with the *data* of the question to be solved, it should continue its movements regularly, progressively, and undeviatingly towards the required solution, since these movements, however complex, are never imagined to be otherwise than finite and determinate. But the case is widely different with the Chess-Player. With him there is no determinate progression. No one move in chess necessarily follows upon any one other. From no particular disposition of the men at one period of a game can we predicate their disposition at a different period. Let us place the *first move* in a game of chess, in juxta-position with the *data* of an algebraical question, and their great difference will be immediately perceived. From the latter — from the *data* — the second step of the question, dependent thereupon, inevitably follows. It is modelled by the *data*. It must be *thus* and not otherwise. But from the first move in the game of chess no especial second move follows of necessity. In the algebraical question, as it proceeds towards solution, the *certainty* of its operations remains altogether unimpaired. The second step having been a consequence of the *data*, the third step is equally a consequence of the second, the fourth of the third, the fifth of the fourth, and so on, *and not possibly otherwise*, to the end. But in proportion to the progress made in a game of chess, is the *uncertainty* of each ensuing move. A few moves having been made, *no* step is certain. Different spectators of the

game would advise different moves. All is then dependent upon the variable judgment of the players. Now even granting (what should not be granted) that the movements of the Automaton Chess-Player were in themselves determinate, they would be necessarily interrupted and disarranged by the indeterminate will of his antagonist. There is then no analogy whatever between the operations of the Chess-Player and those of the calculating machine of Mr. Babbage, and if we choose to call the former a *pure machine*, we must be prepared to admit that it is, beyond all comparison, the most wonderful of the inventions of mankind. Its

original projector, however, Baron Kempelen, had no scruple in declaring it to be a "very ordinary piece of mechanism—a *bagatelle* whose effects appeared so marvellous only from the boldness of the conception, and the fortunate choice of the methods adopted for promoting the illusion." But it is needless to dwell upon this point. It is quite certain that the operations of the Automaton are regulated by *mind*, and by nothing else. Indeed this matter is susceptible of a mathematical demonstration, *a priori*. The only question then is of the *manner* in which human agency is brought to

bear. Before entering upon this subject it would be as well to give a brief history and description of the Chess-Player for the benefit of such of our readers as may never have had an opportunity of witnessing Mr. Maelzel's exhibition.

The Automaton Chess-Player was invented in 1769, by Baron Kempelen, a nobleman of Presburg in Hungary, who afterwards disposed of it, together with the secret of its operations, to its present possessor.[1] Soon after its completion it was exhibited in Presburg, Paris, Vienna, and other continental cities. In 1783 and 1784, it was taken to London by Mr. Maelzel. Of late years it has visited the principal towns in the United States. Wherever seen, the most intense curiosity was excited by its appearance, and numerous have been the attempts, by men of all classes, to fathom the mystery of its evolutions. The cut above gives a tolerable representation of the figure as seen by the citizens of Richmond a few weeks ago. The right arm, however, should lie more at length upon the box, a chess-board should appear upon it, and the cushion should not be seen while the pipe is held. Some immaterial alterations have been made in the costume of the player since it came into the possession of Maelzel — the plume, for example, was not originally worn.

At the hour appointed for exhibition, a curtain is withdrawn, or folding doors are thrown open, and the machine rolled to within about twelve feet of the nearest of the spectators, between whom and it (the machine) a rope is stretched. A figure is seen habited

[1] This was written in 1836, when Mr. Maelzel, recently deceased, was exhibiting the Chess-Player in the United States. It is now (1855), we believe, in the possession of Professor J. K. Mitchell, M. D., of Philadelphia. — Griswold's Note.

as a Turk, and seated, with its legs crossed, at a large box apparently of maple which serves it as a table. The exhibiter will, if requested, roll the machine to any portion of the room, suffer it to remain altogether on any designated spot, or even shift its location repeatedly during the progress of a game. The bottom of the box is elevated considerably above the floor by means of the castors or brazen rollers on which it moves, a clear view of the surface immediately beneath the Automaton being thus afforded to the spectators. The chair on which the figure sits is affixed permanently to the box. On the top of this latter is a chess-board, also permanently affixed. The right arm of the Chess-Player is extended at full length before him, at right angles with his body, and lying, in an apparently careless position, by the side of the board. The back of the hand is upwards. The board itself is eighteen inches square. The left arm of the figure is bent at the elbow, and in the left hand is a pipe. A green drapery conceals the back of the Turk, and falls partially over the front of both shoulders. To judge from the external appearance of the box, it is divided into five compartments — three cupboards of equal dimensions, and two drawers occupying that portion of the chest lying beneath the cupboards. The foregoing observations apply to the appearance of the Automaton upon its first introduction into the presence of the spectators.

Maelzel now informs the company that he will disclose to their view the mechanism of the machine. Taking from his pocket a bunch of keys, he unlocks, with one of them, door marked 1 in the cut above, and throws the cupboard fully open to the inspection of all present. Its whole interior is apparently filled

with wheels, pinions, levers, and other machinery, crowded very closely together, so that the eye can penetrate but a little distance into the mass. Leaving this door open to its full extent, he goes now round to the back of the box, and raising the drapery of the figure, opens another door situated precisely in the rear of the one first opened. Holding a lighted candle at this door, and shifting the position of the whole machine repeatedly at the same time, a bright light is thrown entirely through the cupboard, which is now clearly seen to be full, completely full, of machinery. The spectators being satisfied of this fact, Maelzel closes the back door, locks it, takes the key from the lock, lets fall the drapery of the figure, and comes round to the front. The door marked 1, it will be remembered, is still open. The exhibiter now proceeds to open the drawer which lies beneath the cupboards at the bottom of the box — for although there are apparently two drawers, there is really only one — the two handles and two keyholes being intended merely for ornament. Having opened this drawer to its full extent, a small cushion, and a set of chess-men, fixed in a framework made to support them perpendicularly, are discovered. Leaving this drawer, as well as cupboard No. 1, open, Maelzel now unlocks door No. 2 and door No. 3, which are discovered to be folding doors, opening into one and the same compartment. To the right of this compartment, however (that is to say the spectators' right), a small division, six inches wide, and filled with machinery, is partitioned off. The main compartment itself (in speaking of that portion of the box visible upon opening doors 2 and 3, we shall always call it the main compartment) is lined with dark cloth and contains no machinery whatever

beyond two pieces of steel, quadrant shaped, and situated one in each of the rear top corners of the compartment. A small protuberance about eight inches square, and also covered with dark cloth, lies on the floor of the compartment near the rear corner on the spectators' left hand. Leaving doors No. 2 and No. 3 open as well as the drawer, and door No. 1, the exhibiter now goes round to the back of the main compartment, and unlocking another door there, displays clearly all the interior of the main compartment, by introducing a candle behind it and within it. The whole box being thus apparently disclosed to the scrutiny of the company, Maelzel, still leaving the doors and drawer open, rolls the Automaton entirely round, and exposes the back of the Turk by lifting up the drapery. A door about ten inches square is thrown open in the loins of the figure, and a smaller one also in the left thigh. The interior of the figure, as seen through these apertures, appears to be crowded with machinery. In general, every spectator is now thoroughly satisfied of having beheld and completely scrutinized, at one and the same time, every individual portion of the Automaton, and the idea of any person being concealed in the interior, during so complete an exhibition of that interior, if ever entertained, is immediately dismissed as preposterous in the extreme.

M. Maelzel, having rolled the machine back into its original position, now informs the company that the Automaton will play a game of chess with any one disposed to encounter him. This challenge being accepted, a small table is prepared for the antagonist, and placed close by the rope, but on the spectators' side of it, and so situated as not to prevent the company from obtaining a full view of the Automaton. From a drawer

in this table is taken a set of chess-men, and Maelzel arranges them generally, but not always, with his own hands, on the chess-board, which consists merely of the usual number of squares painted upon the table. The antagonist having taken his seat, the exhibiter approaches the drawer of the box, and takes therefrom the cushion, which after removing the pipe from the hand of the Automaton, he places under its left arm as a support. Then taking also from the drawer the Automaton's set of chess-men, he arranges them upon the chess-board before the figure. He now proceeds to close the doors and to lock them — leaving the bunch of keys in door No. 1. He also closes the drawer, and finally winds up the machine by applying a key to an aperture in the left end (the spectators' left) of the box. The game now commences — the Automaton taking the first move. The duration of the contest is usually limited to half an hour, but if it be not finished at the expiration of this period, and the antagonist still contend that he can beat the Automaton, M. Maelzel has seldom any objection to continue it. Not to weary the company, is the ostensible, and no doubt the real object of the limitation. It will of course be understood that when a move is made at his own table by the antagonist, the corresponding move is made at the box of the Automaton, by Maelzel himself, who then acts as the representative of the antagonist. On the other hand, when the Turk moves, the corresponding move is made at the table of the antagonist, also by M. Maelzel, who then acts as the representative of the Automaton. In this manner it is necessary that the exhibiter should often pass from one table to the other. He also frequently goes in the rear of the figure to remove the chess-men which it has taken, and which it deposits, when taken,

on the box to the left (to its own left) of the board. When the Automaton hesitates in relation to its move, the exhibiter is occasionally seen to place himself very near its right side, and to lay his hand, now and then, in a careless manner, upon the box. He has also a peculiar shuffle with his feet, calculated to induce suspicion of collusion with the machine in minds which are more cunning than sagacious. These peculiarities, are, no doubt, mere mannerisms of M. Maelzel, or, if he is aware of them at all, he puts them in practice with a view of exciting in the spectators a false idea of the pure mechanism in the Automaton.

The Turk plays with his left hand. All the movements of the arm are at right angles. In this manner, the hand (which is gloved and bent in a natural way), being brought directly above the piece to be moved, descends finally upon it, the fingers receiving it in most cases without difficulty. Occasionally, however, when the piece is not precisely in its proper situation, the Automaton fails in his attempt at seizing it. When this occurs, no second effort is made, but the arm continues its movement in the direction originally intended, precisely as if the piece were in the fingers. Having thus designated the spot whither the move should have been made, the arm returns to its cushion, and Maelzel performs the evolution which the Automaton pointed out. At every movement of the figure the machinery is heard in motion. During the progress of the game, the figure now and then rolls its eyes, as if surveying the board, moves its head, and pronounces the word *echec* (check) when necessary.[1] If a false

[1] The making the Turk pronounce the word *echec*, is an improvement by M. Maelzel. When in possession of Baron Kem-

move be made by his antagonist, he raps briskly on the box with the fingers of his right hand, shakes his head roughly, and replacing the pieces falsely moved, in its former situation, assumes the next move himself. Upon beating the game, he waves his head with an air of triumph, looks around complacently upon the spectators, and drawing his left arm farther back than usual, suffers his fingers alone to rest upon the cushion. In general, the Turk is victorious — once or twice he has been beaten. The game being ended, Maelzel will again, if desired, exhibit the mechanism of the box in the same manner as before. The machine is then rolled back, and a curtain hides it from the view of the company.

There have been many attempts at solving the mystery of the Automaton. The most general opinion in relation to it, an opinion too not unfrequently adopted by men who should have known better, was, as we have before said, that no immediate human agency was employed — in other words, that the machine was purely a machine and nothing else. Many, however, maintained that the exhibiter himself regulated the movements of the figure by mechanical means operating through the feet of the box. Others, again, spoke confidently of a magnet. Of the first of these opinions we shall say nothing at present more than we have already said. In relation to the second it is only necessary to repeat what we have before stated, that the machine is rolled about on castors, and will, at the request of a spectator, be moved to and fro to any portion of the room, even during the progress of the game. The supposition of the magnet is also untenable — for if a magnet were the agent, any other magnet in the

pelen, the figure indicated a *check* by rapping on the box with his right hand.

pocket of a spectator would disarrange the entire mechanism. The exhibiter, however, will suffer the most powerful loadstone to remain even upon the box during the whole of the exhibition.

The first attempt at a written explanation of the secret, at least the first attempt of which we ourselves have any knowledge, was made in a large pamphlet printed at Paris in 1785. The author's hypothesis amounted to this — that a dwarf actuated the machine. This dwarf he supposed to conceal himself during the opening of the box, by thrusting his legs into two hollow cylinders, which were represented to be (but which are not) among the machinery in the cupboard No. 1, while his body was out of the box entirely, and covered by the drapery of the Turk. When the doors were shut, the dwarf was enabled to bring his body within the box, the noise produced by some portion of the machinery allowing him to do so unheard, and also to close the door by which he entered. The interior of the Automaton being then exhibited, and no person discovered, the spectators, says the author of this pamphlet, are satisfied that no one is within any portion of the machine. The whole hypothesis was too obviously absurd to require comment, or refutation, and accordingly we find that it attracted very little attention.

In 1789 a book was published at Dresden by M. I. F. Freyhere in which another endeavour was made to unravel the mystery. Mr. Freyhere's book was a pretty large one, and copiously illustrated by coloured engravings. His supposition was that "a well-taught boy, very thin and tall of his age (sufficiently so, that he could be concealed in a drawer almost immediately under the chess-board,") played the game of chess and effected all the evolutions of the Automaton. This

idea, although even more silly than that of the Parisian author, met with a better reception, and was in some measure believed to be the true solution of the wonder, until the inventor put an end to the discussion by suffering a close examination of the top of the box.

These bizarre attempts at explanation were followed by others equally bizarre. Of late years, however, an anonymous writer by a course of reasoning exceedingly unphilosophical, has contrived to blunder upon a plausible solution — although we cannot consider it altogether the true one. His Essay was first published in a Baltimore weekly paper, was illustrated by cuts, and was entitled "An attempt to analyze the Automaton Chess-Player of M. Maelzel." This Essay we suppose to have been the original of the *pamphlet* to which Sir David Brewster alludes in his letters on Natural Magic, and which he has no hesitation in declaring a thorough and satisfactory explanation. The *results* of the analysis are undoubtedly, in the main, just; but we can only account for Brewster's pronouncing the Essay a thorough and satisfactory explanation, by supposing him to have bestowed upon it a very cursory and inattentive perusal. In the compendium of the Essay, made use of in the Letters on Natural Magic, it is quite impossible to arrive at any distinct conclusion in regard to the adequacy or inadequacy of the analysis, on account of the gross misarrangement and deficiency of the letters of reference employed. The same fault is to be found in the "Attempt," etc., as we originally saw it. The solution consists in a series of minute explanations, (accompanied by wood-cuts, the whole occupying many pages,) in which the object is to show the *possibility* of *so shifting the partitions* of the box, as to allow a human being, concealed in the interior, to move portions of

his body from one part of the box to another, during the exhibition of the mechanism — thus eluding the scrutiny of the spectators. There can be no doubt, as we have before observed, and as we will presently endeavour to show, that the principle, or rather the result of this solution is the true one. Some person *is* concealed in the box during the whole time of exhibiting the interior. We object, however, to the whole verbose description of the *manner* in which the partitions are shifted, to accommodate the movements of the person concealed. We object to it as a mere theory assumed in the first place, and to which circumstances are afterwards made to adapt themselves. It was not, and could not have been, arrived at by any inductive reasoning. In whatever way the shifting is managed, it is, of course, concealed at every step from observation. To show that certain movements might possibly be effected in a certain way, is very far from showing that they are actually so effected. There may be an infinity of other methods by which the same results may be obtained. The probability of the one assumed proving the correct one is then as unity to infinity. But, in reality, this particular point, the shifting of the partitions, is of no consequence whatever. It was altogether unnecessary to devote seven or eight pages for the purpose of proving what no one in his senses would deny, viz: that the wonderful mechanical genius of Baron Kempelen could invent the necessary means for shutting a door or slipping aside a panel, with a human agent too at his service in actual contact with the panel or the door, and the whole operations carried on, as the author of the Essay himself shows, and as we shall attempt to show more fully hereafter, entirely out of reach of the observation of the spectators.

over

In attempting ourselves an explanation of the Automaton, we will, in the first place, endeavour to show how its operations are effected, and afterwards describe, as briefly as possible, the nature of the *observations* from which we have deduced our result.

It will be necessary for a proper understanding of the subject, that we repeat here in a few words, the routine adopted by the exhibiter in disclosing the interior of the box — a routine from which he *never* deviates in any material particular. In the first place he opens the door No. 1. Leaving this open, he goes round to the rear of the box, and opens a door precisely at the back of door No. 1. To this back door he holds a lighted candle. He then *closes the back door*, locks it, and coming round to the front, opens the drawer to its full extent. This done, he opens the doors No. 2 and No. 3 (the folding doors), and displays the interior of the main compartment. Leaving open the main compartment, the drawer, and the front door of cupboard No. 1, he now goes to the rear again, and throws open the back door of the main compartment. In shutting up the box no particular order is observed, except that the folding doors are always closed before the drawer.

Now, let us suppose that when the machine is first rolled into the presence of the spectators, a man is already within it. His body is situated behind the dense machinery in cupboard No 1, (the rear portion of which machinery is so contrived as to slip *en masse*, from the main compartment to the cupboard No. 1, as occasion may require,) and his legs lie at full length in the main compartment. When Maelzel opens the door No. 1, the man within is not in any danger of discovery, for the keenest eye cannot penetrate more

than about two inches into the darkness within. But the case is otherwise when the back door of the cupboard No. 1 is opened. A bright light then pervades the cupboard, and the body of the man would be discovered if it were there. But it is not. The putting the key in the lock of the back door was a signal on hearing which the person concealed brought his body forward to an angle as acute as possible — throwing it altogether, or nearly so, into the main compartment. This, however, is a painful position, and cannot be long maintained. Accordingly we find that Maelzel *closes the back door*. This being done, there is no reason why the body of the man may not resume its former situation — for the cupboard is again so dark as to defy scrutiny. The drawer is now opened, and the legs of the person within drop down behind it in the space it formerly occupied.[1] There is, consequently, now no longer any part of the man in the main compartment — his body being behind the machinery in cupboard No. 1, and his legs in the space occupied by the drawer. The exhibiter, therefore, finds himself at liberty to display the main compartment. This he does — opening both its back and front doors — and no person is discovered. The spectators are now satisfied that the whole of the box is exposed to view — and exposed, too, all portions of it at one and the same time. But of course this is not the case. They neither see the space behind the drawer,

[1] Sir David Brewster supposes that there is always a large space behind this drawer even when shut — in other words that the drawer is a "false drawer," and does not extend to the back of the box. But the idea is altogether untenable. So common-place a trick would be immediately discovered — especially as the drawer is always opened to its full extent, and an opportunity thus offered of comparing its depth with that of the box.

nor the interior of cupboard No. 1, — the front door of which latter the exhibiter virtually shuts in shutting its back door. Maelzel, having now rolled the machine around, lifted up the drapery of the Turk, opened the doors in his back and thigh, and shown his trunk to be full of machinery, brings the whole back into its original position, and closes the doors. The man within is now at liberty to move about. He gets up into the body of the Turk just so high as to bring his eyes above the level of the chess-board. It is very probable that he seats himself upon the little square block or protuberance which is seen in a corner of the main compartment when the doors are open. In this position he sees the chess-board through the bosom of the Turk which is of gauze. Bringing his right arm across his breast he actuates the little machinery necessary to guide the left arm and the fingers of the figure. This machinery is situated just beneath the left shoulder of the Turk, and is consequently easily reached by the right hand of the man concealed, if we suppose his right arm brought across the breast. The motions of the head and eyes, and of the right arm of the figure, as well as the sound *echec* are produced by other mechanism in the interior, and actuated at will by the man within. The whole of this mechanism — that is to say all the mechanism essential to the machine — is most probably contained within the little cupboard (of about six inches in breadth) partitioned off at the right (the spectators' right) of the main compartment.

In this analysis of the operations of the Automaton, we have purposely avoided any allusion to the manner in which the partitions are shifted, and it will now be readily comprehended that this point is a matter of no importance, since, by mechanism within the ability

of any common carpenter, it might be effected in an infinity of different ways, and since we have shown that, however performed, it is performed out of the view of the spectators. Our result is founded upon the following *observations* taken during frequent visits to the exhibition of Maelzel.[1]

1. The moves of the Turk are not made at regular intervals of time, but accommodate themselves to the moves of the antagonist — although this point (of regularity) so important in all kinds of mechanical contrivance, might have been readily brought about by limiting the time allowed for the moves of the antagonist. For example, if this limit were three minutes, the moves of the Automaton might be made at any given intervals longer than three minutes. The fact then of irregularity, when regularity might have been so easily attained, goes to prove that regularity is unimportant to the action of the Automaton — in other words, that the Automaton is not *a pure machine*.

2. When the Automaton is about to move a piece, a distinct motion is observable just beneath the left shoulder, and which motion agitates in a slight degree, the drapery covering the front of the left shoulder. This motion invariably precedes, by about two seconds, the movement of the arm itself — and the arm never, in any instance, moves without this preparatory motion in the shoulder. Now let the antagonist move a piece, and let the corresponding move be made by Maelzel,

[1] Some of these *observations* are intended merely to prove that the machine must be regulated *by mind*, and it may be thought a work of supererogation to advance farther arguments in support of what has been already fully decided. But our object is to convince, in especial, certain of our friends upon whom a train of suggestive reasoning will have more influence than the most positive *a priori* demonstration.

as usual, upon the board of the Automaton. Then let the antagonist narrowly watch the Automaton, until he detect the preparatory motion in the shoulder. Immediately upon detecting this motion, and before the arm itself begins to move, let him withdraw his piece, as if perceiving an error in his manœuvre. It will then be seen that the movement of the arm, which, in all other cases, immediately succeeds the motion in the shoulder, is withheld — is not made — although Maelzel has not yet performed, on the board of the Automaton, any move corresponding to the withdrawal of the antagonist. In this case, that the Automaton was about to move is evident — and that he did not move, was an effect plainly produced by the withdrawal of the antagonist, and without any intervention of Maelzel.

This fact fully proves, 1 — that the intervention of Maelzel, in performing the moves of the antagonist on the board of the Automaton, is not essential to the movements of the Automaton, 2 — that its movements are regulated by *mind* — by some person who sees the board of the antagonist, 3 — that its movements are not regulated by the mind of Maelzel, whose back was turned toward the antagonist at the withdrawal of his move.

3. The Automaton does not invariably win the game. Were the machine a pure machine this would not be the case — it would always win. The *principle* being discovered by which a machine can be made to *play* a game of chess, an extension of the same principle would enable it to *win* a game — a farther extension would enable it to *win all* games — that is, to beat any possible game of an antagonist. A little consideration will convince any one that the difficulty of making a machine beat all games, is not in the least degree greater, as regards the principle of the operations neces-

sary, than that of making it beat a single game. If then we regard the Chess-Player as a machine, we must suppose, (what is highly improbable,) that its inventor preferred leaving it incomplete to perfecting it — a supposition rendered still more absurd, when we reflect that the leaving it incomplete would afford an argument against the possibility of its being a pure machine — the very argument we now adduce.

4. When the situation of the game is difficult or complex, we never perceive the Turk either shake his head or roll his eyes. It is only when his next move is obvious, or when the game is so circumstanced that to a man in the Automaton's place there would be no necessity for reflection. Now these peculiar movements of the head and eyes are movements customary with persons engaged in meditation, and the ingenious Baron Kempelen would have adapted these movements (were the machine a pure machine) to occasions proper for their display — that is, to occasions of complexity. But the reverse is seen to be the case, and this reverse applies precisely to our supposition of a man in the interior. When engaged in meditation about the game, he has no time to think of setting in motion the mechanism of the Automaton by which are moved the head and the eyes. When the game, however, is obvious, he has time to look about him, and accordingly, we see the head shake and the eyes roll.

5. When the machine is rolled round to allow the spectators an examination of the back of the Turk, and when his drapery is lifted up and the doors in the trunk and thigh thrown open, the interior of the trunk is seen to be crowded with machinery. In scrutinizing this machinery while the Automaton was in motion, that is to say while the whole machine was moving on the

castors, it appeared to us that certain portions of the mechanism changed their shape and position in a degree too great to be accounted for by the simple laws of perspective; and subsequent examinations convince us that these undue alterations were attributable to mirrors in the interior of the trunk. The introduction of mirrors among the machinery could not have been intended to influence, in any degree, the machinery itself. Their operation, whatever that operation should prove to be, must necessarily have reference to the eye of the spectator. We at once concluded that these mirrors were so placed to multiply to the vision some few pieces of machinery within the trunk so as to give it the appearance of being crowded with mechanism. Now the direct inference from this is that the machine is not a pure machine. For if it were, the inventor, so far from wishing its mechanism to appear complex, and using deception for the purpose of giving it this appearance, would have been especially desirous of convincing those who witnessed his exhibition, of the *simplicity* of the means by which results so wonderful were brought about.

6. The external appearance, and especially, the deportment of the Turk, are, when we consider them as imitations of *life*, but very indifferent imitations. The countenance evinces no ingenuity, and is surpassed, in its resemblance to the human face, by the very commonest of wax-works. The eyes roll unnaturally in the head, without any corresponding motions of the lids or brows. The arm, particularly, performs its operations in an exceedingly stiff, awkward, jerking, and rectangular manner. Now, all this is the result either of inability in Maelzel to do better, or of intentional neglect — accidental neglect being out of the

question, when we consider that the whole time of the ingenious proprietor is occupied in the improvement of his machines. Most assuredly we must not refer the unlifelike appearances to inability — for all the rest of Maelzel's automata are evidence of his full ability to copy the motions and peculiarities of life with the most wonderful exactitude. The rope-dancers, for example, are inimitable. When the clown laughs, his lips, his eyes, his eye-brows, and eye-lids — indeed, all the features of his countenance — are imbued with their appropriate expressions. In both him and his companion, every gesture is so entirely easy, and free from the semblance of artificiality, that, were it not for the diminutiveness of their size, and the fact of their being passed from one spectator to another previous to their exhibition on the rope, it would be difficult to convince any assemblage of persons that these wooden automata were not living creatures. We cannot, therefore, doubt Mr. Maelzel's ability, and we must necessarily suppose that he intentionally suffered his Chess-Player to remain the same artificial and unnatural figure which Baron Kempelen (no doubt also through design) originally made it. What this design was it is not difficult to conceive. Were the Automaton lifelike in its motions, the spectator would be more apt to attribute its operations to their true cause (that is, to human agency within) than he is now, when the awkward and rectangular manœuvres convey the idea of pure and unaided mechanism.

7. When, a short time previous to the commencement of the game, the Automaton is wound up by the exhibiter as usual, an ear in any degree accustomed to the sounds produced in winding up a system of machinery, will not fail to discover, instantaneously, that the

axis turned by the key in the box of the Chess-Player, cannot possibly be connected with either a weight, a spring, or any system of machinery whatever. The inference here is the same as in our last observation. The winding up is inessential to the operations of the Automaton, and is performed with the design of exciting in the spectators the false idea of mechanism.

8. When the question is demanded explicitly of Maelzel — "Is the Automaton a pure machine or not?" his reply is invariably the same — "I will say nothing about it." Now the notoriety of the Automaton, and the great curiosity it has everywhere excited, are owing more especially to the prevalent opinion that it *is* a pure machine, than to any other circumstance. Of course, then, it is the interest of the proprietor to represent it as a pure machine. And what more obvious, and more effectual method could there be of impressing the spectators with this desired idea, than a positive and explicit declaration to that effect? On the other hand, what more obvious and effectual method could there be of exciting a disbelief in the Automaton's being a pure machine, than by withholding such explicit declaration? For, people will naturally reason thus, — It is Maelzel's interest to represent this thing a pure machine — he refuses to do so, directly, in words, although he does not scruple, and is evidently anxious to do so, indirectly by actions — were it actually what he wishes to represent it by actions, he would gladly avail himself of the more direct testimony of words — the inference is, that a consciousness of its *not* being a pure machine, is the reason of his silence — his actions cannot implicate him in a falsehood — his words may.

9. When, in exhibiting the interior of the box,

Maelzel has thrown open the door No. 1, and also the door immediately behind it, he holds a lighted candle at the back door (as mentioned above) and moves the entire machine to and fro with a view of convincing the company that the cupboard No. 1 is entirely filled with machinery. When the machine is thus moved about, it will be apparent to any careful observer, that whereas that portion of the machinery near the front door No. 1 is perfectly steady and unwavering, the portion farther within fluctuates, in a very slight degree, with the movements of the machine. This circumstance first aroused in us the suspicion that the more remote portion of the machinery was so arranged as to be easily slipped, *en masse*, from its position when occasion should require it. This occasion we have already stated to occur when the man concealed within brings his body into an erect position upon the closing of the back door.

10. Sir David Brewster states the figure of the Turk to be of the size of life — but in fact it is far above the ordinary size. Nothing is more easy than to err in our notions of magnitude. The body of the Automaton is generally insulated, and having no means of immediately comparing it with any human form, we suffer ourselves to consider it as of ordinary dimensions. This mistake may, however, be corrected by observing the Chess-Player when, as is sometimes the case, the exhibiter approaches it. Mr. Maelzel, to be sure, is not very tall, but upon drawing near the machine, his head will be found at least eighteen inches below the head of the Turk, although the latter, it will be remembered, is in a sitting position.

11. The box behind which the Automaton is placed is precisely three feet six inches long, two feet four inches

deep, and two feet six inches high. These dimensions are fully sufficient for the accommodation of a man very much above the common size — and the main compartment alone is capable of holding any ordinary man in the position we have mentioned as assumed by the person concealed. As these are facts, which any one who doubts them may prove by actual calculation, we deem it unnecessary to dwell upon them. We will only suggest that, although the top of the box is apparently a board of about three inches in thickness, the spectator may satisfy himself by stooping and looking up at it when the main compartment is open, that it is in reality very thin. The height of the drawer also will be misconceived by those who examine it in a cursory manner. There is a space of about three inches between the top of the drawer as seen from the exterior, and the bottom of the cupboard — a space which must be included in the height of the drawer. These contrivances to make the room within the box appear less than it actually is, are referrible to a design on the part of the inventor, to impress the company again with a false idea, viz., that no human being can be accommodated within the box.

12. The interior of the main compartment is lined throughout with *cloth*. This cloth we suppose to have a twofold object. A portion of it may form, when tightly stretched, the only partitions which there is any necessity for removing during the changes of the man's position, viz.: the partition between the rear of the main compartment and the rear of cupboard No. 1, and the partition between the main compartment, and the space behind the drawer when open. If we imagine this to be the case, the difficulty of shifting the partitions vanishes at once, if indeed any such difficulty

could be supposed under any circumstances to exist. The second object of the cloth is to deaden and render indistinct all sounds occasioned by the movements of the person within.

13. The antagonist (as we have before observed) is not suffered to play at the board of the Automaton, but is seated at some distance from the machine. The reason which, most probably, would be assigned for this circumstance, if the question were demanded, is, that were the antagonist otherwise situated, his person would intervene between the machine and the spectators, and preclude the latter from a distinct view. But this difficulty might be easily obviated, either by elevating the seats of the company, or by turning the end of the box toward them during the game. The true cause of the restriction is, perhaps, very different. Were the antagonist seated in contact with the box, the secret would be liable to discovery, by his detecting, with the aid of a quick ear, the breathings of the man concealed.

14. Although M. Maelzel, in disclosing the interior of the machine, sometimes slightly deviates from the *routine* which we have pointed out, yet *never* in any instance does he *so* deviate from it as to interfere with our solution. For example, he has been known to open, first of all, the drawer — but he never opens the main compartment without first closing the back door of cupboard No. 1 — he never opens the main compartment without first pulling out the drawer — he never shuts the drawer without first shutting the main compartment — he never opens the back door of cupboard No. 1 while the main compartment is open — and the game of chess is never commenced until the whole machine is closed. Now, if it were observed

that *never, in any single instance,* did M. Maelzel differ from the routine we have pointed out as necessary to our solution, it would be one of the strongest possible arguments in corroboration of it — but the argument becomes infinitely strengthened if we duly consider the circumstance that he *does occasionally* deviate from the routine, but never does *so* deviate as to falsify the solution.

15. There are six candles on the board of the Automaton during exhibition. The question naturally arises — "Why are so many employed, when a single candle, or, at farthest, two, would have been amply sufficient to afford the spectators a clear view of the board, in a room otherwise so well lit up as the exhibition room always is — when, moreover, if we suppose the machine a *pure machine,* there can be no necessity for so much light, or indeed any light at all, to enable *it* to perform its operations — and when, especially, only a single candle is placed upon the table of the antagonist?" The first and most obvious inference is, that so strong a light is requisite to enable the man within to see through the transparent material (probably fine gauze) of which the breast of the Turk is composed. But when we consider the *arrangement* of the candles, another reason immediately presents itself. There are six lights (as we have said before) in all. Three of these are on each side of the figure. Those most remote from the spectators are the longest — those in the middle are about two inches shorter — and those nearest the company about two inches shorter still — and the candles on one side differ in height from the candles respectively opposite on the other, by a ratio different from two inches — that is to say, the longest candle on one side is about three inches

shorter than the longest candle on the other, and so on. Thus it will be seen that no two of the candles are of the same height, and thus also the difficulty of ascertaining the *material* of the breast of the figure (against which the light is especially directed) is greatly augmented by the dazzling effect of the complicated crossings of the rays — crossings which are brought about by placing the centres of radiation all upon different levels.

16. While the Chess-Player was in possession of Baron Kempelen, it was more than once observed, first, that an Italian in the suite of the Baron was never visible during the playing of a game at chess by the Turk, and secondly, that the Italian being taken seriously ill, the exhibition was suspended until his recovery. This Italian professed a *total* ignorance of the game of chess, although all others of the suite played well. Similar observations have been made since the Automaton has been purchased by Maelzel. There is a man, *Schlumberger*, who attends him wherever he goes, but who has no ostensible occupation other than that of assisting in the packing and unpacking of the Automaton. This man is about the medium size, and has a remarkable stoop in the shoulders. Whether he professes to play chess or not, we are not informed. It is quite certain, however, that he is never to be seen during the exhibition of the Chess-Player, although frequently visible just before and just after the exhibition. Moreover, some years ago Maelzel visited Richmond with his automata, and exhibited them, we believe, in the house now occupied by M. Bossieux as a Dancing Academy. *Schlumberger* was suddenly taken ill, and during his illness there was no exhibition of the Chess-Player. These facts are well known to many of our citizens. The reason assigned for the suspension of the Chess-

Player's performances, was *not* the illness of *Schlumberger*. The inferences from all this we leave, without farther comment, to the reader.

17. The Turk plays with his *left* arm. A circumstance so remarkable cannot be accidental. Brewster takes no notice of it whatever, beyond a mere statement, we believe, that such is the fact. The early writers of treatises on the Automaton, seem not to have observed the matter at all, and have no reference to it. The author of the pamphlet alluded to by Brewster mentions it, but acknowledges his inability to account for it. Yet it is obviously from such prominent discrepancies or incongruities as this that deduction are to be made (if made at all) which shall lead us to the truth.

The circumstance of the Automaton's playing with his left hand cannot have connexion with the operations of the machine considered merely as such. Any mechanical arrangement which would cause the figure to move, in any given manner, the left arm — could, if reversed, cause it to move, in the same manner, the right. But these principles cannot be extended to the human organization, wherein there is a marked and radical difference in the construction, and at all events, in the powers, of the right and left arms. Reflecting upon this latter fact, we naturally refer the incongruity noticeable in the Chess-Player to this peculiarity in the human organization. If so, we must imagine some *reversion* — for the Chess-Player plays precisely as a man *would not*. These ideas, once entertained, are sufficient of themselves to suggest the notion of a man in the interior. A few more imperceptible steps lead us, finally, to the result. The Automaton plays with his left arm, because under no other circumstances

could the man within play with his right — a *desideratum*, of course. Let us, for example, imagine the Automaton to play with his right arm. To reach the machinery which moves the arm, and which we have before explained to lie just beneath the shoulder, it would be necessary for the man within either to use his right arm in an exceedingly painful and awkward position (viz., brought up close to his body and tightly compressed between his body and the side of the Automaton), or else to use his left arm brought across his breast. In neither case could he act with the requisite ease or precision. On the contrary, the Automaton playing, as it actually does, with the left arm, all difficulties vanish. The right arm of the man within is brought across his breast, and his right fingers act, without any constraint, upon the machinery in the shoulder of the figure.

We do not believe that any reasonable objections can be urged against this solution of the Automaton Chess-Player.

PINAKIDIA.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, August, 1836.]

UNDER the head of *Random Thoughts*, *Odds and Ends*, *Stray Leaves*, *Scraps*, *Brevities*, and a variety of similar titles, we occasionally meet, in periodicals and elsewhere, with papers of rich interest and value — the result, in some cases, of much thought, and more research, expended, however, at a manifest disadvantage, if we regard merely the estimate which the public are willing to set upon such articles. It sometimes occurs that in papers of this nature may be found a collective mass of general, but more usually of classical erudition, which if dexterously besprinkled over a proper surface of narrative, would be sufficient to make the fortunes of one or two hundred ordinary novelists in these our good days, when all heroes and heroines are necessarily men and women of "extensive acquirements." But, for the most part, these "*Brevities*," etc., are either piecemeal cullings at second hand, from a variety of sources hidden or supposed to be hidden, or more audacious pilferings from those vast storehouses of brief facts, memoranda, and opinions in general literature, which are so abundant in all the principal libraries of Germany and France. Of the former species, the *Koran* of Lawrence Sterne is, at the same time, one of the most consummately impudent and silly; and it may well be doubted whether a single paragraph of any merit in the whole of it may not be found, *nearly verbatim*, in the works of some of his

immediate contemporaries. If the *Lacon* of Mr. Colton is any better, its superiority consists altogether in a deeper ingenuity in disguising his stolen wares, and in that prescriptive right of the strongest which, time out of mind, has decided upon calling every Napoleon a conqueror, and every Dick Turpin a thief. Seneca; Machiavelli [1]; Balzac, the author of "La Manière de bien Penser"; Bielfeld, the German, who wrote, in French, "Les Premiers Traits de L'Erudition Universelle"; Rochefoucault; Bacon; Bolingbroke; and especially Burdon, of "Materials for Thinking" memory, possess, among them, indisputable claims to the ownership of nearly everything worth owning in the book.

Of the latter species of theft, we see frequent specimens in the continental magazines of Europe, and occasionally meet with them even in the lower class of periodicals in Great Britain. These specimens are usually extracts, by wholesale, from such works as the "Bibliothèque des Memorabilia Literaria," the "Recueil des Bonnes Pensées," the "Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses," the "Literary Memoirs" of Sallengré, the "Mélanges Littéraires" of Suard and André, or the "Pièces Intéressantes et peu Connues" of La Place. D'Israeli's "Curiosities of Literature," "Literary Character," and "Calamities of Authors," have, of late years, proved exceedingly convenient to some little American pilferers in this line, but are now becoming too generally known to allow much hope of

[1] It is remarkable that much of what Colton has stolen from Machiavelli, was previously stolen by Machiavelli from Plutarch. A Ms. book of the "Apophthegms of the Ancients," by this latter writer, having fallen into Machiavelli's hands, he put them nearly all into the mouth of his hero, Castrucio Castricani.

their good things being any longer appropriated with impunity.

Such collections, as those of which we have been speaking, are usually entertaining in themselves, and for the most part, we relish everything about them save their pretensions to originality. In offering, ourselves, something of the kind to the readers of the Messenger, we wish to be understood as disclaiming in a great degree every such pretension. Most of the following article is not[1] original, and will be readily recognized as such by the classical and general reader — some portions of it may have been written down in the words, or nearly in the words, of the primitive authorities. The whole is taken from a confused mass of marginal notes, and entries in a common-place-book. No certain arrangement has been considered necessary; and, indeed, so heterogeneous a farrago it would have been an endless task to methodize. We have chosen the heading *Pinakidia*, or Tablets, as one sufficiently comprehensive. It was used, for a somewhat similar purpose, by Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

The whole of Bulwer's elaborate argument on the immortality of the soul, which he has put into the mouth of the "Ambitious Student," may be confuted through the author's omission of one particular point in his summary of the attributes of Deity — a point which we cannot believe omitted altogether through accident. A single link is deficient in the chain — but the chain is worthless without it. No man doubts

[1] Mr. G. E. Woodberry first called attention to the misprint by which, the *not* being left out, Poe was made to say that most of his article was "original" instead of "*not* original." — Life, p. 96.

the immortality of the soul — yet of all truths this truth of immortality is the most difficult to prove by any mere series of syllogisms. We would refer our readers to the argument here mentioned.

The rude rough wild waste has its power to please,

a line in one Mr. Idiorne's poem, "The Progress of Refinement," is announced by the American author of a book entitled "Ante-Diluvian Antiquities," "the very best alliteration in all poetry."

The *Turkish Spy* is the original of many similar works — among the best of which are Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, and the *British Spy* of our own Wirt. It was written undoubtedly by John Paul Marana, an Italian, *in* Italian, but probably was first published in French. Dr. Johnson, who saw only an English translation, supposed it an English work. Marana died in 1693.

The hunter and the deer a shade

is a much admired line in Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming* — but the identical line is to be found in the poems of the American Freneau.

Corneille's celebrated *Moi* of Medea is borrowed from Seneca. Racine, in Phædra, has stolen nearly the whole scene of the declaration of love from the same puerile writer.

The peculiar zodiac of the comets is comprised in three verses of Cassini : —

Antinous, Pegasusque, Andromeda, Taurus, Orion.
Procyon, atque Hydrus, Centaurus, Scorpius, Arcus.

Speaking of the usual representation of the banquet-scene in "Macbeth," Von Raumer, the German historian, mentions a shadowy figure thrown by optical means into the chair of Banquo, and producing intense effect upon the audience. Enslen, a German optician, conceived this idea, and accomplished it without difficulty.

A religious hubbub, such as the world has seldom seen, was excited during the reign of Frederic II. by the *imagined* virulence of a book entitled "The Three Impostors." It was attributed to Pierre des Vignes, chancellor of the king, who was accused by the Pope of having treated the religions of Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet as political fables. The work in question, however, which was squabbled about, abused, defended, and familiarly *quoted* by all parties, is well proved never to have existed.

The word Τύχη, or Fortune, does not appear once in the whole Iliad.

The "Lamentations" of Jeremiah are written, with the exception of the last chapter, in acrostic verse; that is to say, every line or couplet begins, in alphabetical order, with some letter in the Hebrew alphabet. In the third chapter each letter is repeated three times successively.

The fullest account of the Amazons is to be found in Diodorus Siculus.

Theophrastus, in his botanical works, anticipated the sexual system of Linnæus. Philolaus of Crotona main-

tained that comets appeared after a certain revolution, and Æcetes contended for the existence of what is now called the new world. Pulci, "the sire of the half-serious rhyme," has a passage expressly alluding to a western continent. Dante, two centuries before, has the same allusion.

> De' vostri sensi ch' è del rimanente,
> Non vogliate negar l' esperienza
> Diretro al sol, del mondo senza gente.[1]
>
> — *Inferno*, XXVI., 115.

Cicero makes *finis* masculine, Virgil feminine. Usque ad eum finem. — *Cicero*. Quae finis standi? Haec finis Priami factorum. — *Virgil*.

Dante left a poem in three languages — Latin, Provençal, and Italian. Rambaud de Vachieras left one in five.

Marcus Antoninus wrote a book entitled, Τῶν εἰς ἑαυτόν — Of the things which concern himself. It would be a good title for a Diary.

Lipsius, in his treatise "De Supplicio Crucis," says that the upright beam of the cross was a *fixture* at the place of execution, whither the criminal was made to bear only the transverse arm. Consequently the painters are in error who depict our Savior bearing the entire cross.

The stream flowing through the middle of the valley of Jehoshaphat, is called, in the Gospel of St. John, "the brook of cedars." In the Septuagint the word

[1] Corrected by Scartazzini's Dante. — Ed.

is κέδρον, darkness, from the Hebrew Kiddar, black, and not κέδρων, of cedars.

Seneca says that Appian, a grammarian of the age of Caligula, maintained that Homer himself made the division of the Iliad and Odyssey into books, and evidences the first word of the Iliad, Μῆνιν, the Μῆ of which signifies 48, the number of books in both poems. Seneca, however, adds, "Talia sciat oportet qui multa vult scire."

The tale in Plato's "Convivium," that man at first was male and female, and that, though Jupiter cleft them asunder, there was a natural love towards one another, seems to be only a corruption of the account in Genesis of Eve's being made from Adam's rib.

Corneille has these lines in one of his tragedies: —

> Pleurez, pleurez, mes yeux, et fondez-vous en eau —
> La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau,

which may be thus translated,

> Weep, weep my eyes! it is no time to laugh
> For half myself has buried the other half.

Over the iron gate of a prison at Ferrara is this inscription

> "Ingresso alla prigione di Torquato Tasso."

Hèdelin, a Frenchman, in the beginning of the 18th century, denied that any such person as Homer ever existed, and supposed the Iliad to be made up ex tragediis, et variis canticis de trivio mendicatorum et circulatorum — à la manière des chansons du Pontneuf.

The Rabbi Manasseh published a book at Amsterdam entitled "The Hopes of Israel." It was founded upon the supposed number and power of the Jews in America. This supposition was derived from a fabulous account by Montesini of his having found a vast concourse of Jews among the Cordilleras.

The word *assassin* is derived, according to Hyle, from Hassa, to kill. Some bring it from Hassan, the first chief of the association — some from the Jewish Essenes-Lemoine from a word meaning "herbage"; De Sacy and Hammer from "hashish," the opiate of hemp leaves, of which the assassins made a singular use.

"Defuncti injuriâ ne afficiantur" was a law of the twelve tables.

The origin of the phrase "corporal oath" is to be found in the ancient usage of touching, upon occasion of attestation, the *corporale* or cloth which covered the consecrated articles.

Montgomery in his lectures on *Literature* (!) has the following — "Who does not turn with absolute contempt from the rings and gems, and filters, and caves and genii of Eastern Tales, as from the trinkets of a toyshop, and the trumpery of a raree-show?" What man of genius but must answer "Not I."

The Abbé de St. Pierre has fixed in his language two significant words, viz.: *bienfaisance*, and the diminutive *la gloriole*.

There is no particular air known throughout Switzerland by the name of the Ranz des Vaches. Every

canton has its own song varying in words, notes, and even language. Mr. Cooper, the novelist, is our authority.

Incidis in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim

is neither in Virgil nor Ovid, as often supposed, but in the "Alexandrics" of Philip Gaultier, a French poet of the thirteenth century.

Under a portrait of Tiberio Fiurilli, who invented the character of Scaramouch, are these verses,

Cet illustre Comédien
De son art traça la carrière :
Il fut le maître de Molière
Et la Nature fut le sien.

A curious passage in a letter from Cicero to his literary friend Papyrius Pætus, shows that our custom of annexing a farce or pantomime to a tragic drama existed among the Romans.

In Cary's "Dante" is the following passage

And pilgrim newly on his road with love
Thrills if he hear the vesper bell from far
That seems to mourn for the expiring day.

Gray has also

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.

Marmontel in the "Encyclopédie" declares that the Italians did not possess a single comedy worth reading — therein displaying his ignorance. Some of the greatest names in Italian Literature were writers of comedy. Baretti mentions a collection of four thou-

sand dramas made by Apostolo Zeno, of which the greater part were comedies — many of a high order.

A comedy or opera by Andreini was the origin of "Paradise Lost." Andreini's Adamo was the model of Milton's Adam.

Milton has the expression "Forget thyself to marble." Pope has the line "I have not yet forgot myself to stone."

The noble simile of Milton, of Satan with the rising sun in the first book of the "Paradise Lost," has nearly occasioned the suppression of that epic: it was supposed to contain a treasonable allusion.

Campbell's line

> Like angel visits few and far between,

is a palpable plagiarism. Blair has

> Its visits
> Like angel visits short and far between.

In Hudibras are these lines —

> Each window like the pillory appears
> With heads thrust through, nailed by the ears.

Young in his "Love of Fame" has the following

> An opera, like a pillory, may be said
> To nail our ears down and expose our head.

Goldsmith's celebrated lines

> Man wants but little here below
> Nor wants that little long.

are stolen from Young; who has

> Man wants but little, nor that little long.

The character of the ancient Bacchus, that graceful divinity, seems to have been little understood by Dryden. The line in Virgil

> Et quocunque deus circum caput egit *honestum*

is thus grossly mistranslated,

> On whate'er side he turns his *honest* face.

There are about one thousand lines identical in the Iliad and Odyssey.

Macrobius gives the form of an imprecation by which the Romans believed whole towns could be demolished and armies defeated. It commences "Dis Pater sive Jovis mavis sive quo alio nomine fas est nominare," and ends "Si haec ita faxitis ut ego sciam, sentiam, intelligamque, tum quisquis votum hoc faxit recte factum esto, ovibus atris tribus, Tellus mater, teque Jupiter, obtestor."

The "Courtier" of Baldazzar Castiglione, 1528, is the first attempt at periodical moral Essay with which we are acquainted. The "Noctes Atticae" of Aulus Gellius cannot be allowed to rank as such.

These lines are written over the closet door of M. Ménard: —

> Las d'espérer, et de me plaindre
> De l'amour, des grands, et du sort,
> C'est ici que j'attends la mort
> Sans la désirer ou la craindre.

Martin Luther in his reply to Henry VIII.th's book by which the latter acquired the title of "Defender of the Faith," calls the monarch very unceremoniously "a pig, an ass, a dunghill, the spawn of an adder, a basilisk, a lying buffoon dressed in a king's robes, a mad fool with a frothy mouth and a whorish face."

The Psalter of Solomon, which contains 18 psalms, is the work which was found in Greek in the library of Augsburg, and has been translated into Latin by John Lewis de la Cerda. It is supposed not to be Solomon's, but the work of some Hellenistical Jew, and composed in imitation of David's Psalms. The Psalter was known to the ancients, and was formerly in the famous Alexandrian MS.

An unshaped kind of something first appeared,

is a line in Cowley's famous description of the Creation.

It is probable that the queen of Sheba was Balkis — that Sheba was a kingdom in the southern part of Arabia Felix, and that the people were called Sabæans. These lines of Claudian relate to the people and queen,

Medis, levibusque Sabaeis
Imperat hic sexus; reginarumque sub armis
Barbariae magna pars jacet.

Sheridan declared he would rather be the author of the ballad called Hosier's Ghost, by Glover, than of the Annals of Tacitus.

The word Jehovah is not Hebrew. The Hebrews had no such letters as J or V. The word is properly Iah — Uah — compounded of Iah Essence and Ush

Existing. Its full meaning is the self-existing essence of all things.

The "Song of Solomon," throwing aside the heading of the chapters, which is the work of the English translators, contains nothing which relates to the Savior or the Church. It does not, like every other sacred book, contain even the name of the Deity.

In the Vatican is an ancient picture of Adam, with the Latin inscription, "Adam divinitus edoctus, primus scientiarum et literarum inventor."

The word translated "*slanderers*" in 1 Timothy iii., 2, and that translated "*false accusers*" in Titus ii., 3, are "*female devils*" in the original Greek of the New Testament.

The Hebrew language contains no word (except perhaps Jehovah) which conveys to the mind the idea of Eternity. The translators of the Old Testament have used the word Eternity but once.

"The slipper of Cinderella," says the editor of the new edition of Warton, finds a parallel in the history of the celebrated Rhodope." Cinderella is a tale of universal currency. An ancient Danish ballad has some of the incidents. It is popular among the Welsh—also among the Poles—in Hesse and Schwerin. Schottky found it among the Servian fables. Rollenbagen, in his Froschmäuseler, speaks of it as the tale of the despised Aschen-possel. Luther mentions it. It is in the Italian Pentamerone under the title of Cenerentola.

Porphyry, than whom no one could be better acquainted with the theology of the ancients, acknowledged Vesta, Rhea, Ceres, Themis, Priapus, Proserpina, Bacchus, Attis, Adonis, Silenus, and the Satyrs to be one and the same.

Servius on Virgil's Æneid speaks of a *bearded* Venus. The poet Calvus in Macrobius speaks of Venus as masculine. Valerius Soranus among other titles calls Jupiter the *Mother* of the Gods.

In Suidas is a letter from Dionysius, the Areopagite, dated Heliopolis, in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad (the year of Christ's crucifixion), to his friend Apollophanes, in which is mentioned a total eclipse of the sun at noon. "Either," says Dionysius "the author of nature suffers, or he sympathizes with some who do."

The most particular history of the Deluge, and the nearest of any to the account given by Moses, is to be found in Lucian (De Dea Syria.)

The Greeks had no historian prior to Cadmus Milesius, nor any public inscription of which we can be certified, before the laws of Draco.

So great is the uncertainty of ancient history that the epoch of Semiramis cannot be ascertained within 1535 years, for according to

Syncellus, she lived before Christ 2177,
Patavius, she lived before Christ 2060,
Helvicus, she lived before Christ 2248,
Eusebius, she lived before Christ 1984,

Mr. Jackson, she lived before Christ 1964,
Archbishop Usher, she lived before Christ 1215,
Philo-Biblius from Sanconiathon, 1200,
Herodotus, about 713.

The book of Jasher, said to have been preserved from the deluge by Noah, but since lost, was extant in the time of Joshua, and in the time of David. Mr. Bryant thinks, however, very justly, that the ten tables of stone were the first written characters. The book of Jasher is mentioned Joshua x., 13, and 2 Samuel i., 18.

André Chénier, imprisoned during the French Revolution, began thus some lines on his unhappy situation,

> Peut-être avant que l'heure en cercle promenée
> Ait posé sur l'émail brillant
> Dans les soixante pas où sa route est bornée
> Son pied sonore et vigilant,
> Le sommeil du tombeau pressera ma paupière —

At this instant André Chénier was interrupted by the officials of the guillotine.

Archbishop Usher, in a MS. of St. Patrick's life, said to have been found at Louvain as an original of a very remote date, detected several entire passages purloined from his own writings.

An extract from the "Mystery of St. Denis" is in the "Bibliothèque du Théâtre Français, depuis son origine, Dresde. 1768." In this serious drama St. Denis, having been tortured and at length decapitated, rises very quietly, takes his head under his arm and walks off the stage in all the dignity of martyrdom.

The idea of

> No light but rather darkness visible

was perhaps suggested to Milton by Spenser's

> A little gloaming light much like a shade.

In the Dutch Vondel's tragedy, "The Deliverance of the Children of Israel," one of the principal characters is the Divinity himself.

Darwin is indebted for a great part of his "Great Poem" to a Latin one by De La Croix, published in 1727 and entitled "Connubia Florum."

Mr. Bryant, in his learned "Mythology," says that although the Pagan fables are not believed, yet we forget ourselves continually and make inferences from them as existing realities.

The shield of Achilles in Homer seems to have been copied from some Pharos which the poet had seen in Egypt. What he describes on the central part of the shield is a map of the earth and of the celestial appearances.

Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ is said to have prophesied that a stone would fall from the sun. This is a mistake of the learned. All that Anaxagoras averred may be seen in the Scholiast upon Pindar (Olymp. Ode. 1). It amounts only to this, that Petros was a name of the sun.

The Hebrew language has lain now for two thousand years mute and incapable of utterance. The

"Masoretical punctuation" which professes to supply the vowels was formed a thousand years after the language had ceased to be spoken, and disagrees in many instances with the Seventy, Origen and other writers.

James Montgomery thinks proper to style M'Pherson's Ossian, a collection "of halting, dancing, lumbering, grating, nondescript paragraphs."

The paucity of spondees in the English language, is the reason why we cannot tolerate an English Hexameter. Sir Philip Sidney, in his Arcadia, thus speaks of Love in what is meant for Hexameter verse

So to the woods Love runnes, as well as rides to the palace:
Neither he bears reverence to a prince, nor pity to a beggar;
But, like a point in the midst of a circle, is still of a nearnesse.

His form had not yet lost
All *her* original brightness,

is a very remarkable passage in Milton's Paradise Lost, wherein a *person* is *personified.*

It is certain that Hebrew verse did not include rhyme: the terminations of the lines where they are most distinct, never showing any thing of the kind.

Francis le Brossano engraved these verses upon a marble tomb which he erected to Petrarch at Arqua.

Frigida Francisci tegit hic lapis ossa Petrarcae.
Suscipe, virgo parens, animam: sate virgine, parce,
Fessaque jam terris, coeli requiescat in arce.

"Statua Statuae" was an inscription handed about at Paris for the equestrian statue of Louis XV., begun

by Bouchardon and finished by Pigal. The following also,

> Bouchardon est un animal
> Et son ouvrage fait pitié :
> Il place les vices à cheval
> Et les vertus à pied.

and another,

> Voilà notre roi comme il est à Versailles
> Sans foi, sans loi, et sans entrailles.

Bochart derives Elysium from the Phœnician Elysoth, joy, through the Greek Ἠλύσιον. Circe from the Phœnician Kirkar, to corrupt — Siren, from the Phœnician Sir, to sing — Scylla, from the Phœnician Scol, destruction — Charybdis, from the Phœnician Chor-obdam, chasm of ruin.

Attrogs, a fruit common in Palestine, is supposed to have been "the forbidden." It has a rough rind, and resembles a citron or lemon.

The following quaint sentence is found in Saint Evremond. "I own I do not envy him, when I consider that there are in the next world such people as Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Eacus."

The standard of Judas Maccabæus displayed the words "Mi camoca baelim Jehovah" — Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the Gods? This being afterwards intimated by the first letter of each word, in the manner of the S. P. Q. R., gave rise to the surname Maccabæus — for the initials in Hebrew form "Maccabi."

Josephus, with Saint Paul and others, supposed man to be compounded of body, soul, and spirit. The

distinction between soul and spirit is an essential point in ancient philosophy.

Lord Lyttleton acknowledged the authorship of two dialogues, in the first of which the personages were the Savior and Socrates; in the second, king David and Cæsar Borgia.

Dante gives the name of *sonnet* to his little canzone or ode beginning

> O voi che per la via d'Amor passate.

The learned Ménage has this epitaph on Sannazarius —

> Ci gît, dont l'esprit fut si beau,
> Sannazar, ce poète habile,
> Qui par ses vers divins approche de Virgile,
> Plus encore que par son tombeau.

The two reprehensible lines in Pope's Eloisa,

> Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove;
> No — make me mistress to the man I love,

are to be found in the original letters of Eloisa — at least the thought.

Mercier, in "L'an deux mille quatre cent quarante," seriously maintains the doctrines of the Metempsychosis, and I. D'Israeli says there is no system so simple, and so little repugnant to the understanding.

Boileau is mistaken in saying that Petrarch, 'qui est regardé comme le père du sonnet,' borrowed it from the French or Provençal writers. The Italian

sonnet can be traced back as far as the year 1200. Petrarch was not born until 1304.

One of the best epigrams affixed to the statue of Pasquin was the following upon Paul III,

> Ut canerent, data multa olim sunt vatibus aera;
> Ut taceam quantum tu mihi, Paule, dabis?

Milton in Paradise Lost, has this passage,

> . . . when the *scourge*
> Inexorably, and the *torturing hour*
> Call us to penance.

Gray, in his Ode to Adversity, has

> Thou tamer of the human breast
> Whose iron *scourge*, and *torturing hour*
> The bad affright.

Gray tells us that the image of his bard, where

> Loose his beard, and hoary hair
> Streamed like a meteor to the troubled air,

was taken from a picture by Raphael: yet the beard of Hudibras is also likened to a meteor,

> This hairy meteor did denounce
> The fall of sceptres and of crowns.

The lines

> For he that fights and runs away
> May live to fight another day,
> But he that is in battle slain,
> Will never rise to fight again,

are not to be found, as is thought, in Hudibras. Butler's verses ran thus;

> For he that flies may fight again,
> Which he can never do that's slain.

The former are in a volume of 'Poems' by Sir John Mennes, reign of Charles II. The original idea is in Demosthenes: *ἀνὴρ ὁ φεύγων καὶ πάλιν μαχήσεται.*

"Semel insanivimus omnes" is not from Horace but from Mantuanus, an Italian. In a work entitled "De honesto amore" is this line,

> Id commune malum, semel insanivimus omnes.

Dryden in 'Absalom and Achitophel' has these lines,

> David for him his tuneful harp had strung
> And heaven had wanted one immortal song.

Pope, in his Epistle to Arbuthnot, has

> Friend of my life which, did not you prolong,
> The world had wanted many an idle song.

Tickell's lines

> While the charmed reader with thy thought complies,
> And views thy Rosamond with Henry's eyes,

are evidently borrowed from those of Boileau,

> En vain contre 'Le Cid' un ministre se ligue;
> Tout Paris pour Chimène a les yeux de Rodrigue.

The expressions 'nemorumque noctem' occurring in one of Gray's Latin odes, has been repeatedly found fault with — yet Virgil has 'media nimborum in nocte.'

Selden observes of Henry VIII., that he was a king with a pope in his belly.

In the 'Nubes' of Aristophanes, there are several Greek verses in *rhyme*.

Of the ten tragedies which are attributed to Seneca, (the only Roman tragedies extant,) nine are on Greek subjects.

Ariosto says of one of his heroes, that, in the heat of combat, not perceiving that he was a dead man, he continued to fight valiantly, dead as he was.

> Il pover' huomo, che non s'en era accorto,
> Andava combattendo, ed era morto.

The author of 'La Manière de bien Penser' speaks of a French divine who, to prove that young persons sometimes die before old ones, cited the text, 'Praecucurrit citius Petro Johannes et venit primus ad monumentum.'

There is no passage among all the writings of antiquity more sublime than these lines of Silius Italicus. The words are addressed to a young man of Capua, who proposed to assassinate Hannibal at a banquet.

> Fallis te mensas inter quod credis inermem,
> Tot bellis quaesita viro, tot caedibus armat
> Majestas eterna ducem : si admoveris ora
> Cannas et Trebium ante oculos, Trasymenaque busta,
> Et Pauli stare ingentem miraberis umbram.

> Giace l'alta Cartago : à pena i segni
> De l'alte sui ruine il lido serba :
> Muoino le città, muoino i regni ;
> Copre i fasti e le pompe arena ed herba :
> E l'huom d'esser mortal par che si sdegni.

These lines of Tasso are a curious specimen of literary robbery — being made up entirely of passages from Lucan and Sulpicius. Lucan says of Troy

> Jam tota teguntur
> Pergama dumetis : etiam perire ruinae :

and Sulpicius, in a letter to Cicero, says of Megara, Ægina, Corinth, &c. — "Hem! nos homunculi indignamur si quis nostrum interiit, quorum vita brevior esse debet, cum uno loco tot oppidorum cadavera projecta jaceant."

The epigrams of the Greek Anthology are characterized more by *naïveté* than point. They are for the most part insipid.

Longinus calls pompous and inflated thoughts "reveries of Jupiter" — insomnia Jovis.

The "Satyre Ménippée" of the French is, in prose, the exact counterpart of Hudibras in rhyme.

An epigram upon the subject of François de Bassompière being released from the Bastille upon the death of Richelieu, is a strange mixture of lofty thought and puerile conceit.

> Enfin dans l'arrière-saison
> La fortune d'Armaud s'accorde avec la mienne :
> France, je sors de ma prison
> Quand son âme sort de la sienne.

The line, "France, je sors de ma prison," is the anagram of François de Bassompière.

A French writer of celebrity dedicated a book to Richelieu in terms of the most blasphemous flattery. But being disappointed in his expectations, he suppressed all his praises in a second edition, and rededicated his volume "*à Jésus Christ.*"

The following inscription, intended for the Louvre, possesses both simplicity and dignity :

Pande fores populis, sublimis Lupara: non est
Terrarum imperio dignior ulla domus.

Under a fine painting of St. Bruno in solitude, some Italian wrote these words, "Egli è vivo, e parlarebbe se non osservasse la regola del silenzio." Malherbe has taken the hint in his epigram upon a picture of Saint Catherine.

A fine sample of *galimatias* is to be found in an epigram of Miguel de Cervantes:

Van muerte tan escondida,
Que no te sienta venir;
Porque el plazer del morir
No me torne à dar la vida.

Quintilian mentions a pedant who taught obscurity, and who was wont to say to his scholars, "This is excellent — I do not understand it myself."

An Italian metaphysician, to disprove that greatness of mind is proportioned to the size of the skull, argues thus: "Non sano, che la mente è il centro del capo; ed il centro non cresce per la grandezza del circolo."

A horse is often seen on ancient sepulchral monuments. Caylus quotes a passage from Passeri, "de animae transvectione," implying that the horse designates the passage of the soul to Elysium.

A remarkable instance of concord of sound and sense is to be seen in the following stanza by M. Anton Flaminius:

Ast amans charae thalamum puellae
Desĕrit flens, et tibi verba dicit
Aspera amplexu tenerae cupito a
— vulsus amicae.

Voltaire's ignorance of antiquity is laughable. In his Essay on Tragedy, prefixed to Brutus, he actually boasts of having introduced the Roman senate on the stage in red mantles. "The Greeks," as he asserts, "font paraître leurs acteurs (tragic) sur des espèces d'échasses, le visage couvert d'un masque qui exprime la douleur d'un côté et la joye de l'autre!" The only circumstance upon which he could possibly have founded such an accusation is, that in the *new comedy* masks were worn with one eyebrow drawn up and the other down, to denote a busy-body or inquisitive meddler.

Several ancient tragedies, viz.: Eumenides, Philoctetes, and Œdipus at Colonos, besides many pieces of Euripides, have a happy and enlivening termination.

The only historical tragedies by Grecian authors were The Capture of Miletus, by Phrynicus, and the Persians of Æschylus.

The foundation of all the erroneous opinions on the subject of the old Greek comedy (Voltaire's opinion particularly) may be found in the comparison between Aristophanes and Menander, in Plutarch.

Schlegel says justly, that Harlequin and Pulcinello descend in a direct line from the buffoons of the ancient Romans. On Greek vases are seen also dresses like theirs — long breeches and waistcoats with arms, articles worn by neither Greeks nor Romans except upon the stage. At present Zanni is one of the names of Harlequin, and Sannio in the Latin farces was a buffoon who had a shaven head, and a dress patched together of all colors.

In Racine's *Bérénice* Antiochus says to the queen :

> . . . Je me suis tû cinq ans,
> Madame, et vais encore me taire plus longtems,

and to give a direct proof of his intention, recites immediately no less than fifty verses in a breath.

In Voltaire's scruples about unity of place he has committed a thousand blunders. In the Mort de César the scene is in the Capitol, but the people seem not to know their precise situation. On one occasion Caesar exclaims, "Courons au Capitole !"

Denis de Sallo's "Journal des Sçavans," in 1665 may be considered as the origin of Literary Journals or Reviews.

> Sous ce tombeau gît Le Sage abattu
> Par le ciseau de la Parque importune,
> S'il ne fut pas ami de la fortune,
> Il fut toujours ami de la vertu,

was Le Sage's epitaph.

These lines although extremely French are forcible,

> Et comme un jeune coeur est bientôt enflammé,
> Il me vit, il m'aima, je le vis, je l'aimai.

On Cardinal Richelieu, Benserade made the following epitaph :

> Cy gist — ouy gist par la mort bleu
> Le Cardinal de Richelieu,
> Et ce qui cause mon ennuy
> Ma pension avec lui.

The Jesuits called Crébillon 'Puer ingeniosus, sed insignis nebulo.'

Dr. E. Young published "A true Estimate of Human Life, part 1," dedicated to Queen Anne, and describing the *shades* of existence. The second part, however, which should have contained the lights, never appeared.

The "Batrachomyomachia," is nothing more than a burlesque poem, much in the manner of Aristophanes, and doubtfully attributed to Homer. Philip Melancthon however, wrote a commentary to prove the poet's object was to excite a hatred for tumults and sedition. Pierre La Seine going a step farther, thinks the intention was to recommend to young men temperance in eating and drinking.

"Amare et sapere vix Deo conceditur," is not Seneca's, as generally supposed.

The heathen poets are mentioned three times in the New Testament. Aratus in the seventeenth chapter of Acts — Menander in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians — also Epimenides.

"Semper sub Sextis perdita Roma fuit,"

was a line written during the pontificate of Alexander VI. Sextus Tarquinius provoked by his tyranny the expulsion of the kings of Rome. Urban VI. began the great schism of the West. Alexander VI. astonished the world by the enormity of his crimes, and Pius VI. did not falsify the saying.

A letter was once addressed from Rome "Alla sua Excellenza Seromfidevi," in London. It caused much perplexity at the Post-office and British Museum, and

after much foiling the acumen of a minister of state, was found to be intended for Sir Humphry Davy.

The vulgar Christian era is the invention of Dionysius Exiguus.

The book of Judith was originally written in Chaldee, and thence translated into Latin by St. Jerome. There are several particulars in our English version which are not to be found in St. Jerome, and which seem to be those readings which he professes to omit as vicious corruptions.

The proverb, "Evil communications corrupt good manners," which is found in Corinthians, is a quotation, intended as such from Euripides.

Varro reckons three epochs: the first from the beginning of the world to the first flood, which he calls *uncertain;* the second from the flood to the first Olympiad, *fabulous;* the third from the first Olympiad to his own time, *historical.*

Politian, the poet and scholar, was an admirer of Alessandra Scala, and addressed to her this extempore:

> To teach me that in hapless suit
> I do but waste my hours,
> Cold maid, whene'er I ask for fruit,
> Thou givest me naught but flowers.

In the Latin version of Herodotus, the lowest of the towers forming the temple of Belus, is said to be a furlong thick and a furlong high; and some writers

concluding each of the eight to be as high, make the whole one mile in height. In the Greek text, however, the lowest tower is merely said to be a furlong *through* — nothing is said of its height. Strabo makes the temple a furlong altogether in altitude.

Jacobus Hugo was of opinion that by the Harpies Homer intended the Dutch; by Euenis, John Calvin; by Antinous, Martin Luther; and by the Lotophagi, Protestants in general.

"Impune quae libet, facere id esse regem," is a definition of a king to be found in Sallust.

The first collection of the Iliad was by Pisistratus, or some of the Pisistratidae. There were, after this, innumerable editions — but Aristarchus in the reign of Ptolemy Philometer, B.C. 150, published from a collection of all the copies then existing, a new edition, the text of which has finally prevailed.

Some one after the manner of Santeuil, composed the following quatrain for the gates of the market to be erected on the site of the famous Jacobin Club at Paris,

> Impia tortorum longos hic turba furores
> Sanguinis innocui, non satiata, aluit.
> Sospite nunc patriâ, fracto nunc funeris antro,
> Mors ubi dira fuit, vita salusque patent.

A version of the Psalms was published in 1642 by William Slatyer, of which this is a specimen:

> The righteous shall his sorrow scan
> And laugh at him, and say 'Behold!
> What hath become of this here man
> That on his riches was so bold.'

At the bottom of an obelisk which Pius VI. was erecting at great expense near the entrance of the Quirinal Palace in 1783, while the people were suffering for bread, were found written these words,

> Signore, di a questa pietra che divenga pane.
> Lord, command that these stones be made bread.

Constantine Koliades wrote a book to prove that Homer and Ulysses were one and the same — but Joshua Barnes attributes the authorship of the Iliad to Solomon.

In xviii. 192, of the Iliad, Achilles says none of the armor of the chieftains will fit him except the shield of Ajax: how then did his own armor fit Patroclus?

Empedocles professed the system of four elements, and added thereto two principles which he called 'principium amicitiae' and 'principium contentionis.' What are these but attraction and repulsion?

The Germans have epic poems composed in metre of sixteen and seventeen syllables.

In the reign of Edward VI. Dr. Christopher Tye turned the Acts of the Apostles into rhyme. They begin thus,

> In the former epistle to thee
> Dear friend Theophilus
> I have written the veritie
> Of the Lord Christ Jesus.

The Count Bielfeld's definition of poetry is 'L'art d'exprimer les pensées par la fiction.' The German

terms Dichtkunst, *the art of fiction*, and Dichten to *feign*, which are used for *Poetry*, and *to make verses*, are in full accordance with his definition.

The following Vaudeville is one of the drollest of its kind:

Quand un bon vin meuble mon estomac
Je suis plus savant que Balzac —
Plus sage que Pibrac.
Mon bras seul faisant l'attaque
De la nation Cosaque
La mettroit au sac.
De Charon je passerois le lac
En dormant dans son bac.
J'irois au fier Eac
Sans que mon cœur fît tic ni tac
Présenter du tabac.

On ancient monuments are often found the letters A.E.R.A. meaning Annus erat Regni Augusti. The ignorance of copyists may probably have formed of these letters the single AERA. Would it not be a better derivation than the Latin AES?

The work of John Albert Fabricius, the Hamburg professor, entitled Bibliotheca Graeca, in which his sole object is to render an account of the *Greek* authors *extant*, occupies fourteen thick volumes in quarto.

The usual derivation of the word Metaphysics is not to be sustained. *Meta physicam* is tortured into meaning *super physicam*, and the science is supposed to take its name from its superiority to physics. The truth is, that Aristotle's treatise on Morals is next in succession to his Book of Physics, and this order he considers the rational order of study. His Ethics con-

sequently commence with the words Μετὰ τὰ φυσικά &c., from which the word Metaphysics.

The commentators upon Mr. Beckford's Vathek say that the *locusts* derive their name from having been so called by the first English settlers in America. The word comes evidently from *loco usto*, the havoc they made wherever they passed leaving the appearance of a place desolated by fire.

M. Patru was convinced that in all his prose writings no sentence or part of a sentence could be found so *cadenced* as to form a verse. A friend, however, immediately pointed out to him the words in his 'Plaidoyers'

Septième plaidoyer pour un jeune Allemand.

Despréaux speaking of the cæsura in French versification, asserts,

Que toujours dans nos vers — le sens coupant les mots,
Suspende l'hémistiche — en marquant le repos.

M. Despréaux seems to have forgotten that hemistich is a composite Greek word signifying a demi-line, and that consequently his own admired verses have no meaning at all.

Every one is acquainted with the excellent *commencement* of the Annals of Tacitus. From this, principally he has acquired his reputation for *concision*. It is singular that no notice has ever been taken of the extreme prolixity of their *conclusion*.

There is a dissertation upon Hebrew, or Samaritan medals by Père Soucier, in which he proves the exist-

ence of Hebrew money struck by the Jews upon the model of the coins current before the captivity. All the Hebrew medals, however, bearing a head of Moses or of Christ, are manifestly forgeries.

There is a book by a Jesuit, Père Labbe, entitled La Bibliothèque des Bibliothèques. It is a catalogue of all authors in all nations who have written catalogues of books.

Albert, in his Hebrew Dictionary, pretends to discover in each word, in its root, in its letters, and in the manner of pronouncing them, the reason of its signification. Leescher in his treatise De causis Linguae Hebreae, carries the matter even farther.

Lucretius, lib. V, 93, 96, has the words,

— terras —
Una dies dabit exitio.

Ovid the lines,

Carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
Exitio terras cum dabit una dies.

In Judges is this expression, 'And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter.' The phrase 'to smite hip and thigh' arises from these words. No meaning, however, can be attached to them as they stand — but the original will admit of a different signification, viz.: 'He smote them with his leg on the thigh,' and alludes to the wrestling matches which were common in the east. In this sense the phrase exactly answers to the 'crus femori impingere,' and the σκελίζειν or ἀποσκελίζειν of the ancients.

It is a remarkable fact, that during the whole period of the middle ages, the Germans lived in utter ignorance of the art of writing.

The silver shekel of the Hebrews has on its face the rod of Aaron, with the inscription, Jeruschalaim Hakkedoucha, Jerusalem the Holy, and on the reverse a cup, with the words, Chekel Ischrael, money of Israel.

The Masoretical punctuation is a kind of critique upon the Hebrew text invented by the Jewish teachers to prevent its alteration. The first original being lost, recourse was had to the Masora as an infallible method of fixing the text. The verses, words, and even letters are there counted, and all their variations recorded.

Among the Hebrew text of the Old Testament are mingled a few passages of Chaldaic. *All the characters* as we have them now, are properly speaking Chaldaic.

A version of the Psalms in 1564, by Archbishop Parker, has the following —

> Who sticketh to God in stable trust,
> As Sion's mount he stands full just,
> Which moveth no whit, nor yet can reel,
> But standeth for ever as stiff as steel.

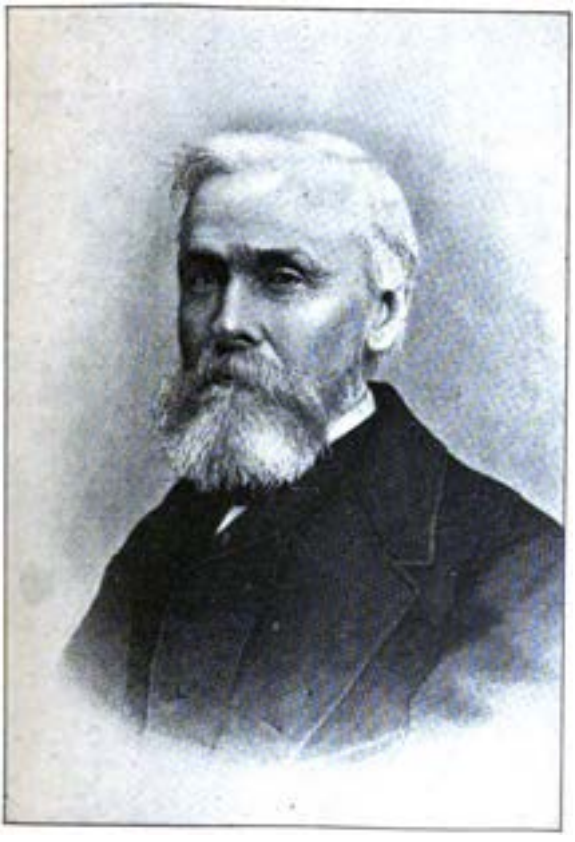
A part of the 137th Psalm runs thus: 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my

mouth,' which has thus been paraphrased in a version of the Psalms.

> If I forget thee ever
> Then let me prosper never,
> But let it cause
> My tongue and jaws
> To cling and cleave together.

E. A. DUYCKINCK.

From steel engraving



PETER SNOOK.

[*Southern Literary Messenger*, October, 1836; *Broadway Journal*, I., 23.]

In a late number of the Democratic Review, there appeared a very excellent paper (by Mr. Duyckinck) on the subject of Magazine Literature — a subject much less thoroughly comprehended here than either in France or in England. In America, we compose, now and then, agreeable essays and other matters of that character — but we have not yet caught the true Magazine spirit — a thing neither to be defined nor described. Mr. Duyckinck's article, although piquant, is not altogether to our mind. We think he places too low an estimate on the capability of the Magazine paper. He is inclined to undervalue its power — to limit unnecessarily its province — which is illimitable. In fact it is in the extent of subject, and not less in the extent or variety of *tone*, that the French and English surpass us, to so good a purpose. How very rarely are we struck with an American Magazine article, as with an absolute novelty — how frequently the foreign articles so affect us! We are so circumstanced as to be unable to *pay* for elaborate compositions — and, after all, the true invention is elaborate. There is no greater mistake than the supposition that a true originality is a mere matter of impulse or inspiration. To originate, is carefully, patiently, and understandingly to combine. The few American Magazinists who ever think of this elaboration at all, cannot afford to

carry it into practice for the paltry prices offered them by our periodical publishers. For this and other glaring reasons, we are behind the age in a *very* important branch of literature — a branch which, moreover, is daily growing in importance — and which, in the end (not far distant), will be the *most* influential of all the departments of Letters.

We are lamentably deficient not only in invention proper, but in that which is, more strictly, *Art*. What American, for instance, in penning a criticism, ever supposes himself called upon to present his readers with more than the exact stipulation of his title — to present them with a criticism and *something beyond?* Who thinks of making his critique a work of art in itself — independently of its critical opinions? — a work of art, such as are all the more elaborate, and most effective reviews of Macaulay? Yet, these reviews we have evinced no incapacity to appreciate, when presented. The best American review ever penned is miserably ineffective when compared with the notice of Montagu's Bacon — and yet this latter is, in general, a piece of tawdry sophistry, owing everything to a consummate, to an exquisite arrangement — to a thorough and just sufficiently comprehensive diffuseness — to a masterly *climacing* of points — to a style which dazzles the understanding with its brilliancy — but not more than it misleads it by its perspicuity — causing us so distinctly to comprehend that we fancy we coincide — in a word to the perfection of Art — of all the art which a Macaulay can wield, or which is applicable to any criticism that a Macaulay could write.

It is, however, in the composition of that class of Magazine papers which come, properly, under the head of *Tales*, that we evince the most remarkable

deficiency in skill. If we except first Mr. Hawthorne — secondly, Mr. Simms — thirdly Mr. Willis — and fourthly, one or two others, whom we may as well put mentally together without naming them — there is not even a respectably skilful tale-writer on this side the Atlantic. We have seen, to be sure, many very well-constructed stories — individual specimens — the work of American Magazinists; but these specimens have invariably appeared to be happy accidents of construction; their authors, in subsequent tales, having always evinced an incapacity to construct.

We have been led to a comparison of the American with the British ability in tale-writing, by a perusal of some Magazine papers, the composition of the author of "Chartley," and "The Invisible Gentleman." He is one of the best of the English journalists, and has some of the happiest peculiarities of Dickens, whom he preceded in the popular favor. The longest and best of his tales, properly so called, is "Peter Snook," and this presents so many striking points for the consideration of the Magazinist, that we feel disposed to give an account of it in full.

Peter Snook, the hero, and the *beau idéal* of a Cockney, is a retail linen-draper in Bishopgate street. He is of course a stupid and conceited, although at bottom a very good little fellow, and "always looks as if he was frightened." Matters go on very thrivingly with him, until he becomes acquainted with Miss Clarinda Bodkin, "a young lady owning to almost thirty, and withal a great proficient in the mysteries of millinery and mantua-making." Love and ambition, however, set the little gentleman somewhat beside himself. "If Miss Clarinda would but have me," says he, "we might divide the shop, and have a linen-

drapery side, and a haberdashery and millinery side, and one would help the other. There'd be only one rent to pay, and a double business — and it would be so comfortable too!" Thinking thus, Peter commences a flirtation, to which Miss Clarinda but doubtfully responds. He escorts the lady to White Conduit House, Bagnigge Wells, and other genteel places of public resort — and finally is so rash as to accede to the proposition on her part, of a trip to Margate. At this epoch of the narrative, the writer observes that the subsequent proceedings of the hero are gathered from accounts rendered by himself, when called upon, after the trip, for explanation.

It is agreed that Miss Clarinda shall set out alone for Margate — Mr. Snook following her, after some indispensable arrangements. These occupy him until the middle of July, at which period, taking passage in the "Rose in June," he safely reaches his destination. But various misfortunes here await him, — misfortunes admirably adapted to the meridian of Cockney feeling, and the capacity of Cockney endurance. His umbrella, for example, and a large brown paper parcel, containing a new pea-green coat and flower-patterned embroidered silk waistcoat, are tumbled into the water at the landing-place, and Miss Bodkin forbids him her presence in his old clothes. By a tumble of his own, too, the skin is rubbed from both his shins for several inches, and the surgeon, having no regard to the lover's cotillion engagements, enjoins on him a total abstinence from dancing. A cock-chafer, moreover, is at the trouble of flying into one of his eyes, and (worse than all) a tall military-looking shoemaker, Mr. Last, has taken advantage of the linen-draper's delay in reaching Margate, to ingratiate himself with his mistress.

Finally, he is cut by Last, and rejected by the lady, and has nothing left for it, but to secure a homeward passage in the "Rose in June."

In the evening of the second day after his departure, the vessel drops anchor off Greenwich. Most of the passengers go ashore, with the view of taking the stage to the city. Peter, however, who considers that he has already spent money enough to no purpose, prefers remaining on board. "We shall get to Billingsgate," says he, "while I am sleeping, and I shall have plenty of time to go home and dress, and go into the city and borrow the trifle I may want for Pester and Company's bill, that comes due the day after to-morrow." This determination is a source of much trouble to our hero, as will be seen in the sequel. Some shopmen who remain with him in the packet, tempt him to unusual indulgences in the way first, of brown stout, and, secondly, of positive French brandy. The consequence is, that Mr. Snook falls, thirdly, asleep, and fourthly, overboard.

About dawn on the morning after this event, Ephraim Hobson, the confidential clerk and factotum of Mr. Peter Snook, is disturbed from a sound sleep by the sudden appearance of his master. That gentleman seems to be quite in a bustle, and delights Ephraim with an account of a whacking wholesale order for exportation just received. "Not a word to anybody about the matter," exclaims Peter, with unusual emphasis. "It's such an opportunity as don't come often in a man's life-time. There's a captain of a ship — he's the owner of her too; but never mind! there a'nt time to enter into particulars now, but you'll know all by and bye — all you have to do, is to do as I tell you — so come along!"

Setting Ephraim to work, with directions to pack up immediately all the goods in the shop, with the exception of a few trifling articles, the master avows his intention of going into the city "to borrow enough money to make up Pester's bill, for to-morrow." "I don't think you'll want much, Sir," replied Mr. Hobson with a self-complacent air. "I've been looking about long-winded 'uns you see, since you've been gone, and have got Shy's money and Slack's account, which we'd pretty well given up for a bad job, and one or two more. There, — there's the list — and there's the key to the strong box, where you'll find the money, besides what I've took at the counter." Peter at this seems well pleased, and shortly afterwards goes out, saying, he cannot tell when he'll be back, and giving directions that whatever goods may be sent in during his absence, shall be left untouched till his return.

It appears that, after leaving his shop, Mr. Snook proceeded to that of Jobb, Flashbill & Co. (one of whose clerks, on board the "Rose in June," had been very liberal in supplying our hero with brandy on the night of his ducking) looked over a large quantity of ducks and other goods, and finally made purchase of "a choice assortment," to be delivered the same day. His next visit was to Mr. Bluff, the managing partner in the banking-house where he usually kept his cash. His business now was to request permission to overdraw a hundred pounds for a few days.

"Humph," said Mr. Bluff, "money is very scarce; but — Bless me! — yes — it's he! Excuse me a minute, Mr. Snook, there's a gentleman at the front counter whom I want particularly to speak to — I'll

be back with you directly." As he uttered these words, he rushed out, and, in passing one of the clerks on his way forward, he whispered, "Tell Scribe to look at Snook's account, and let me know directly." He then went to the front counter, where several people were waiting to pay and receive money. "Fine weather this, Mr. Butt. What! you're not out of town like the rest of them?"

"No," replied Mr. Butt, who kept a thriving gin-shop, "no, I sticks to my business — make hay while the sun shines — that's my maxim. Wife up at night — I up early in the morning."

The banker chatted and listened with great apparent interest till the closing of a huge book on which he kept his eye, told him that his whispered order had been attended to. He then took a gracious leave of Mr. Butt, and returned back to the counting-house with a slip of paper, adroitly put in his hand while passing, on which was written, "Peter Snook, Linen Draper, Bishopgate Street — old account — increasing gradually — balance £153 15*s.* 6*d.* — *very* regular." "Sorry to keep you waiting, Mr. Snook," said he, "but we must catch people when we can. Well, what is it you were saying you wanted us to do?"

"I should like to be able to overdraw just for a few days," replied Peter.

"How much?"

"A hundred."

"Won't fifty do?"

"No, not quite, sir."

"Well, you're an honest fellow, and don't come bothering us often, so I suppose we must not be too particular with you for this once."

Leaving Bluff, Mr. Snook hurries to overtake Mr. Butt, the dealer in spirits, who had just left the banking-house before himself, and to give that gentleman an order for a hogshead of the best gin. As he is personally unknown to Mr. Butt, he hands him a card on which is written, "Peter Snook, linen and muslin ware house, No. —, Bishopgate Street within," &c., &c., and takes occasion to mention that he purchases at the recommendation of Mr. Bluff. The gin is to be at Queenhithe the same evening. The spirit-dealer, as soon as his new customer has taken leave, revolves in his mind the oddity of a linen draper's buying a hogshead of gin, and determines to satisfy himself of Mr. Snook's responsibility by a personal application to Mr. Bluff. On reaching the bank, however, he is told by the clerks that Mr. Bluff, being in attendance upon a committee of the House of Commons, will not be home in any reasonable time — but also that Peter Snook is a perfectly safe man. The gin is accordingly sent; and several other large orders for different goods, upon other houses, are promptly fulfilled in the same manner. Meantime, Ephraim is busily engaged at home in receiving and inspecting the invoices of the various purchases as they arrive, at which employment he is occupied until dusk, when his master makes his appearance in unusually high spirits. We must here be pardoned for copying some passages:

"Well, Ephraim," he exclaimed, "this looks something like business. You haven't had such a job this many a day! Shop looks well now, eh?"

"You know best, sir," replied Hobson. "But hang me if I a'nt frightened. When we shall sell all these goods I'm sure I can't think. You talked of

having a haberdashery side to the shop; but if we go on at this rate, we shall want another side for ourselves; I'm sure I don't know where Miss Bodkin is to be put."

"She go to Jericho!" said Peter, contemptuously. "As for the goods, my boy, they'll be gone before to-morrow morning. All you and I have got to do is to pack 'em up; so, let us turn to and strap at it."

Packing was Ephraim's favorite employment, but, on the present occasion, he set to work with a heavy heart. His master, on the contrary, appeared full of life and spirits, and corded boxes, sewed up trusses, and packed huge paper parcels with a celerity and an adroitness truly wonderful.

"Why, you don't get on, Hobson," he exclaimed; "see what I've done! Where's the ink-pot? — oh, here it is!" and he proceeded to mark his packages with his initials, and the letter G below. "There," he resumed, "P. S. G.: that's for me, at Gravesend. I'm to meet the Captain and owner there; show the goods — if there's any he don't like, shall bring 'em back with me; get bills — bankers' acceptances for the rest; see 'em safe on board; *then* — but *not before*, mind that, Master Ephraim! No, no, keep my weather eye open, as the men say on board the 'Rose in June.' By-the-bye, I havn't told you yet about my falling overboard whap into the river."

"Falling overboard!" exclaimed the astonished shopman, quitting his occupation to stand erect and listen.

"Ay, ay," continued Peter — "see it won't do to tell you long stories *now*. There — mark that truss, will you? Know all about it some day. Lucky job though — tell you that: got this thundering order by

it. Had one tumble, first going off, at Margate. Spoilt my peagreen — never mind — that was a lucky tumble, too. Hadn't been for that, shouldn't so soon have found out the game a certain person was playing with me. She go to Jericho!"

But for the frequent repetition of this favorite expression, Ephraim Hobson has since declared he should have doubted his master's identity during the whole of that evening, as there was something very singular about him, and his strength and activity in moving the bales, boxes, and trusses, were such as he had never previously exhibited. The phrase condemning this, that, or the other thing or person to "go to Jericho," was the only expression that he uttered, as the shopman said, "naturally," and Peter repeated that whimsical anathema as often as usual.

The goods being all packed up, carts arrive to carry them away; and, by half-past ten o'clock, the shop is entirely cleared, with the exception of some trifling articles, to make show on the shelves and counters. Two hackney coaches are called. Mr. Peter Snook gets into one with a variety of loose articles which would require too much time to pack, and his shopman into another with some more. Arriving at Queenhithe, they find all the goods previously sent, already embarked in the hold of a long-decked barge, which lies near the shore. Mr. Snook now insists upon Ephraim's going on board, and taking supper and some hot rum and water. This advice he follows to so good purpose, that he is at length completely bewildered, when his master, taking him up in his arms, carries him on shore, and there setting him down, leaves him to make the best of his way home as he can.

About eight the next morning, Ephraim awaking, of course, in a sad condition, both of body and mind, sets himself immediately about arranging the appearance of the shop "so as to secure the credit of the concern." In spite of all his ingenuity, however, it maintains a poverty-stricken appearance; — which circumstance excites some most unreasonable suspicions in the mind of Mr. Bluff's clerk, upon his calling at ten with Pester & Co's bill (three hundred and sixteen pounds, seventeen shillings), and receiving by way of payment, a check upon his own banking house for the amount — Mr. Snook having written this check before his departure with the goods, and left it with Ephraim. On reaching the bank, therefore, the clerk inquires if Peter Snook's check is good for three hundred and sixteen pounds odd, and is told that it is not worth a farthing, Mr. S. having overdrawn for a hundred. While Mr. Bluff and his assistants are conversing on this subject, Butt, the gin-dealer, calls to thank the banker for having recommended him a customer — which the banker denies having done. An explanation ensues and "stop thief!" is the cry. Ephraim is sent for, and reluctantly made to tell all he knows of his master's proceedings on the day before — by which means a knowledge is obtained of the other houses, who (it is supposed) have been swindled. Getting a description of the barge which conveyed the goods from Queenhithe, the whole party of the creditors now set off in pursuit.

About dawn the next morning they overtake the barge, a little below Gravesend — when four men are observed leaving her, and rowing to the shore in a skiff. Peter Snook is found sitting quietly in the cabin, and, although apparently a little surprised at

seeing Mr. Pester, betrays nothing like embarrassment or fear.

"Ah, Mr. Pester! is it you? Glad to see you, sir! So you've been taking a trip out o' town, and are going back with us? We shall get to Billingsgate between eight and nine, they say; and I hope it won't be later, as I've a bill of yours comes due to-day, and I want to be at home in time to write a check for it."

The goods are also found on board, together with three men in the hold, gagged and tied hand and foot. They give a strange account of themselves. Being in the employ of Mr. Heaviside, a lighterman, they were put in charge of "The Flitter" when she was hired by Peter Snook for a trip to Gravesend. According to their orders they took the barge, in the first instance, to a wharf near Queenhithe and helped to load her with some goods brought down in carts. Mr. Snook afterwards came on board, bringing with him two fierce looking men, and "a little man with a hooked nose." (Ephraim.) Mr. S. and the little man, then, "had a sort of jollification" in the cabin, till the latter got drunk and was carried ashore. They then proceeded down the river nothing particular occurring till they had passed Greenwich Hospital, when Mr. S. ordered them to lay the barge alongside a large black sided ship. No sooner was the order obeyed than they were boarded by a number of men from said ship, who seized them, bound them, gagged them and put them in the hold.

The immediate consequence of this information is, that Peter is bound, gagged, and put down into the hold in the same manner, by way of retaliation, and

for safe keeping on his way back to the city. On the arrival of the party a meeting of the creditors is called. Peter appears before them in a great rage and with the air of an injured man. Indeed his behavior is so *mal à propos* to his situation as entirely to puzzle his interrogators. He accuses the whole party of a conspiracy.

"Peter Snook," said Mr. Pester solemnly, from the chair, "that look does not become you after what has passed. Let me advise you to conduct yourself with propriety. You will find that the best policy, depend on't."

"A pretty thing for you, for to come to talk of propriety!" exclaimed Peter; "you that seed me laid hold on by a set of ruffians, and never said a word, nor given information a'terwards! And here have I been kept away from business I don't know how long, and shut up like a dog in a kennel; but I look upon't you were at the bottom of it all — you and that fellow with the plum-pudding face, as blowed me up about a cask of gin! What you both mean by it, I can't think; but if there's any law in the land, I'll make you remember it, both of you — that's what I will!"

Mr. Snook swears that he never saw Jobb in his life except on the occasion of his capture in "The Flitter," and positively denies having looked out any parcel of goods at the house of Jobb, Flashbill & Co. With the banker, Mr. Bluff, he acknowledges an acquaintance — but not having drawn for the two hundred and seventy pounds odd, or having ever overdrawn for a shilling in his life. Moreover he is clearly of opinion that the banker has still in his hands more than a hundred and fifty pounds of his (Mr. Snook's)

money. He can designate several gentlemen as being no creditors of his, although they were of the number of those from whom his purchases had been made for the "whacking" shipping out, and although their goods were found in "The Flitter." Ephraim is summoned, and testifies to all the particulars of his master's return, and the subsequent packing, cart-loading and embarkation as already told — accounting for the extravagances of Mr. Snook as being "all along of *that* Miss Bodkin."

"Lor', master, hi's glad to see you agin," exclaimed Ephraim. "Who'd ha' thought as 'twould come to this?"

"Come to what?" cried Peter. "I'll make 'em repent of it, every man Jack of 'em, before I've done, if there's law to be had for love or money!"

"Ah, sir," said Ephraim, "we'd better have stuck to the retail. I was afraid that shipping consarn wouldn't answer, and tell'd you so, if you recollect, but you wouldn't harken to me."

"What shipping concern?" inquired Peter, with a look of amazement.

"La! master," exclaimed Ephraim, "it aint of any use to pretend to keep it a secret now, when everybody knows it. I didn't tell Mr. Pester, though, till the last, when all the goods was gone out of the shop, and the sheriff's officers had come to take possession of the house."

"Sheriff's officers in possession of my house!" roared Peter. "All the goods gone out of the shop! What do you mean by that, you rascal? What have you been doing in my absence?" And he sprang forward furiously, and seized the trembling shopman

by the collar with a degree of violence which rendered it difficult for the two officers in attendance to disengage him from his hold.

Hereupon, Mr. Snap, the attorney retained by the creditors, harangues the company at some length, and intimates that Mr. Snook is either mad or acting the madman for the purpose of evading punishment. A practitioner from Bedlam is sent for, and some artifices resorted to — but to no purpose. It is found impossible to decide upon the question of sanity. The medical gentleman, in his report to the creditors, confesses himself utterly perplexed, and, without giving a decision, details the particulars of a singular story told him by Mr. Snook himself, concerning the mode of his escape from drowning after he fell overboard from the "Rose in June." "It is a strange, unlikely tale to be sure," says the physician, "and if his general conversation was of that wild, imaginative, flighty kind which I have so often witnessed, I should say it was purely ideal; but he appears such a plain-spoken, simple sort of a person, that it is difficult to conceive how he could invent such a fiction." Mr. Snook's narration is then told, not in his very words, but in the author's own way, with all the particulars obtained from Peter's various recitations. We give it only in brief.

Upon tumbling overboard, Mr. Snook (at least according to his own story) swam courageously as long as he could. He was upon the point of sinking, however, when an oar was thrust under his arm, and he found himself lifted in a boat by a "dozen dark-looking men." He is taken on board a large ship, and the captain, who is a droll genius, and talks in rhyme

somewhat after the fashion of the wondrous Tale of Alroy, entertains him with great cordiality, dresses him in a suit of his own clothes, makes him drink in the first place, a brimmer of "something hot," and afterwards plies him with wines and cordials of all kinds, at a supper of the most magnificent description. Warmed in body and mind by this excellent cheer, Peter reveals his inmost secrets to his host, and talks freely and minutely of a thousand things; of his man Ephraim and his oddities; of his bank account; of his great credit; of his adventures with Miss Bodkin; of his prospects in trade; and especially of the names, residences, etc. etc., of the wholesale houses with whom he is in the habit of dealing. Presently, being somewhat overcome with wine, he goes to bed at the suggestion of the captain, who promises to call him in season for a boat in the morning, which will convey him to Billingsgate in full time for Pester and Co.'s note. How long he slept is uncertain — but when he awoke a great change was observable in the captain's manner, who was somewhat brusque, and handed him over the ship's side into the barge where he was discovered by the creditors in pursuit, and which he was assured would convey him to Billingsgate.

This relation, thus succinctly given by us, implies little or nothing. The result, however, to which the reader is ingeniously led by the author, is, that the real Peter Snook has been duped, and that the Peter Snook who made the various purchases about town, and who appeared to Ephraim only during the morning and evening twilight of the eventful day, was, in fact, no other person than the captain of "the strange, black-sided ship." We are to believe that, taking advantage of Peter's communicativeness, and a certain degree

of personal resemblance to himself, he assumed our hero's clothes while he slept, and made a bold and nearly successful attempt at wholesale peculation.

The incidents of this story are forcibly conceived, and even in the hands of an ordinary writer would scarcely fail of effect. But, in the present instance, so unusual a tact is developed in the narration, that we are inclined to rank "Peter Snook" among the few tales which (each in its own way) are absolutely faultless. It is a Flemish home-piece of the highest order — its merits lying in its chiaro 'scuro — in that blending of light and shade and shadow, where nothing is too distinct, yet where the idea is fully conveyed — in the absence of all rigid outlines and all miniature painting — in the not undue warmth of the coloring — and in a well subdued exaggeration at all points — an exaggeration never amounting to caricature.

LITERARY SMALL TALK.

[Text: *American Museum*, January–February, 1839.]

I HAVE had no little to do, in my day, with the trade of Aristarchus, and have even been accused of playing the Zoïlus. Yet I cannot bring myself to feel any goadings of conscience for undue severity. Indeed my remorse lies somewhat the other way. How often, in commendatory reviews of books, whose purpose, whose precision, or whose piety rendered them equivocal objects of animadversion, have I longed to close in the pregnant words of St. Austin, when speaking of the books of the Manichæans. "Tam multi," says he, "tam grandes, tam pretiosi codices"—adding, as if aside, "incendite omnes illas membranas."

I have seen lately some rambling and nonsensical verses entitled "Political Squibs," in which it appeared to me the author had blundered upon a title most appropriate, and been guilty, without knowing it, of a bit of erudition. Versus politici, political, that is to say, city verses, was an appellation applied by way of ridicule to the effusions of certain bards (such as Constantine, Manasses, John Tzetzes, &c.) who flourished in the latter end of Rome, then so miscalled. Their verses (styled by Leo Allatius from their easiness of composition "common prostitutes") usually consisted of fifteen feet, but, like those of Peter Pinder, made laws for themselves as they went along.

Even a good Greek scholar might find himself puz-

zled by the following sentences. *Κωνσερβετ Δεους ημπεριυμ βεστρυμ, βικτορ σισ σεμπερ, βεβητε Δομινι, Ημπερατορες ην μουλτος αννος.* The Greeks of the Eastern empire, in the tenth century, made use of these and similar acclamations upon all occasions of public pomp. As evidence of the unlimited dominion of their emperors, the expressions were repeated in Latin, Gothic, Persian, French, and English. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who wrote a pompous and silly volume, reducing to form and minutely detailing the ceremonies of the court, gives the above sentences as a specimen of *the Latin.* If we remember that the want of the *v* obliged the Greeks to use *b* as the nearest approach, the words, disregarding quantity, then read *Conservet Deus imperium vestrum — victor sis semper — vivite Domini Imperatores in multos annos.* Had Constantine preserved also the words of the English acclamation, we should possibly, to-day, think them a droll specimen of our language.

Bulwer, in my opinion, wants the true vigour of intellect which would prompt him to seek, and enable him to seize truth upon the surface of things. He images her forever in the well. He is perpetually refining to no purpose upon themes which have nothing to gain, and everything to lose in the process. He even condescends to ape the externals of a deep meaning, and will submit to be low rather than fail in appearing profound. It is this coxcombry which leads him so often into allegory and objectless personification. Does he mention "truth" in the most ordinary phrase? — she is with a great T, Truth, the divinity. All common qualities of the mind, all immaterial or mental existences, are capitalized into persons. That he has not yet discarded this senseless mannerism, must

be considered the greater wonder, as the whole herd of his little imitators have already taken it up. His "Last Days of Pompeii" is ridiculously full of it. The same work, in its abundant allusions to Egyptian theology, gives also sufficient evidence of his love of the "far-fetched." Is it indeed possible that he seriously believes one half of the abominable rigmarole put into the mouth of his philosopher Arbaces? I mean *that* rigmarole especially, which asserts the brute-worship of Egypt to have been deliberately intended as typical of certain moral and physical truths. If so, how little of the spirit of wisdom is here, with how vast a solicitude to seem wise! I remember, apropos to this subject, that in the year 1096, there thronged to the first Crusade, in the train of Peter the Hermit, and more immediately in that of the fanatic Godescal, a herd of some two hundred thousand of the most stupid, savage, drunken, and utterly worthless of the people, whose genuine leaders in the expedition were a goat and a goose. These were carried in front, and to these, *for no reason whatever, save the mad whim of the mob*, was ascribed a miraculous participation in the spirit of the Deity. Had the rabble founded an empire, we should, no doubt, have had them instituting a solemn worship of goat and goose, and Mr. Bulwer, with care, might have discovered in the goat a type of one species of deep wisdom, and in the goose a clear symbol of another.

II.

Gibbon's "splendid and stately but artificial style," is often discussed; yet its *details* have never, to my knowledge, been satisfactorily pointed out. The peculiar construction of his sentences, being since adopted

by his imitators without that just reason which perhaps influenced the historian, has greatly vitiated our language. For in these imitations the body is copied, without the soul, of the phraseology. It will be easy to show wherein his chief peculiarity lies — yet this, I believe, has never been shown. In his autobiography he says, "Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle, and a rhetorical declamation." The immense theme of the decline and fall required precisely the kind of sentence which he habitually employed.

A world of essential, or at least of valuable, information or remark, had either to be omitted altogether or *collaterally* introduced. In his endeavours thus to *crowd in* his vast stores of research, much of the artificial will, of course, be apparent; yet I cannot see that any other method would have answered as well. For example, take a passage at random:

"The proximity of its situation to that of Gaul, seemed to invite their arms; the pleasing, although doubtful, intelligence of a pearl-fishery, attracted their avarice; and as Britain was viewed in the light of a distant and insulated world, the conquest scarcely formed any exception to the general system of continental measures; after a war of about fifty years, undertaken by the most stupid, maintained by the most dissolute, and terminated by the most timid of all the emperors, the far greater part of the island submitted to the Roman yoke."

The facts and allusions here indirectly given might have been easily dilated into a page. It is his *indirectness* of observation, then, which forms the soul of the style of Gibbon, of which the apparently pompous phraseology is the body.

Another peculiarity of Johnson, whom he styles "a bigoted, yet vigorous mind:" I mean the coupling in one sentence matters that have but a very shadow of connexion. For instance —

"The Life of Julian, by the Abbé de la Breterie, first introduced me to the man and to the times, and I should be glad to recover my first essay on the truth of the miracle which stopped the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem." This laughable Gibbonism is still a great favorite with the *stellæ minores* of our literature. In the historian's statements regarding the composition of his work, there occurs a contradiction worthy of notice. "I will add a fact" — he in one place says — "which has seldom occurred in the composition of six quartos; my rough MS. without any intermediate copy, has been sent to press." In other passages he speaks of "frequent experiments," and states distinctly, that "three times did he compose the first chapter, twice the second and third" — and that "the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced, by successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size;" upon every page of the work, indeed, there is most ample evidence of the *limæ labor*.

Voltaire betrays, on many occasions, an almost incredible ignorance of antiquity and its affairs. One of his saddest blunders is that of assigning the Canary Island to the Roman empire.

There is something of naïveté, if not much of logic, in these words of the Germans to the Ubii of Cologne, commanding them to cast off the Roman yoke. "Postulamus a vobis" — say they — "muros coloniæ, munimenta servitii detrahatis; etiam fera animalia, si clausa teneas, virtutis obliviscuntur."

PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION TO "THE CONCHOLOGIST'S FIRST BOOK," 1839.

Preface.

The term "*Malacology*," an abbreviation of "*Malacozoology*" [*sic*], from the Greek *μαλακος, soft, ζωον, an animal,* and λογος, *a discourse,* was first employed by the French naturalist, De Blainville, to designate an important division of Natural History, in which the leading feature of the animals discussed was the *softness* of the flesh, or, to speak with greater accuracy, of the general envelop. This division comprehends not only the *mollusca,* but also the *testacea* of Aristotle and of Pliny, and, of course, had reference to molluscous animals in general — of which the greater portion have shells.

A treatise concerning the shells, exclusively, of this greater portion, is termed, in accordance with general usage, a Treatise upon Conchology or Conchyliology; although the word is somewhat improperly applied, as the Greek *conchylion,* from which it is derived, embraces in its signification both the animal and shell. Ostracology would have been more definite.

The common works upon this subject, however, will appear to every person of science very essentially defective, insomuch as the *relations* of the animal and shell, with their dependence upon each other, is a radically important consideration in the examination of either. Neither, in the attempt to obviate this difficulty, is a work upon Malacology at large necessarily

included. Shells, it is true, form, and for many obvious reasons, will continue to form, the subject of chief interest whether with regard to the school or the cabinet. There is no good reason why a book upon *Conchology* (using the common term) may not be malacological as far as it proceeds.

In this view of the subject the present little work is offered to the public. Beyond the ruling feature — that of giving an anatomical account of each animal, together with a description of the shell which it inhabits, the Author has aimed at little more than accuracy and simplicity, as far as the latter quality can be thought consistent with the rigid exactions of science.

No attention has been given to the mere *History* of our subject; it is conceived that any disquisition on this head would more properly appertain to works of ultimate research, than to one whose sole intention is to make the pupil acquainted, in as tangible a form as possible, with *results*. To afford, at a cheap rate, a concise, yet sufficiently comprehensive, and especially a well illustrated school-book, has been the principal design.

In conclusion, the author has only to acknowledge his great indebtedness to the valuable public labors, as well as private assistance, of Mr. Isaac Lea, of Philadelphia. To Mr. Thomas Wyatt, and his late excellent *Manual of Conchology*, he is also under many obligations. No better work, perhaps, could be put into the hands of the student as a secondary text-book. Its beautiful and perfectly well-coloured illustrations afford an aid in the collection of a cabinet scarcely to be met with elsewhere.

E. A. P.

Introduction.

The term "*Conchology*," in its legitimate usage, is applied to that department of Natural History which has reference to animals with testaceous coverings or shells. It is not unfrequently compounded [*sic*] with *Crustaceology*, but the distinction is obvious and radical, lying not more in the composition of the animal's habitation than in the organization of the animal itself. This latter, in the *Crustacea*, is of a fibrous nature, and has articulated limbs; the shell, strictly adapted to the members, covers the creature like a coat of mail, is produced at one elaboration, is cast or thrown aside periodically, and, again at one elaboration, renewed; it is moreover composed of the animal matter with phosphate of lime. In the *Testacea*, on the contrary, the inhabitant is of a simple and soft texture, without bones, and is attached to its domicil [*sic*] by a certain adhesive muscular force; this domicil, too, is a permanent one, and is increased, from time to time, by gradual adhesions on the part of the tenant; while the entire shell, which is distributed in layers, or strata, is a combination of carbonate of lime, with a very small portion of gelatinous matter. Such animals, then, with such shells, form, alone, the subject of a proper "Conchology."

Writers have not been wanting to decry this study as frivolous or inessential; not unjustly assailing the science itself on account of the gross abuses which have now and then arisen from its exclusive and extravagant pursuit. They have reasoned much after this fashion: — that Conchology is a folly, because Rumphius was a fool. The *Conus Cedo Nulli* has been sold for three hundred guineas, and the naturalist first mentioned gave

a thousand pounds sterling for one of the first discovered specimens of the *Venus Dione* (of Linnæus). But there have been men in all ages who have carried to an absurd, and even pernicious, extreme pursuits the most ennobling and praiseworthy.

To an upright and well regulated mind, there is no portion of the works of the Creator, coming within its cognizance, which will not afford material for attentive and pleasurable investigation; and, so far from admitting the venerable error even now partially existing to the discredit of Conchology, we should not hesitate to acknowledge, that while few branches of Natural History are of more direct, *very few* are of more adventitious importance.

Testaceous animals form the principal subsistence of an immense number of savage nations, inhabitants of the sea-board. On the coast of Western Africa, of Chili, of New Holland, and in the clustered and populous islands of the Southern seas, how vast an item is the apparently unimportant shell-fish in the wealth and happiness of man! In more civilized countries it often supplies the table with a delicate luxury. Nor must we forget the services of the pinna with its web, nor of the purpura with its brilliant and once valuable dye, nor omit to speak of the pearl-oyster, with the radiant nacre, and the gem which it produces, and the world of industry which it sets in action as minister to the luxury which it stimulates.

Shells, too, being composed of particles already in natural combination, have not within them, like flowers and animals, the seed of dissolution. While the preparation of a specimen for the cabinet is a simple operation, a conchological collection will yet remain perhaps for ages. These important circumstances being duly

considered, in connexion with the universally acknowledged beauty and variety, both of form and colour, so strikingly observable in shells, it is a matter for neither wonder nor regret that these magnificent *exuviæ*, even regarded merely as such, should have attracted, in a very exclusive degree, the attention and the admiration of the naturalist. The study of Conchology, however, when legitimately directed, and when regarding these *exuviæ* in their natural point of view, as the habitations, wonderfully constructed, of an immensely numerous and vastly important branch of the animal creation, will lead the mind of the investigator through paths hitherto but imperfectly trodden, to many novel contemplations of Almighty Beneficence and Design.

But it is, beyond all doubt, in a geological point of view that Conchology offers the most of interest to the student; and here, by reference to the fair pages of a profound and mighty knowledge, to which it has pointed out the searcher after truth, are triumphantly refuted all charges brought against it of insignificance or frivolity.

"In fine, the relations of the mollusca," says De Blainville, "with the mineral kingdom, and consequently with the mass of the earth which they contribute to form, are not devoid of interest, for without seeking here to resolve the physiological question — whether the conchyliferous mollusca borrow of the inorganic kingdom the calcareous matter which composes their shells, or whether they form it of themselves, it is still certain that they produce, at least, changes upon the surface of the earth by accumulating this material in some places more than in others, and in consequence that they alter the physiognomy of the superficial structure of the globe, the study of which constitutes geognosy."

"By this," says Parkinson, "we are taught that innumerable beings have lived, of which not one of the same kind does any longer exist — that immense beds composed of the spoils of these animals, extending for many miles underground, are met with in many parts of the globe — that enormous chains of mountains, which seem to load the surface of the earth, are vast monuments, in which these remains of former ages are entombed — that, though lying thus crushed together, in a rude and confused mass, they are hourly suffering these changes, by which, after thousands of years, they become the chief constituent parts of gems, the limestone which forms the humble cottage of the peasant, or the marble which adorns the splendid palace of the prince." Fossil, wood, coral, and shells, are, indeed, as Bergman has very forcibly remarked, the only true remaining "medals of Creation."

NOTE. — For a history of "The Conchologist's First Book," see Vol. I. (Biography). — ED.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FURNITURE.

[Text: *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, May, 1840; *Broadway Journal*, I., 18.]

In the internal decoration, if not in the external architecture of their residences, the English are supreme. The Italians have but little sentiment beyond marbles and colours. In France, *meliora probant, deteriora sequuntur* — the people are too much a race of gad-abouts to maintain those household proprieties of which, indeed, they have a delicate appreciation, or at least the elements of a proper sense. The Chinese and most of the eastern races have a warm but inappropriate fancy. The Scotch are *poor* decorists. The Dutch have, perhaps, an indeterminate idea that a curtain is not a cabbage. In Spain they are *all* curtains — a nation of hangmen. The Russians do not furnish. The Hottentots and Kickapoos are very well in their way. The Yankees alone are preposterous.

How this happens, it is not difficult to see. We have no aristocracy of blood, and having therefore as a natural, and indeed as an inevitable thing, fashioned for ourselves an aristocracy of dollars, the *display of wealth* has here to take the place and perform the office of the heraldic display in monarchical countries. By a transition readily understood, and which might have been as readily foreseen, we have been brought to merge in simple *show* our notions of taste itself.

To speak less abstractly. In England, for example, no mere parade of costly appurtenances would be so

likely as with us, to create an impression of the beautiful in respect to the appurtenances themselves — or of taste as regards the proprietor: — this for the reason, first, that wealth is not, in England, the loftiest object of ambition as constituting a nobility; and secondly, that there, the true nobility of blood, confining itself within the strict limits of legitimate taste, rather avoids than affects that mere costliness in which a *parvenu* rivalry may at any time be successfully attempted.

The people *will* imitate the nobles, and the result is a thorough diffusion of the proper feeling. But in America, the coins current being the sole arms of the aristocracy, their display may be said, in general, to be the sole means of the aristocratic distinction; and the populace, looking always upward for models, are insensibly led to confound the two entirely separate ideas of magnificence and beauty. In short, the cost of an article of furniture has at length come to be, with us, nearly the sole test of its merit in a decorative point of view — and this test, once established, has led the way to many analogous errors, readily traceable to the one primitive folly.

There could be nothing more directly offensive to the eye of an artist than the interior of what is termed in the United States — that is to say, in Appallachia — a well-furnished apartment. Its most usual defect is a want of keeping. We speak of the keeping of a room as we would of the keeping of a picture — for both the picture and the room are amenable to those undeviating principles which regulate all varieties of art; and very nearly the same laws by which we decide on the higher merits of a painting, suffice for decision on the adjustment of a chamber.

A want of keeping is observable sometimes in the

character of the several pieces of furniture, but generally in their colours or modes of adaptation to use. *Very* often the eye is offended by their inartistic arrangement. Straight lines are too prevalent — too uninterruptedly continued — or clumsily interrupted at right angles. If curved lines occur, they are repeated into unpleasant uniformity. By undue precision, the appearance of many a fine apartment is utterly spoiled.

Curtains are rarely well disposed, or well chosen in respect to other decorations. With formal furniture, curtains are out of place; and an extensive volume of drapery of any kind is, under any circumstance, irreconcilable with good taste — the proper quantum, as well as the proper adjustment, depending upon the character of the general effect.

Carpets are better understood of late than of ancient days, but we still very frequently err in their patterns and colours. The soul of the apartment is the carpet. From it are deduced not only the hues but the forms of all objects incumbent. A judge at common law may be an ordinary man; a good judge of a carpet *must be* a genius. Yet we have heard discoursing of carpets, with the air "*d'un mouton qui rêve*," fellows who should not and who could not be entrusted with the management of their own *moustaches*. Every one knows that a large floor *may* have a covering of large figures, and that a small one *must* have a covering of small — yet this is not all the knowledge in the world. As regards texture, the Saxony is alone admissible. Brussels is the preterpluperfect tense of fashion, and Turkey is taste in its dying agonies. Touching pattern — a carpet should *not* be bedizzened out like a Riccaree Indian — all red chalk, yellow ochre, and cock's feathers. In brief — distinct grounds, and vivid

circular or cycloid figures, *of no meaning*, are here Median laws. The abomination of flowers, or representations of well-known objects of any kind, should not be endured within the limits of Christendom. Indeed, whether on carpets, or curtains, or tapestry, or ottoman coverings, all upholstery of this nature should be rigidly Arabesque. As for those antique floor-cloths still occasionally seen in the dwellings of the rabble — cloths of huge, sprawling, and radiating devises, stripe-interspersed, and glorious with all hues, among which no ground is intelligible — these are but the wicked invention of a race of time-servers and money-lovers — children of Baal and worshippers of Mammon — Benthams, who, to spare thought and economize fancy, first cruelly invented the Kaleidoscope, and then established joint-stock companies to twirl it by steam.

Glare is a leading error in the philosophy of American household decoration — an error easily recognised as deduced from the perversion of taste just specified. We are violently enamoured of gas and of glass. The former is totally inadmissible within doors. Its harsh and unsteady light offends. No one having both brains and eyes will use it. A mild, or what artists term a cool light, with its consequent warm shadows, will do wonders for even an ill-furnished apartment. Never was a more lovely thought than that of the astral lamp. We mean, of course, the astral lamp proper — the lamp of Argand, with its original plain ground-glass shade, and its tempered and uniform moonlight rays. The cut-glass shade is a weak invention of the enemy. The eagerness with which we have adopted it, partly on account of its *flashiness*, but principally on account of its *greater cost*, is a good commentary on the proposition with which we began. It is not too much to

say, that the deliberate employer of a cut-glass shade, is either radically deficient in taste, or blindly subservient to the caprices of fashion. The light proceeding from one of these gaudy abominations is unequal, broken, and painful. It alone is sufficient to mar a world of good effect in the furniture subjected to its influence. Female loveliness, in especial, is more than one-half disenchanted beneath its evil eye.

In the matter of glass, generally, we proceed upon false principles. Its leading feature is *glitter* — and in that one word how much of all that is detestable do we express! Flickering, unquiet lights, are *sometimes* pleasing — to children and idiots always so — but in the embellishment of a room they should be scrupulously avoided. In truth, even strong *steady* lights are inadmissible. The huge and unmeaning glass chandeliers, prism-cut, gas-lighted, and without shade, which dangle in our most fashionable drawing-rooms, may be cited as the quintessence of all that is false in taste or preposterous in folly.

The rage for *glitter* — because its idea has become, as we before observed, confounded with that of magnificence in the abstract — has led us, also, to the exaggerated employment of mirrors. We line our dwellings with great British plates, and then imagine we have done a fine thing. Now the slightest thought will be sufficient to convince any one who has an eye at all, of the ill effect of numerous looking-glasses, and especially of large ones. Regarded apart from its reflection, the mirror presents a continuous, flat, colourless, unrelieved surface, — a thing always and obviously unpleasant. Considered as a reflector, it is potent in producing a monstrous and odious uniformity: and the evil is here aggravated, not in merely

direct proportion with the augmentation of its sources, but in a ratio constantly increasing. In fact, a room with four or five mirrors arranged at random, is, for all purposes of artistic show, a room of no shape at all. If we add to this evil, the attendant glitter upon glitter, we have a perfect farrago of discordant and displeasing effects. The veriest bumpkin, on entering an apartment so bedizzened, would be instantly aware of something wrong, although he might be altogether unable to assign a cause for his dissatisfaction. But let the same person be led into a room tastefully furnished, and he would be startled into an exclamation of pleasure and surprise.

It is an evil growing out of our republican institutions, that here a man of large purse has usually a very little soul which he keeps in it. The corruption of taste is a portion or a pendant of the dollar-manufacture. As we grow rich, our ideas grow rusty. It is, therefore, not among *our* aristocracy that we must look (if at all, in Appallachia), for the spirituality of a British *boudoir*. But we have seen apartments in the tenure of Americans of modern[1] means, which, in negative merit at least, might vie with any of the *or-molu'd* cabinets of our friends across the water. Even *now*, there is present to our mind's eye a small and not ostentatious chamber with whose decorations no fault can be found. The proprietor lies asleep on a sofa — the weather is cool — the time is near midnight: we will make a sketch of the room during his slumber.

It is oblong — some thirty feet in length and twenty-five in breadth — a shape affording the best (ordinary) opportunities for the adjustment of furniture. It has but one door — by no means a wide one

[1] Moderate? — Ed.

—which is at one end of the parallelogram, and but two windows, which are at the other. These latter are large, reaching down to the floor — have deep recesses — and open on an Italian *veranda*. Their panes are of a crimson-tinted glass, set in rose-wood framings, more massive than usual. They are curtained within the recess, by a thick silver tissue adapted to the shape of the window, and hanging loosely in small volumes. Without the recess are curtains of an exceedingly rich crimson silk, fringed with a deep network of gold, and lined with silver tissue, which is the material of the exterior blind. There are no cornices; but the folds of the whole fabric (which are sharp rather than massive, and have an airy appearance), issue from beneath a broad entablature of rich giltwork, which encircles the room at the junction of the ceiling and walls. The drapery is thrown open also, or closed, by means of a thick rope of gold loosely enveloping it, and resolving itself readily into a knot; no pins or other such devices are apparent. The colours of the curtains and their fringe — the tints of crimson and gold — appear everywhere in profusion, and determine the *character* of the room. The carpet — of Saxony material — is quite half an inch thick, and is of the same crimson ground, relieved simply by the appearance of a gold cord (like that festooning the curtains) slightly relieved above the surface of the *ground*, and thrown upon it in such a manner as to form a succession of short irregular curves — one occasionally overlaying the other. The walls are prepared with a glossy paper of a silver gray tint, spotted with small Arabesque devices of a fainter hue of the prevalent crimson. Many paintings relieve the expanse of the paper. These are chiefly landscapes of an imagi-

native cast — such as the fairy grottoes of Stanfield, or the lake of the Dismal Swamp of Chapman. There are, nevertheless, three or four female heads, of an ethereal beauty — portraits in the manner of Sully. The tone of each picture is warm, but dark. There are no "brilliant effects." *Repose* speaks in all. Not one is of small size. Diminutive paintings give that *spotty* look to a room, which is the blemish of so many a fine work of Art overtouched. The frames are broad but not deep, and richly carved, without being *dulled* or filagreed. They have the whole lustre of burnished gold. They lie flat on the walls, and do not hang off with cords. The designs themselves are often seen to better advantage in this latter position, but the general appearance of the chamber is injured. But one mirror — and this not a very large one — is visible. In shape it is nearly circular — and it is hung so that a reflection of the person can be obtained from it in none of the ordinary sitting-places of the room. Two large low sofas of rosewood and crimson silk, gold-flowered, form the only seats, with the exception of two light conversation chairs, also of rose-wood. There is a pianoforte (rose-wood, also), without cover, and thrown open. An octagonal table, formed altogether of the richest gold-threaded marble, is placed near one of the sofas. This is also without cover — the drapery of the curtains has been thought sufficient. Four large and gorgeous Sèvres vases, in which bloom a profusion of sweet and vivid flowers, occupy the slightly rounded angles of the room. A tall candelabrum, bearing a small antique lamp with highly perfumed oil, is standing near the head of my sleeping friend. Some light and graceful hanging shelves, with golden edges and crimson silk cords with gold tassels,

sustain two or three hundred magnificently bound books. Beyond these things, there is no furniture, if we except an Argand lamp, with a plain crimson-tinted ground-glass shade, which depends from the lofty vaulted ceiling by a single slender gold chain, and throws a tranquil but magical radiance over all.

SOME ACCOUNT OF STONEHENGE, THE GIANT'S DANCE, A DRUIDICAL RUIN IN ENGLAND.[1]

[Text: *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine and American Monthly Review*, June, 1840.]

THE pile called Stonehenge is an assemblage of upright and prostrate stones on Salisbury plain, England, and is generally supposed to be the remains of an ancient Druidical temple. From its singularity, and the mystery attending its origin and appropriation, it has excited more surprise and curiosity than any other relic of antiquity in Great Britain. It is situated about two miles directly west of Amesbury, and seven north of Salisbury, in Wiltshire. When viewed at a distance it appears but a small and trifling object, for its bulk and character are lost in the extensive space which surrounds it; and even on a near examination it fails to fulfil the expectations of the stranger who visits it with exaggerated prepossessions. To behold this "wonder of Britain" it should be viewed with an artist's eye, and contemplated by an intellect stored with antiquarian and historical knowledge. Stonehenge, notwithstanding much that has been said to the contrary, is utterly unlike any monument now remaining in Europe. Many of its stones have been squared or hewn by art; and on the top of the outer circle has been raised a continued series of squared stones, at-

[1] Here for the first time reprinted.— ED.

tached to the uprights by mortices and tenons, or regular cavities in the horizontal blocks, with projecting points on the perpendicular ones. Nearly all other so-called examples of Druidical circles are composed of rough unhewn stones, and are without imposts.

Our engraving represents the present appearance of Stonehenge — a confused heap of erect and fallen stones. The original arrangement of these, however, may be readily understood; for by the situation and condition of the yet standing and prostrate members, we are enabled to judge of the number and site of those which have been removed. The whole consisted of two circular, and two other curved rows, or arrangements of stones, the forms and positions of which may be easily ascertained. Horizontal stones, or imposts, were laid all around, in a continued order, on the outer circle, and five similar imposts on ten uprights of the third row. The whole is surrounded by a ditch and vallum of earth, connected with which are three other stones. The vallum does not exceed fifteen feet in height, and is exterior to the ditch. Through this line of circumvallation there appears to have been one grand entrance from the north-east side, and this is decidedly marked by two banks and ditches, called *The Avenue*. Approaching Stonehenge in this direction, the attention is first arrested by an immense unchiselled stone, called the *Friar's Heel*, which is now in a leaning position, and measures about sixteen feet in height. Immediately within the vallum is another stone lying on the ground. It is twenty-one feet two inches long, and a hundred feet from the stone just mentioned, and about the same distance from the outside of the outermost circle. Each impost of this circle has two mortices in it, to correspond with two tenons on the top of each vertical stone. The

imposts were so connected as to form a continued series of architraves. The stones of the inner circle are much smaller and more irregular than those of the outer. Within these two circles are arranged two inner rows of stones, one of which constitutes the grandest portion of Stonehenge. It was formed by five distinct *trilithons* — a trilithon is a large impost upon two uprights. The workmanship here appears to be better. The interior row of stones which next claims attention consisted of nineteen uprights without imposts, and inclined to a pyramidical form. The most perfect among them is seven feet and a half high. The *Altar Stone*, as it is usually called, lies flat on the ground, and occupies the *adytum* of the temple. The total number of stones of which Stonehenge was composed, is, according to Dr. Smith's plan and calculation, one hundred and twenty-nine. Some of these were of a compact sand-stone, some of fine-grained grünstein, interspersed with black hornblende, feldspar, quartz, and chlorite, some a siliceous schistus, others an argillaceous schistus, others horn-stone. The Altar Stone is gray cos.

In regard to the history of these extraordinary monuments, there is little of any definite nature. The earliest account of them occurs in Nennius, who lived in the eighth century. He says they were erected by the Britons to commemorate a massacre which took place at the spot. The Historical Triads of the Welsh refer their origin to the same cause. Camden calls the structure *insana*, but says nothing about it entitled to notice. Modern authors have been profuse in speculation, but no more. The general opinion seems to be in favor of a Druidical Temple. The Rev. James Ingram supposes it to have been "a heathen burial-place." Borlase remarks that "the work of Stone-

henge must have been that of a great and powerful nation, not of a limited community of priests; the grandeur of the design, the distance of the materials, the tediousness with which all such massive works are necessarily attended, all show that such designs were the fruits of peace and religion." Bryant, whose authority we regard as superior to any, discredits the Druidical theory altogether.

We may be permitted to conclude this cursory article by an extract from the Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus — leaving the application of the passage to the judgment or the fancy of our readers.

"Among the authors of antiquity Hecatæus and some others relate that there is *an island in the ocean, opposite to Celtic Caul*, and not inferior in size to Sicily, lying towards the north, and inhabited by Hyperborei, who are so called because they live more remote from the north wind. The soil is excellent and fertile, and the harvest is made twice in the same year. Tradition says that Latona was here born, and therefore Apollo is worshipped above any other deity. To him is also dedicated *a remarkable temple of a round form.*"

The ancient superstitions gave the giants credit for the construction of Stonehenge, believing that the massive piles were moveable but by giant power — hence, the name of *Choir-gaur*, which literally means "The Giant's Dance."

The whole number of stones now visible amounts to one hundred and nine.

A FEW WORDS ON SECRET WRITING.[1]

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, July, 1841.]

As we can scarcely imagine a time when there did not exist a necessity, or at least a desire, of transmitting information from one individual to another in such manner as to elude general comprehension, so we may well suppose the practice of writing in cipher to be of great antiquity, De la Guilletière, therefore, who, in his "Lacedæmon Ancient and Modern," maintains that the Spartans were the inventors of Cryptography, is obviously in error. He speaks of the *scytala* as being the origin of the art; but he should only have cited it as one of its earliest instances, so far as our records extend. The *scytalæ* were two wooden cylinders, precisely similar in all respects. The general of an army, in going upon any expedition, received from the *ephori* one of these cylinders, while the other remained in their possession. If either party had occasion to communicate with the other, a narrow strip of parchment was so wrapped around the *scytala* that the edges of the skin fitted accurately each to each. The writing was then inscribed longitudinally, and the epistle unrolled and despatched. If, by mischance, the messenger was intercepted, the letter proved unintelligible to his captors. If he reached his destination

[1] Here for the first time given in its completeness, with the Addenda (three supplements). — Ed.

safely, however, the party addressed had only to involve the second cylinder in the strip to decipher the inscription. The transmission to our own times of this obvious mode of cryptography is due, probably, to the *historical* uses of the *scytala* rather than to anything else. Similar means of secret intercommunication must have existed almost contemporaneously with the invention of letters.

It may be as well to remark, in passing, that in none of the treatises on the subject of this paper which have fallen under our cognisance have we observed any suggestion of a method — other than those which apply alike to all ciphers — for the solution of the cipher by *scytala*. We read of instances, indeed, in which the intercepted parchments were deciphered; but we are not informed that this was ever done except accidentally. Yet a solution might be obtained with absolute certainty in this manner. The strip of skin being intercepted, let there be prepared a cone of great length comparatively — say six feet long — and whose circumference at base shall at least equal the length of the strip. Let this latter be rolled upon the cone near the base, edge to edge, as above described; then, still keeping edge to edge, and maintaining the parchment close upon the cone, let it be gradually slipped towards the apex. In this process, some of those words, syllables, or letters, whose connection is intended, will be sure to come together at that point of the cone where its diameter equals that of the *scytala* upon which the cipher was written. And, as in passing up the cone to its apex, all possible diameters are passed over, there is no chance of a failure. The circumference of the *scytala* being thus ascertained, a similar one can be made, and the cipher applied to it.

Few persons can be made to believe that it is not quite an easy thing to invent a method of secret writing which shall baffle investigation. Yet it may be roundly asserted that human ingenuity cannot concoct a cipher which human ingenuity cannot resolve. In the facility with which such writing is deciphered, however, there exist very remarkable differences in different intellects. Often, in the case of two individuals of acknowledged equality as regards ordinary mental efforts, it will be found that, while one cannot unriddle the commonest cipher, the other will scarcely be puzzled by the most abstruse. It may be observed, generally, that in such investigations the analytic ability is very forcibly called into action; and, for this reason, cryptographical solutions might with great propriety be introduced into academies as the means of giving tone to the most important of the powers of mind.

Were two individuals, totally unpractised in cryptography, desirous of holding by letter a correspondence which should be unintelligible to all but themselves, it is most probable that they would at once think of a peculiar alphabet, to which each should have a key. At first it would, perhaps, be arranged that *a* should stand for *z*, *b* for *y*, *c* for *x*, *d* for *w*, &c., &c.; that is to say, the order of the letters would be reversed. Upon second thoughts, this arrangement appearing too obvious, a more complex mode would be adopted. The first thirteen letters might be written beneath the last thirteen, thus:

n o p q r s t u v w x y z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m;

and, so placed, *a* might stand for *n* and *n* for *a*, *o* for *b* and *b* for *o*, &c., &c. This, again, having an air of

regularity which might be fathomed, the key alphabet might be constructed absolutely at random.

Thus,	a might stand for			p
	b	,,	,,	x
	c	,,	,,	u
	d	,,	,,	o, &c.

The correspondents, unless convinced of their error by the solution of their cipher, would no doubt be willing to rest in this latter arrangement as affording full security. But if not, they would be likely to hit upon the plan of arbitrary marks used in place of the usual characters. For example,

(	might be employed for		a
.	,,	,,	b
:	,,	,,	c
;	,,	,,	d
)	,,	,,	e, &c.

A letter composed of such characters would have an intricate appearance unquestionably. If, still, however, it did not give full satisfaction, the idea of a perpetually shifting alphabet might be conceived, and thus effected. Let two circular pieces of pasteboard be prepared, one about half an inch in diameter less than the other. Let the centre of the smaller be placed upon the centre of the larger, and secured for a moment from slipping; while *radii* are drawn from the common centre to the circumference of the smaller circle, and thus extended to the circumference of the greater. Let there be twenty-six of these *radii*, forming on each pasteboard twenty-six spaces. In each of these spaces on the under circle write one of the letters of the alphabet, so that the whole alphabet be written

—if at random so much the better. Do the same with the upper circle. Now run a pin through the common centre, and let the upper circle revolve, while the under one is held fast. Now stop the revolution of the upper circle, and, while both lie still, write the epistle required; using for *a* that letter in the smaller circle which tallies with *a* in the larger, for *b* that letter in the smaller circle which tallies with *b* in the larger, &c., &c. In order that an epistle thus written may be read by the person for whom it is intended, it is only necessary that he should have in his possession circles constructed as those just described, and that he should know any two of the characters (one in the under and one in the upper circle) which were in juxtaposition when his correspondent wrote the cipher. Upon this latter point he is informed by looking at the two initial letters of the document which serve as a key. Thus, if he sees *a m* at the beginning, he concludes that, by turning his circles so as to put these characters in conjunction, he will arrive at the alphabet employed.

At a cursory glance, these various modes of constructing a cipher seem to have about them an air of inscrutable secrecy. It appears almost an impossibility to unriddle what has been put together by so complex a method. And to some persons the difficulty might be great; but to others — to those skilled in deciphering — such enigmas are very simple indeed. The reader should bear in mind that the basis of the whole art of solution, as far as regards these matters, is found in the general principles of the formation of language itself, and thus is altogether independent of the particular laws which govern any cipher, or the construction of its key. The difficulty of reading a cryptographical puzzle is by no means always in accordance with the

labor or ingenuity with which it has been constructed. The sole use of the key, indeed, is for those *au fait* to the cipher; in its perusal by a third party, no reference is had to it at all. The lock of the secret is picked. In the different methods of cryptography specified above, it will be observed that there is a gradually increasing complexity. But this complexity is only in shadow. It has no substance whatever. It appertains merely to the formation, and has no bearing upon the solution, of the cipher. The last mode mentioned is not in the least degree more difficult to be deciphered than the first — whatever may be the difficulty of either.

In the discussion of an analogous subject, in one of the weekly papers of this city, about eighteen months ago, the writer of this article had occasion to speak of the application of a rigorous *method* in all forms of thought — of its advantages — of the extension of its use even to what is considered the operation of pure fancy — and thus, subsequently of the solution of cipher. He even ventured to assert that no cipher, of the character above specified, could be sent to the address of the paper which he would not be able to resolve. This challenge excited, most unexpectedly, a very lively interest among the numerous readers of the journal. Letters were poured in upon the editor from all parts of the country; and many of the writers of these epistles were so convinced of the impenetrability of their mysteries, as to be at great pains to draw him into wagers on the subject. At the same time, they were not always scrupulous about sticking to the point. The cryptographs were, in numerous instances, altogether beyond the limits defined in the beginning. Foreign languages were employed. Words and sentences were run together without interval. Several

alphabets were used in the same cipher. One gentleman, but moderately endowed with conscientiousness, inditing us a puzzle composed of pothooks and hangers to which the wildest typography of the office could afford nothing similar, went even so far as to jumble together no less than *seven distinct alphabets*, without intervals between the letters *or between the lines*. Many of the cryptographs were dated in Philadelphia, and several of those which urged the subject of a bet were written by gentlemen of this city. Out of, perhaps, one hundred ciphers altogether received, there was only one which we did not immediately succeed in resolving. This one we *demonstrated* to be an imposition — that is to say, we fully proved it a jargon of random characters, having no meaning whatever. In respect to the epistle of the seven alphabets, we had the pleasure of completely *nonplussing* its inditer by a prompt and satisfactory translation.

The weekly paper mentioned, was, for a period of some months, greatly occupied with the hieroglyphic and cabalistic-looking solutions of the cryptographs sent us from all quarters. Yet with the exception of the writers of the ciphers, we do not believe that any individuals could have been found among the readers of the journal, who regarded the matter in any other light than in that of a desperate humbug. We mean to say that no one really believed in the authenticity of the answers. One party averred that the mysterious figures were only inserted to give a *queer* air to the paper, for the purpose of attracting attention. Another thought it more probable that we not only solved the ciphers, but put them together ourselves for solution. This having been the state of affairs at the period when it was thought expedient to decline further dealings in necromancy,

the writer of this article avails himself of the present opportunity to maintain the truth of the journal in question — to repel the charges of rigmarole by which it was assailed — and to declare in his own name, that the ciphers were all written in good faith, and solved in the same spirit.

A very common and somewhat too obvious mode of secret correspondence is the following. A card is interspersed, at irregular intervals, with oblong spaces, about the length of ordinary words of three syllables in a bourgeois type. Another card is made exactly coinciding. One is in possession of each party. When a letter is to be written, the key-card is placed upon the paper and words conveying the true meaning inscribed in the spaces. The card is then removed and the blanks filled up, so as to make out a signification different from the real one. When the person addressed receives the cipher, he has merely to apply to it his own card, when the superfluous words are concealed, and the significant ones alone appear. The chief objection to this cryptograph is the difficulty of so filling the blanks as not to give a forced appearance to the sentences. Differences, also, in the handwriting between the words written in the spaces, and those inscribed upon removal of the card, will always be detected by a close observer.

A pack of cards is sometimes made the vehicle of a cipher, in this manner. The parties determine, in the first place, upon certain arrangements of the pack. For example: it is agreed that, when a writing is to be commenced, a natural sequence of the spots shall be made; with spades at top, hearts next, diamonds next, and clubs last. This order being obtained, the writer proceeds to inscribe upon the top card the first letter of his epistle, upon the next the second, upon the next the

third, and so on until the pack is exhausted, when, of course, he will have written fifty-two letters. He now shuffles the pack according to a preconcerted plan. For example: he takes three cards from the bottom and places them at top, then one from top, placing it at bottom, and so on, for a given number of times. This done, he again inscribes fifty-two characters as before, proceeding thus until his epistle is written. The pack being received by the correspondent, he has only to place the cards in the order agreed upon for commencement, to read, letter by letter, the first fifty-two characters as intended. He has then only to shuffle in the manner prearranged for the second perusal, to decipher the series of the next fifty-two letters — and so on to the end. The objection to this cryptograph lies in the nature of the missive. *A pack of cards*, sent from one party to another, would scarcely fail to excite suspicion, and it cannot be doubted that it is far better to secure ciphers from being considered as such, than to waste time in attempts at rendering them scrutiny-proof when intercepted. Experience shows that the most cunningly constructed cryptograph, if suspected, can and will be unriddled.

An unusually secure mode of secret intercommunication might be thus devised. Let the parties each furnish themselves with a copy of the same edition of a book — the rarer the edition the better — as also the rarer the book. In the cryptograph, numbers are used altogether, and these numbers refer to the locality of letters in the volume. For example — a cipher is received commencing, 121-6-8. The party addressed refers to page 121, and looks at the sixth letter from the left of the page in the eighth line from the top. Whatever letter he there finds is the initial letter of the

epistle — and so on. This method is very secure; yet it is *possible* to decipher any cryptograph written by its means — and it is greatly objectionable otherwise, on account of the time necessarily required for its solution, even with the key-volume.

It is not to be supposed that Cryptography, as a serious thing, as the means of imparting important information, has gone out of use at the present day. It is still commonly practised in diplomacy; and there are individuals, even now, holding office in the eye of various foreign governments, whose real business is that of deciphering. We have already said that a peculiar mental action is called into play in the solution of cryptographical problems, at least in those of the higher order. Good cryptographists are rare indeed; and thus their services, although seldom required, are necessarily well requited.

An instance of the modern employment of writing in cipher is mentioned in a work lately published by Messieurs Lea and Blanchard of this city — "Sketches of Conspicuous Living Characters of France." In a notice of Berryer, it is said that a letter being addressed by the Duchess de Berri to the legitimists of Paris, to inform them of her arrival, it was accompanied by a long note in cipher, the key of which she had forgotten to give. "The penetrating mind of Berryer," says the biographer, "soon discovered it. It was this phrase substituted for the twenty-four letters of the alphabet — *Le gouvernement provisoire.*"

The assertion that Berryer "soon discovered the key-phrase," merely proves that the writer of these memoirs is entirely innocent of cryptographical knowledge. Monsieur B. no doubt ascertained the key-phrase; but it was merely to satisfy his curiosity, *after*

the riddle had been read. He made no use of the key in deciphering. The lock was picked.

In our notice of the book in question (published in the April number of this Magazine) we alluded to this subject thus —

"The phrase '*Le gouvernement provisoire*' is French, and the note in cipher was addressed to Frenchmen. The difficulty of deciphering may well be supposed much greater, had the key been in a foreign tongue; yet any one who will take the trouble may address us a note, in the same manner as here proposed; and the key-phrase may be either in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin, or Greek, (or in any of the dialects of these languages,) and we pledge ourselves for the solution of the riddle."

This challenge has elicited but a single response, which is embraced in the following letter. The only quarrel we have with the epistle, is that its writer has declined giving us his name in full. We beg that he will take an early opportunity of doing this, and thus relieve us of the chance of that suspicion which was attached to the cryptography of the weekly journal above mentioned — the suspicion of inditing ciphers to ourselves. The postmark of the letter is *Stonington, Conn.*

S——, Ct., April 21, 1841.

To the Editor of Graham's Magazine

Sir — In the April number of your magazine, while reviewing the translation by Mr. Walsh of "Sketches of Conspicuous Living Characters of France," you invite your readers to address you a note in cipher, "the key phrase to which may be either in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin or Greek," and pledge your-

self for its solution. My attention being called, by your remarks, to this species of cipher-writing, I composed for my own amusement the following exercises, in the first part of which the key-phrase is in English — in the second in Latin. As I did not see (by the number for May,) that any of your correspondents had availed himself of your offer, I take the liberty to send the enclosed, on which, if you should think it worth your while, you can exercise your ingenuity.

I am, yours respectfully,

S. D. L.

No. 1.

Cauhiif aud ftd sdftirf ithot tacd wdde rdchfdr tiu fuacfshff heo fdoudf hetusaf hie tuis ied herhchriai fi aeiftdu wn sdaef it iuhf heo hiidohwid wn aen deodsf ths tiu itis hf iaf iuhoheaiin rdff hedr ; aer ftd auf it ftif fdoudfin oissiehoaf heo hefdiihodeod taf wdde odeduaiin fdusdr ounsfiouastn. Saen fsdohdf it fdoudf iuhf heo idud weiie fi ftd aeohdeff ; fisdf hsdf, A fiacdf tdar ief ftacdr aer ftd ouiie iuhffde isie ihft fisd herdihwid oiiiiuheo tiihr, atfdu ithot ftd tahu wdheo sdushffdr fi ouii aoahe, hetiusaf hie oiiir wd fuaefshffdr ihft ihffid raeoeu fthf rhfoicdun iiiir defid iefhi ftd aswiiafiun dshffid fatdin udaotdr hff rdff heaf hie. Ounsfiouastn tiidcdu siud suisduin dswuaodf ftifd sirdf it iuhf heo ithot aud uderdudr idohwid iein wn sdaef it fisd desiaeafiun wdn ithot sawdf weiie ftd udai f hoehthoaf hie it ftd onstduf dssiindr fi hff siffdffiu.

No. 2.

Ofoiioiiaso ortsiii sov eodisoioe afduiostifoi ft iftvi si tri oistoiv oiniafetsorit ifeov rsri afotiiiv ridiiot irio

rivvio eovit atrotfetsoria aioriti iitri tf oitovin tri aetifei ioreitit sov usttoi oioittatifo dfti afdooitior trso ifeov tri dfit otftfeov softriedi ft oistoiv oriofiforiti suitteii viireiiitifoi ft tri iarfoisiti iiti trir uet otiiiotiv uitfti rid io tri eoviieeiiiv rfasueostr ft rii dftrit tfoeei.

In the solution of the first of these ciphers we had little more than ordinary trouble. The second proved to be exceedingly difficult, and it was only by calling every faculty into play that we could read it at all. The first runs thus,

"Various are the methods which have been devised for transmitting secret information from one individual to another by means of writing, illegible to any except him for whom it was originally destined; and the art of thus secretly communicating intelligence has been generally termed *cryptography*. Many species of secret writing were known to the ancients. Sometimes a slave's head was shaved and the crown written upon with some indelible coloring fluid; after which the hair being permitted to grow again, information could be transmitted with little danger that discovery would ensue until the ambulatory epistle safely reached its destination. Cryptography, however, pure, properly embraces those modes of writing which are rendered legible only by means of some explanatory key which makes known the real signification of the ciphers employed to its possessor."

The key-phrase of this cryptograph is — "A word to the wise is sufficient."

The second is thus translated —

"Nonsensical phrases and unmeaning combinations of words, as the learned lexicographer would have confessed himself, when hidden under cryptographic

ciphers, serve to *perpdex* the curious enquirer, and baffle penetration more completely than would the most profound *apothegms* of learned philosophers. Abstruse disquisitions of the scholiasts were they but presented before him in the undisguised vocabulary of his mother tongue" ——

The last sentence here (as will be seen) is broken off short. The spelling we have strictly adhered to. *D*, by mistake, has been put for *l* in *perplex*.

The key-phrase is — "*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*"

In the ordinary cryptograph, as will be seen in reference to most of those we have specified above, the artificial alphabet agreed upon by the correspondents is employed, letter for letter in place of the usual or natural one. For example: — two parties wish to communicate secretly. It is arranged before parting that

)	shall	stand for	a
(	"	"	b
—	"	"	c
*	"	"	d
.	"	"	e
,	"	"	f
;	"	"	g
:	"	"	h
?	"	"	i or j
!	"	"	k
&	"	"	l
o	"	"	m
‘	"	"	n
†	"	"	o
‡	"	"	p
¶	"	"	q

☛ shall stand for r
] ,, ,, s
† ,, ,, t
£ ,, ,, u or v
$,, ,, w
¿ ,, ,, x
¡ ,, ,, y
☛ ,, ,, z

Now the following note is to be communicated—-

"We must see you immediately upon a matter of great importance. Plots have been discovered, and the conspirators are in our hands. Hasten!"

These words would have been written thus —

$.o£] []..¡†£?oo.*?)[.&¡£‡†')o)
[[.☛†';☛.)[?o‡†☛[)'—.‡&†[
]:)£.(..'*.]—†£.☛.*)'*[:.—†'
]‡?☛)[†☛])☛.?'†£☛:)'*]:)
][.'

This certainly has an intricate appearance, and would prove a most difficult cipher to any one not conversant with cryptography. But it will be observed that *a*, for example, is never represented by any other character than), *b* never by any other character than (, and so on. Thus by the discovery, accidental or otherwise, of any one letter, the party intercepting the epistle would gain a permanent and decided advantage; and could apply his knowledge to all the instances in which the character in question was employed throughout the cipher.

In the cryptographs, on the other hand, which have been sent us by our correspondent at Stonington, and

which are identical in conformation with the cipher resolved by Berryer, no such permanent advantage is to be obtained.

Let us refer to the second of these puzzles. Its key-phrase runs thus:

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.

Let us now place the alphabet beneath this phrase, letter beneath letter —

S	u	a	v	i	t	e	r	i	n	m	o	d	o	f	o	r	t	i	t	e	r	i	n	r	e
A	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

We here see that

a	stands for	c
d	"	m
e	"	g, u, and z
f	"	o
i	"	e, i, s and w
m	"	k
n	"	j and x
o	"	l, n, and p
r	"	h, q, v, and y
s	"	a
t	"	f, r, and t
u	"	b
v	"	d

In this manner *n* stands for two letters, and *e*, *o*, and *t* for three each, while *i* and *r* represent each as many as four. Thirteen characters are made to perform the operations of the whole alphabet. The result of such a key-phrase upon the cipher is to give it the appearance of a mere medley of the letters *e*, *o*, *t*, *r*, and *i* — the latter character greatly predominating through the

accident of being employed for letters, which, themselves, are inordinately prevalent in most languages — we mean *e* and *i*.

A letter thus written being intercepted, and the key-phrase unknown, the individual who should attempt to decipher it may be imagined *guessing*, or otherwise attempting to convince himself that a certain character (*i*, for example,) represented the letter *e*. Looking throughout the cryptograph for confirmation of this idea he would meet with nothing but a negation of it. He would see the character in situations where it could not possibly represent *e*. He might, for instance, be puzzled by four *i*'s forming of themselves a single word, without the intervention of any other character; in which case, of course, they could not be *all e*'s. It will be seen that the word *wise* might be thus constructed. We say this may be seen *now*, by us, in possession of the key-phrase; but the question will no doubt occur, how, *without* the key-phrase, and without cognizance of any single letter in the cipher, it would be possible for the interceptor of such a cryptograph to make anything of such a word as *iiii?*

But again. A key-phrase might easily be constructed in which one character would represent seven, eight, or ten letters. Let us then imagine the word *iiiiiiiiii* presenting itself in a cryptograph to an individual *without* the proper key-phrase; or, if this be a supposition somewhat too perplexing, let us suppose it occurring to the person for whom the cipher is designed, and who *has* the key-phrase. What is he to do with such a word as *iiiiiiiiii?* In any of the ordinary books upon Algebra will be found a very concise *formula* (we have not the necessary type for its insertion here) for ascertaining the number of ar-

rangements in which *m* letters may be placed, taken *n* at a time. But no doubt there are none of our readers ignorant of the innumerable combinations which may be made from these ten *i*'s. Yet, unless it occur otherwise by accident, the correspondent receiving the cipher would have to write down all these combinations before attaining the word intended; and even when he had written them, he would be inexpressibly perplexed in selecting the word designed from the vast number of other words arising in the course of the permutation.

To obviate, therefore, the exceeding difficulty of deciphering this species of cryptograph, on the part of the possessors of the key-phrase, and to confine the deep intricacy of the puzzle to those for whom the cipher was not designed, it becomes necessary that some *order* should be agreed upon by the parties corresponding, — some order in reference to which those characters are to be read which represent more than one letter — and this *order* must be held in view by the writer of the cryptograph. It may be agreed, for example, that the *first* time an *i* occurs in the cipher, it is to be understood as representing that character which stands against the *first i* in the key-phrase, that the *second* time an *i* occurs it must be supposed to represent that letter which stands opposed to the *second i* in the key-phrase, &c. &c. Thus the *location* of each cipherical letter must be considered in connection with the character itself in order to determine its exact signification.

We say that some preconcerted *order* of this kind is necessary, lest the cipher prove too intricate a lock to yield even to its true key. But it will be evident, upon inspection, that our correspondent at Stonington has inflicted upon us a cryptograph in which *no* order

has been preserved; in which many characters respectively stand, at absolute random, for many others. If, therefore, in regard to the gauntlet we threw down in April, he should be half-inclined to accuse us of braggadocio, he will yet admit that we have *more* than acted up to our boast. If what we then said was not said *suaviter in modo*, what we now do is at least done *fortiter in re*.

In these cursory observations we have by no means attempted to exhaust the subject of Cryptography. With such object in view, a folio might be required. We have, indeed, mentioned only a few of the ordinary modes of cipher. Even two thousand years ago, Æneas Tacticus detailed twenty distinct methods; and modern ingenuity had added much to the science. Our design has been chiefly suggestive; and perhaps we have already bored the readers of the Magazine. To those who desire farther information upon this topic, we may say that there are extant treatises by Trithemius, Cap. Porta, Vigenere, and P. Nicéron. The works of the two latter may be found, we believe, in the library of the Harvard University. If, however, there should be sought in these disquisitions — or in any — *rules for the solution* of cipher, the seeker will be disappointed. Beyond some hints in regard to the general structure of language, and some minute exercises in their practical application, he will find nothing upon record which he does not in his own intellect possess.

SECRET WRITING.

[Addendum to "A Few Words on Secret Writing," *Graham's Magazine*, August, 1841.]

Our remarks on this head, in the July number, have excited much interest. The subject is unquestionably one of importance, when we regard cryptography as an exercise for the analytical faculties. In this view, men of the finest abilities have given it much of their attention; and the invention of a perfect cipher was a point to which Lord Chancellor Bacon devoted many months; — devoted them in vain, for the cryptograph which he has thought worthy a place in his *De Augmentis*, is one which can be solved.

Just as we were going to press with the last sheet of this number, we received the following letter from F. W. Thomas, Esq., (of Washington,) the well-known author of "Clinton Bradshaw," "Howard Pinckney," &c. &c.

My dear Sir: — The enclosed cryptograph is from a friend of mine (Dr. Frailey,) who thinks he can puzzle you. If you decipher it, then are you a magician, for he has used, as I think, the greatest art in making it. Your friend,

F. W. Thomas.

£ 7i A itagi niinbiiit thitvuiaib9g h auehbiif b ivgiht itau ☛ gvuiitiif 4 t$bt2ihtbo £iiiiadb9 iignit£d i2 ta5ta whbo ttbibtiii†it9 A iti if X hti 4 ithtt ☛ i‡

bnniathubii iSt b eaovuhoSu vtt7diboif * iti nihd6Xht na3ig an choo$ht u‡tnvotigg2 iibtvo$if b Eaovu£avg iinoht$h7 niau iti vtheiigbo iit6 A itagi t7iitig h fifvti iti gvugidviti bubodbub9 A tiiiiaditiavg nbttg iStavi fvuhiiu £thnhiti niiiit8 † bni 4 iiiu£$i ht d£bo evodbiSa ‡ nbiivihiti uavtib£g ibei—it dbuvo$if ia niafvti uvgtvnvobi buai9g uii iti £giSv9 i2 gvuiiti A uu iiubisg ibg tai—it iStavi tbvgi iti itiui A i2 intiuiiibo taovutg an dvaihfh¶ iavitbog ¶f a ititvghbgight ittauh$h7g ht t7eiigb9bo £iiitavigi.

This cipher is printed precisely as we received it, with the exception that we have substituted, for convenience sake, in some instances, characters that we have in the office, for others that we have not. Of course, as these characters are substituted *throughout*, the cryptograph is not affected.

By return of mail we sent the solution to Mr. Thomas; but as the cipher is an exceedingly ingenious one, we forbear publishing its translation here, and prefer testing the ability of our readers to solve it. *We will give a year's subscription to the Magazine, and also a year's subscription to the Saturday Evening Post, to any person, or rather to the first person who shall read us this riddle.* We have no expectation that it will be read; and, therefore, should the month pass without an answer forthcoming, we will furnish the key to the cipher, and again offer a year's subscription to the Magazine, to any person who shall solve it *with the key.*

Lest the tenor of our observations on Cryptography should be misunderstood, and especially lest the nature of our challenge should be misconceived, we take occasion to refer to our Review of Mr. Walsh's "Sketches

of Conspicuous Living Characters of France," published in the April number of the Magazine. M. Berryer, the French Minister, is there said to have displayed the highest ingenuity in the solution of a cipher addressed by the Duchess of Berri to the legitimists of Paris, but of which she had neglected to furnish the key. Berryer discovered this to be the phrase "Le gouvernement provisoire." Beneath this sentence the alphabet had been placed, letter for letter; and thus when *a* was intended *l* was written, when *b* was meant *e* was substituted, and so on throughout. This species of cryptograph is justly considered very difficult. We remarked, however, that we would engage to read any one *of the kind*; and to this limit our correspondents must confine themselves. To be sure, we said, in our last number that "human ingenuity could not construct a cipher which human ingenuity could not resolve" — but then we do not propose, just now, to make ourselves individually the test of "human ingenuity" in general. We do not propose to solve *all* ciphers. Whether we can or cannot do this is a question for another day — a day when we have more leisure than at present we have any hope of enjoying. The most simple cryptograph requires, in its solution, labor, patience, and much time. We therefore abide by the limits of our cartel. It is true that in attempting the perusal of Dr. Frailey's we have exceeded these limits by very much; but we were seduced into the endeavor to read it by the decided manner in which an opinion was expressed that we could not.

E. St. J. will observe that his cipher includes every letter of the natural alphabet. Then (admitting it to be a cipher of the kind proposed) his key-phrase must contain every letter of the natural alphabet. In such

case no letter of the phrase can stand *for more than one* of the alphabet, and the whole would be nothing more than a simple cipher, where the natural characters are represented, invariably and respectively, by arbitrary ones. But in this supposition there could be no such words as *ll*, *&c.* — words seen in the cryptograph. *Therefore*, his cipher is *not* within the limits prescribed — Q. E. D. We do not say that we *cannot* solve it, but that we will not make the attempt. This for the obvious reasons above assigned.

P.S. We have just received the annexed letter from Mr. Thomas, enclosing one from Dr. Frailey:

WASHINGTON, July 6th, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,

This morning I received yours of yesterday, deciphering the "cryptograph" which I sent you last week, from my friend, Doctor Frailey. You request that I would obtain the Doctor's acknowledgment of your solution. I have just received the enclosed from him.

Doctor Frailey had heard me speak of your having deciphered a letter which our mutual friend, Dow, wrote upon a challenge from you last year, at my lodgings in your city, when Aaron Burr's correspondence in cipher was the subject of our conversation. You laughed at what you termed Burr's shallow artifice, and said you could decipher any such cryptography easily. To test you on the spot, Dow withdrew to the corner of the room, and wrote a letter in cipher, which you solved in a much shorter time than it took him to indite it.

As Doctor Frailey seemed to doubt your skill to the extent of my belief in it, when your article on

"Secret Writing" appeared in the last number of your Magazine, I showed it to him. After reading it, he remarked that he thought he could puzzle you, and the next day he handed me the cryptograph which I transmitted to you. He did not tell me the key.

The uncommon nature of this article, of which I gave you not the slightest hint, made me express to you my strong doubts of your ability to make the solution. I confess that your solution, so speedily and correctly made, surprised me. I congratulate myself that I do not live in an age when the black art is believed in, for, innocent as I am of all knowledge of cryptography, I should be arrested as an accessory before the fact, and, though I escaped, it is certain that you would have to die the death, and alas! I fear upon my testimony.

Your friend,

F. W. Thomas.

Edgar A. Poe, Esq.

Washington, July 6th, 1841.

Dear Sir,

It gives me pleasure to state that the reading, by Mr. Poe, of the cryptograph which I gave you a few days since for transmission to him, is correct. I am the more astonished at this since . . . (We omit the remainder of the letter, since it enters into details which would give our readers some clue to the cipher.)

As ever, yours, &c.,

Chas. S. Frailey.

F. W. Thomas.

SECRET WRITING.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, October, 1841.]

On the tenth of August, a letter addressed to us by some gentleman who had assumed the *nom de guerre* of Timotheus Whackemwell, was received at this office, from Baltimore. It enclosed a cipher, and says, "if you succeed with it I will set you down as perfect in the art." Thinking that in the chirography we recognized the hand of our friend, Mr. J. N. McJilton, of Baltimore, we addressed *him* by return of mail, with the solution desired. Mr. McJilton, it appears, however, was not the correspondent. The solution ran thus —

"This specimen of secret writing is sent you for explanation. If you succeed in divining its meaning, I will believe that you are some kin to Old Nick."

Mr. Whackemwell, whoever or whatever he is, will acknowledge this reading to be correct.

The cipher submitted through Mr. F. W. Thomas, by Dr. Frailey, of Washington, and deciphered by us, also in return of mail, as stated in our August number, has not yet been read by any of our innumerable readers. We now append its solution, together with the whole of that letter of the Doctor's, of which we gave only a portion in the August number.

SOLUTION.

In one of those peripatetic circumrotations I obviated a rustic whom I subjected to catechetical interrogation

respecting the nosocomical characteristics of the edifice to which I was approximate. With a volubility uncongealed by the frigorific powers of villatic bashfulness, he ejaculated a voluminous replication from the universal tenor of whose contents I deduce the subsequent amalgamation of heterogeneous facts. Without dubiety incipient pretension is apt to terminate in final vulgarity, as parturient mountains have been fabulated to produce muscupular abortions. The institution the subject of my remarks, has not been without cause the theme of the ephemeral columns of quotidian journalism, and enthusiastic encomiations in conversational intercourse.

The key to this cipher is as follows: *But find this out and I give it up.*

The appended letter, however, from Dr. Frailey, will show the means used by him to embarrass the reading. Arbitrary characters were made to stand for whole words. When we take this circumstance into consideration, with other facts mentioned in the letter, and regard also the nonsensical character of the phraseology employed, we shall be the better enabled to appreciate the extreme difficulty of the puzzle.

WASHINGTON, July 6, 1841.

DEAR SIR,

It gives me pleasure to state that the reading by Mr. Poe of the cryptograph which I gave you a few days since for transmission to him is correct.

I am the more astonished at this, since for various words of two, three and four letters, a distinct character was used for each in order to prevent the discovery of some of those words, by their frequent

repetition in a cryptograph of any length and applying them to other words. I also used a distinct character for the terminations *tion* and *sion*, and substituted in every word where it was possible, some of the characters above alluded to. Where the same word of two of those letters occurred frequently, the letters of the key phrase and the characters were alternately used, to increase the difficulty.

As ever, yours, &c..

CHAS. S. FRAILEY.

To F. W. THOMAS, ESQ.

SECRET WRITING

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, December, 1841.]

THE annexed letter from a gentleman whose abilities we very highly respect, was received, unfortunately, at too late a period to appear in our November number.

DEAR SIR,

I should perhaps apologize for again intruding a subject upon which you have so ably commented, and which may be supposed by this time to have been almost exhausted; but as I have been greatly interested in the articles upon "cryptography," which have appeared in your Magazine, I think that you will excuse the present intrusion of a few remarks. With secret writing I have been practically conversant for several years, and I have found both in correspondence and in the preservation of private memoranda, the frequent benefit of its peculiar virtues. I have thus a record of thoughts, feelings and occurrences, — a history of my

mental existence, to which I may turn, and in imagination, retrace former pleasures, and again live through by-gone scenes, — secure in the conviction that the magic scroll has a tale for *my* eye alone. Who has not longed for such a confidante?

Cryptography is, indeed, not only a topic of mere curiosity but is of general interest, as furnishing an excellent exercise for mental discipline, and of high *practical* importance on various occasions: — to the statesman and the general — to the scholar and the traveller, — and, may I not add "last though not least," to the *lover?* What can be so delightful amid the trials of absent lovers, as a secret intercourse between them of their hopes and fears, — safe from the prying eyes of some old aunt, or it may be, of a perverse and *cruel* guardian? — a *billet doux* that will not betray its mission, even if intercepted, and that can "tell no tales" if lost, or, (which *sometimes* occurs,) if *stolen* from its violated depository.

In the solution of the various ciphers which have been submitted to your examination, you have exhibited a power of analytical and synthetical reasoning I have never seen equalled; and the astonishing skill you have displayed, — particularly in deciphering the cryptograph of Dr. Charles S. Frailey, will, I think, crown you the king of "secret-readers." But notwithstanding this, I think your opinion that the construction of a *real cryptograph* is impossible, not sufficiently supported. These examples which you have published have indeed not been of that character, as you have fully proved. They have, moreover, not been sufficiently accurate, for where the key was a phrase, (and consequently the same character was employed for several letters,) different words would be formed with the

same ciphers. The sense could then only be ascertained from the context, and this would amount to a probability — generally of a high degree, I admit — but still not to a positive certainty. Nay, a case might readily be imagined, where the most important word of the communication, and one on which the sense of the whole depended, should have so equivocal a nature, that the person for whose benefit it was intended, would be unable, even with the aid of his key, to discover which of two very different interpretations should be the correct one. If necessary, this can easily be shown; thus, for example, suppose a lady hould receive from her affianced, a letter written in ciphers, containing this sentence, "4 5663 967 268 26 3633," and that *a* and *n* were represented by the figure 2, — *e*, *m*, and *r* by 3, — *i* by 4, — *l* by 5, — *o*, *s*, and *v* by 6, — *u* by 7, — *w* by 8, — and *y* by 9; a moment's inspection will show that the sentence might either be "I love you now as ever," or "I love you now *no more*." How "positively shocking," to say the least of it; and yet several of the ciphers that you have published have required a greater number of letters to be represented by one character, than any to be found in the example before us. It is evident, then, that this is not a very desirable system, as it would scarcely be more useful than a lock without its key, or with one that did not fit its wards.

I think, however, that there are various methods by which a hieroglyphic might be formed, whose meaning would be perfectly "hidden;" and I shall give one or two examples of what I consider such. A method which I have adopted for my own private use, is one which I am satisfied is of this nature, as it cannot possibly be solved without the assistance of its key,

and that key, by which *alone* it can be unlocked, exists only in my mind; at the same time it is so simple, that with the practice in it which I have had, I now read it, and write it, with as much facility as I can the English character. As I prefer not giving it here, I shall be compelled to have recourse to some other plan that is more complicated. By a CRYPTOGRAPH, I understand — a communication which, though *clearly* ascertained by means of its proper key, cannot possibly be without it. To most persons, who have not thought much upon the subject, an article written in simple cipher, (by which I mean with each letter uniformly represented by a single distinct character,) would appear to be an impenetrable mystery; and they would doubtless imagine that the more complicated the method of constructing such a cipher, the more *insoluble* — to use a chemical expression — would be the puzzle, since so much less would be the chance of discovering its key. This very natural conclusion is, however, erroneous, as it is founded on the supposition that possession must first be obtained of the key, in order to unravel the difficulty, — which is not the case. The process of reasoning employed in resolving "secret writing" has not the slightest relation to the form or description of the characters used, but refers simply to their succession, and to a comparison of words in which the same letters occur. By these means any cipher of this nature can be unriddled as experience has fully shown. A very successful method of avoiding detection, would be to apply the simple cipher to words written backwards and continuously. This, I conceive, might be called a perfect cryptograph, since from the want of spaces, and consequently the impossibility of comparing words, it would utterly perplex the person attempting to dis-

cover its hidden import, and yet with the help of the key, each letter being known, the words could easily be separated and inverted. I give a short specimen of this style, and would feel much gratified with your opinion of the possibility of reading it.

,†§:‡] [,?‡),[¡¶?,†,)¡,§[¶‖,:¶![
§(,†§¡‖(?‡?,**(‡‡¡([,¶*.‡[§¡¶§¡
¶]¿,†§[?(§[::(†[.‡(*;(‖(,†§¡‡[*
:,]![¶†‖]?*![¶‡†§¶‖,*(†¡(,?‡§(¡
¡¶[?(,;§‡ ‡]†§§:(†[†[¶?‡]:
*¡¶:(§?]![¶†§‡];§?‡†¡‡‡¶![,†§?(‖
][§¡'¡,:,,†§),?‖]?,§§(![‡¡(,
†§†[‡!)*][‡:?]‖

Should this not be considered *perfect*, (though I suspect it would puzzle even the ingenious editor to detect its meaning,) I shall give another method below, which I can show *must* be, and if I am successful I think you will do me the justice to admit that "human ingenuity" has contrived "a cipher which human ingenuity cannot resolve." I wish to be distinctly understood; the secret communication above, and the one following, are not intended to show that you have promised more than you can perform. I do not take up the gauntlet. Your challenge, I am happy to testify, has been more than amply redeemed. It is merely with an incidental remark of yours, that I am at present engaged, and my object is to show that however correct it may be generally, — it is not so universally.

Agreeably to a part of my foregoing definition, *that* cannot be a proper cryptograph, in which a single

character is made to represent more than one letter. Let us for a moment see what would be the result if this was reversed, — that is, if more than one cipher were used for a single letter. In case each letter were represented by two different characters, (used alternately or at random,) it is evident that while the certainty of reading such a composition correctly, by help of the key, would not be at all diminished, the difficulty of its solution without that help, would be vastly increased. This then is an approach to the formation of a secret cipher. If, now, the number of the characters were extended to three or four for each letter, it might be pronounced with tolerable certainty that such a writing would be "secret." Or, to take an extreme case, a communication might be made, in which no two characters would be alike! Here all reasoning would be entirely baffled, as there would evidently be no objects of *comparison;* and even if half a dozen words were known, they would furnish no clue to the rest. Here, then, is a complete *non plus* to investigation, and we have arrived at a perfect cryptograph. For, since any given cipher would stand for but one letter in the key, there could be but a single and definite solution; and thus both conditions of my definition are fully satisfied. In the following specimen of this method, I have employed the Roman-capital, small letter, and small capital, with their several inversions, giving me the command of 130 characters, or an average of five to each letter. This is to "make assurance doubly sure," for I am satisfied that were an average of three characters used for each letter, such a writing would be emphatically secret. If you will be so kind as to give my cipher a place in your interesting Magazine, I will immediately forward you its key. Hoping

that you will not be displeased with my tedious letter,

I am most respectfully yours,

W. B. Tyler.

To Edgar A. Poe, Esq.

Dr Tix OGXEW PjqFyA NgUH TIA VQSMGd
xdTbjs SNB esAtNKgYQ JCP TAol HqZcucC
LLIIJf Rf NqDdL AWO hjfXIxFxIRf gaHAYEa Ta
QJETBXPeE yGMdUd gA SJAA nvZ TCGDYRC
DHB AFKxDGf ZcNsMEJJ lR OIJO IJO zQh Mfc
wcVIecXHB YmL NxU AFKsO iyBJDV bqgpEq
SPZl CEWNSW bGerth aNjmx aaYhyAes YaTAkIXDIx
gw JCq Pl Kr oFQA LRYDN qDOTY xcr O IJO JJrBGP
SEB DNBLQu LpH NJnJA atgz dikY WAo cEpnuXyA
yxJZ eIf xMx xYKSsG HJitAW QgP qTrc DBYj xvv
Udscame nk VFHA lDah XMXTIax Ye Ai aqFqW
XQcNKUxMxxx gs B AGOiA uuey rpc GIOQgg
NBLEmMQ nk LcoBB SAIBFJgl NZQ dgrjq ydugf
RZnK Cxe xL WIX JDMNYrUFQx GDHYBRi
bzNL LBTdh FW esToYdx TIA VRdMFTv
VAHdTP dHB NNGJ cW mUYJJuf JVD qphx
xySXtC gs AmL LQIgmxvx cW NJUiKA Mp
AGGb MJG xRNwQ cmr jrz xHOEl xSxWtB
CFo Jo yx fjeo IDBTSTP jxz VnkAqdo TCLXh
qdJW qcJFep ludpA K vdTA x gxRpEo utx AJYI
Kj emy iw GDx

[The difficulty attending the cipher by key-phrase, viz: that the same characters may convey various meanings — is a difficulty upon which we commented in our first article upon this topic, and more lately at greater length in a private letter to our friend, F. W. Thomas,

The key-phrase cryptograph is, in fact, altogether inadmissible. The labor requisite for its elucidation, *even with the key*, would, alone, render it so. Lord Bacon very properly defines three *essentials* in secret correspondence. It is required, first, that the cipher be such as to elude suspicion of being a cipher; secondly, that its alphabet be so simple of formation as to demand but little time in the construction of an epistle; thirdly, that it shall be absolutely insoluble without the key — we may add, fourthly, that, with the key, it be promptly and *certainly* decipherable.

Admitting, now, that the ingenious cryptograph proposed by our correspondent be abolutely what he supposes it, impenetrable, it would still, we think, be inadmissible on the first point above stated and more so on the second. But of its impenetrability we are by no means sure, notwithstanding what, at a cursory glance, appears to be the *demonstration* of the writer. In the key-phrase cipher an arbitrary character is sometimes made to represent five, six, seven, or even more letters. Our correspondent proposes merely to reverse the operation: — and this simple statement of the case will do more towards convincing him of his error than an elaborate argument, for which he would neither have time, nor our readers patience. In a key-phrase cryptograph, equally as in his own, each discovery is *independent*, not necessarily affording any clue to farther discovery. Neither is the idea of our friend, although highly ingenious, philosophical, and unquestionably original with him, (since he so assures us,) original *in itself*. It is one of the many systems tried by Dr. Wallis and found wanting. Perhaps no good cipher was *ever* invented which its originator did not conceive insoluble; yet, so far, no impenetrable crypto-

graph has been discovered. Our correspondent will be the less startled at this, our assertion, when he bears in mind that he who has been termed the "wisest of mankind" — we mean Lord Verulam — was as confident of the absolute insolubility of his own mode as our present cryptographist is of his. What he said upon the subject in his *De Augmentis* was, at the day of its publication, considered unanswerable. Yet his cipher has been repeatedly unriddled. We may say, in addition, that the nearest approach to perfection in this matter, is the *chiffre quarré* of the French Academy. This consists of a table somewhat in the form of our ordinary multiplication tables, from which the secret to be conveyed is so written that no letter is ever represented twice by the same character. Out of a thousand individuals nine hundred and ninety-nine would at once pronounce this mode inscrutable. It is yet susceptible, under peculiar circumstances, of prompt and certain solution.

Mr. T. will have still less confidence in his hastily adopted opinions on this topic when we assure him, from personal experience, that what he says in regard to writing backwards and continuously without intervals between the words — is all wrong. So far from "utterly perplexing the decipherer," it gives him no difficulty, legitimately so called — merely taxing to some extent his patience. We refer him to the files of "Alexander's Weekly Messenger," for 1839 — where he will see that we read numerous ciphers of the class described, even when very ingenious *additional* difficulties were interposed. We say, in brief, that we should have little trouble in reading the one now proposed.

"Here," says our friend, referring to another point, "all reasoning would be entirely baffled, as there would evidently be no objects of *comparison*." This sentence

assures us that he is laboring under much error in his conception of cipher solutions. *Comparison* is a vast *aid* unquestionably; but not an absolute *essential* in the elucidation of these mysteries.

We need not say, however, that this object is an excessively wide one. Our friend will forgive us for not entering into details which would lead us — God knows whither. The ratiocination actually passing through the mind in the solution of even a single cryptograph, if detailed step by step, would fill a large volume. Our time is much occupied, and notwithstanding the limits originally placed to our cartel, we have found ourselves overwhelmed with communications on this subject, and must close it, perforce — deeply interesting as we find it. To this resolution we had arrived last month; but the calm and truly ingenious reasoning of our correspondent has induced us to say these few words more. We print his cipher — with no promise to attempt its solution ourselves — much as we feel inclined to make the promise — and to keep it. Some of our hundred thousand readers will, no doubt, take up the gauntlet thrown down; and our pages shall be open for any communication on the subject, which shall not tax our own abilities or time.

In speaking of our hundred thousand readers (and we can scarcely suppose the number to be less), we are reminded that of this vast number one, and only one has succeeded in solving the cryptograph of Dr. Frailey. The honor of the solution, is however, due to Mr. Richard Bolton, of Pontotoc, Mississippi. His letter did not reach us until three weeks after the completion of our November number, in which we should, otherwise, have acknowledged it.

BYRON AND MISS CHAWORTH.

[Text: *Columbian Magazine*, December 1844.]

"Les anges," says Madame Dudevant, a woman who intersperses many an admirable sentiment amid a chaos of the most shameless and altogether objectionable fiction — "*Les anges ne sont plus pures que le cœur d'un jeune homme qui aime en vérité.*" The angels are not more pure than the heart of a young man who loves with fervor.

The hyperbole is scarcely less than true. It would be truth itself, were it averred of the love of him who is at the same time young and a poet. The boyish poet-love is indisputably that one of the human sentiments which most nearly realizes our dreams of the chastened voluptuousness of heaven.

In every allusion made by the author of "Childe Harold" to his passion for Mary Chaworth, there runs a vein of almost spiritual tenderness and purity, strangely in contrast with the gross earthliness pervading and disfiguring his ordinary love poems. The Dream, in which the incidents of his parting with her when about to travel, are said to be delineated, or at least paralleled, has never been excelled (certainly never excelled by him) in the blended fervor, delicacy, truthfulness and ethereality which sublimate and adorn it. For this reason, it may well be doubted if he has written anything so universally popular.

That his attachment for this "Mary" (in whose very name there indeed seemed to exist for him an

"enchantment") was earnest and long-abiding, we have every reason to believe. There are a hundred evidences of this fact, scattered not only through his own poems and letters, but in the memoirs of his relatives, and contemporaries in general. But that it *was* thus earnest and enduring, does not controvert, in any degree, the opinion that it was a passion (if passion it can properly be termed) of the most thoroughly romantic, shadowy, and imaginative character. It was born of the hour, and of the youthful necessity to love, while it was nurtured by the waters and the hills, and the flowers and the stars. It had no peculiar regard to the person, or to the character, or to the reciprocating affection of Mary Chaworth. Any maiden, not immediately and positively repulsive, he would have loved, under the same circumstances of hourly and unrestricted communion, such as our engraving shadows forth. They met without restraint and without reserve. As mere children they sported together; in boyhood and girlhood they read from the same books, sang the same songs, or roamed, hand in hand, through the grounds of the conjoining estates. The result was not merely natural or merely probable, it was as inevitable as destiny itself.

In view of a passion thus engendered, Miss Chaworth, (who is represented as possessed of no little personal beauty and some accomplishments,) could not have failed to serve sufficiently well as the incarnation of the ideal that haunted the fancy of the poet. It is perhaps better, nevertheless, for the mere romance of the love-passages between the two, that their intercourse was broken up in early life and never uninterruptedly resumed in after years. Whatever of warmth, whatever of soul-passion, whatever of the truer nare

and essentiality of romance was elicited during the youthful association is to be attributed altogether to the poet. If *she* felt at all, it was only while the magnetism of *his* actual presence compelled her to feel. If *she* responded at all, it was merely because the necromancy of *his* words of fire could not do otherwise than exhort a response. In absence, the bard bore easily with him all the fancies which were the basis of his flame — a flame which absence itself but served to keep in vigor — while the less ideal but at the same time the less really substantial affection of his ladye-love, perished utterly and forthwith, through simple lack of the element which had formed it into being. He to her, in brief, was a not unhandsome, and not ignoble, but somewhat portionless, somewhat eccentric and rather lame young man. She to him was the Egeria of his dreams — the Venus Aphrodite that sprang, in full and supernal loveliness, from the bright foam upon the storm-tormented ocean of his thoughts.

NOTE. — This essay faces an engraving of Byron and Miss Chaworth. — ED.

ANASTATIC PRINTING.

[Text: *Broadway Journal*, I., 15.]

It is admitted by every one that of late there has been a rather singular invention, called Anastatic Printing, and that this invention may possibly lead, in the course of time, to some rather remarkable results — among which the one chiefly insisted upon, is the abolition of the ordinary stereotyping process: — but this seems to be the amount, in America at least, of distinct understanding on this subject.

"There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, "without some strangeness in the proportions." The philosopher had reference, here, to beauty in its common acceptation; but the remark is equally applicable to all the forms of beauty — that is to say, to everything which arouses profound interest in the heart or intellect of man. In every such thing, strangeness — in other words *novelty* — will be found a principal element; and so universal is this law that it has no exception even in the case of this principal element itself. Nothing, unless it be novel — *not even novelty itself* — will be the source of very intense excitement among men. Thus the *ennuyé* who travels in the hope of dissipating his *ennui* by the perpetual succession of novelties, will invariably be disappointed in the end. He receives the impression of novelty so continuously that it is at length no novelty to receive it. And the man, in general, of the nineteenth century — more especially of our own particular epoch of it — is very much in the

predicament of the traveller in question. We are so habituated to new inventions, that we no longer get from newness the vivid interest which should appertain to the new — and no example could be adduced more distinctly showing that the *mere* importance of a novelty will not suffice to gain for it universal attention, than we find in the invention of *Anastatic Printing*. It excites not one fiftieth part of the comment which was excited by the comparatively frivolous invention of Sennefelder; — but he lived in the good old days when a novelty was novel. Nevertheless, while Lithography opened the way for a very agreeable pastime, it is the province of Anastatic Printing to revolutionize the world.

By means of this discovery anything written, drawn, or printed, can be made to stereotype itself, with absolute accuracy, in five minutes.

Let us take, for example, a page of this Journal; supposing only one side of the leaf to have printing on it. We dampen the leaf with a certain acid diluted, and then place it between two leaves of blotting-paper to absorb superfluous moisture. We then place the printed side in contact with a zinc plate that lies on the table. The acid in the interspaces between the letters, immediately corrodes the zinc, but the acid on the letters themselves, has no such effect, having been neutralized by the ink. Removing the leaf at the end of five minutes, we find a reversed copy, in slight relief, of the printing on the page; — in other words, we have a stereotype-plate, from which we can print a vast number of absolute facsimiles of the original printed page — which latter has not been at all injured in the process — that is to say, we can still produce from it (or from any impression of the stereotype-plate) new stereotype-plates *ad libitum*. Any engraving, or any pen-and-ink

drawing, or any MS. can be stereotyped in precisely the same manner.

The *facts* of the invention are established. The process is in successful operation both in London and Paris. We have seen several specimens of printing done from the plates described, and have now lying before us a leaf (from the London 'Art-Union') covered with drawing, MS., letter-press, and impressions from wood-cuts, — the whole printed from the Anastatic stereotypes, and warranted by the 'Art-Union' to be absolute *facsimiles* of the originals.

The process can scarcely be regarded as a *new* invention, — and appears to be rather the modification and successful application of two or three previously ascertained principles — those of etching, electrography, lithography, etc. It follows from this that there will be much difficulty in establishing or maintaining a right of patent, and the probability is that the benefits of the process will soon be thrown open to the world. As to the secret — it can only be a secret in name.

That the discovery (if we may so call it) has been made can excite no surprise in any thinking person — the only matter for surprise is, that it has not been made many years ago. The obviousness of the process, however, in no degree lessens its importance. Indeed its inevitable results enkindle the imagination, and embarrass the understanding.

Every one will perceive, at once, that the ordinary process of stereotyping will be abolished. Through this ordinary process, a publisher, to be sure, is enabled to keep on hand the means of producing edition after edition of any work the certainty of whose sale will justify the cost of stereotyping — which is trifling *in comparison* with that of re-setting the matter. But

still, *positively*, this cost (of stereotyping) is great. Moreover, there cannot always be certainty about sales. Publishers frequently are forced to re-set works which they have neglected to stereotype, thinking them unworthy the expense; and many excellent works are not published at all, because small editions do not pay, and the anticipated sales will not warrant the cost of stereotype. *Some* of these difficulties will be at once remedied by the Anastatic Printing, and *all* will be remedied in a brief time. A publisher has only to print as many copies as are immediately demanded. He need print no more than a dozen, indeed, unless he feels perfectly confident of success. Preserving *one* copy, he can from this, at no other cost than that of the zinc, produce with any desirable rapidity, as many impressions as he may think proper. Some idea of the advantages thus accruing may be gleaned from the fact that in several of the London publishing warehouses there is deposited in stereotype plates alone, property to the amount of a million sterling.

The next view of the case, in point of obviousness, is, that, if necessary, a hundred thousand impressions per hour, or even infinitely more, can be taken of any newspaper, or similar publication. As many presses can be put in operation as the occasion may require: — indeed there can be no limit to the number of copies producible, provided we have no limit to the number of presses.

The tendency of all this to cheapen information, to diffuse knowledge and amusement, and to bring before the public the very class of works which are most valuable, but least in circulation on account of unsaleability — is what need scarcely be suggested to any one. But benefits such as these are merely the im-

mediate and most obvious — by no means the most important.

For some years, perhaps, the strong spirit of conventionality — of conservatism — will induce authors in general to have recourse, as usual, to the setting of type. A printed book, *now*, is more sightly, and more legible, than any MS. and for some years the idea will not be overthrown that this state of things is one of necessity. But by degrees it will be remembered that, while MS. was a *necessity*, men wrote after such fashion that no books printed in modern times have surpassed their MSS. either in accuracy or in beauty. This consideration will lead to the cultivation of a neat and distinct style of handwriting — for authors will perceive the immense advantage of giving their own manuscripts directly to the public without the expensive interference of the type-setter, and the often ruinous intervention of the publisher. All that a man of letters need do, will be to pay some attention to legibility of MS., arrange his pages to suit himself, and stereotype them instantaneously, as arranged. He may intersperse them with his own drawings, or with anything to please his own fancy, in the certainty of being fairly brought before his readers, with all the freshness of his original conception about him.

And at this point we are arrested by a consideration of infinite moment, although of a seemingly shadowy character. The cultivation of accuracy in MS., thus enforced, will tend with an inevitable impetus to every species of improvement in *style* — more especially in the points of concision and distinctness — and this again, in a degree even more noticeable, to precision of thought, and luminous arrangement of matter. There is a very peculiar and easily intelligible reciprocal influence be-

tween the thing written and the manner of writing — but the latter has the predominant influence of the two. The more remote effect on philosophy at large, which will inevitably result from improvement of style and thought in the points of concision, distinctness, and accuracy, need only be suggested to be conceived.

As a consequence of attention being directed to neatness and beauty of MS., the antique profession of the scribe will be revived, affording abundant employment to women — their delicacy of organization fitting them peculiarly for such tasks. The female amanuensis, indeed, will occupy very nearly the position of the present male type-setter, whose industry will be diverted perforce into other channels.

These considerations are of vital importance — but there is yet one beyond them all. The value of every book is a compound of its literary value and its physical or mechanical value as the product of physical labor applied to the physical material. But at present the latter value immensely predominates, even in the works of the most esteemed authors. It will be seen, however, that the new condition of things will at once give the ascendency to the literary value, and thus by their literary values will books come to be estimated among men. The wealthy gentleman of elegant leisure will lose the vantage-ground now afforded him, and will be forced to tilt on terms of equality with the poordevil author. At present the literary world is a species of anomalous Congress, in which the majority of the members are constrained to listen in silence while all the eloquence proceeds from a privileged few. In the new *régime*, the humblest will speak as often and as freely as the most exalted, and will be sure of receiving

just that amount of attention which the intrinsic merit of their speeches may deserve.

From what we have said it will be evident that the discovery of Anastatic Printing will not only not obviate the necessity of copy-right laws, and of international law in especial, but will render this necessity more imperative and more apparent. It has been shown that in depressing the value of the *physique* of a book, the invention will proportionately elevate the value of its *morale*, and since it is the latter value alone which the copy-right laws are needed to protect, the necessity of the protection will be only the more urgent and more obvious than ever.

SOME SECRETS OF THE MAGAZINE PRISON-HOUSE.

[Text; *Broadway Journal*, I., 7.]

THE want of an International Copy-Right Law, by rendering it nearly impossible to obtain anything from the booksellers in the way of remuneration for literary labor, has had the effect of forcing many of our best writers into the service of the Magazines and Reviews, which with a pertinacity that does them credit, keep up in a certain or uncertain degree the good old saying, that even in the thankless field of Letters the laborer is worthy of his hire. How — by dint of what dogged instinct of the honest and proper, these journals have contrived to persist in their paying practices, in the very teeth of the opposition got up by the Fosters and Leonard Scotts, who furnish for eight dollars any four of the British periodicals for a year, is a point we have had much difficulty in settling to our satisfaction, and we have been forced to settle it, at last, upon no more reasonable ground than that of a still lingering *esprit de patrie*. That Magazines can live, and not only live but thrive, and not only thrive but afford to disburse money for original contributions, are facts which can only be solved, under the circumstances, by the really fanciful but still agreeable supposition, that there is somewhere still existing an ember not altogether quenched among the fires of good feeling for letters and literary men that once animated the American bosom.

It would *not do* (perhaps this is the idea) to let our

poor devil authors absolutely starve, while we grow fat, in a literary sense, on the good things of which we unblushingly pick the pocket of all Europe; it would not be exactly the thing *comme il faut*, to permit a positive atrocity of this kind, and hence we have Magazines, and hence we have a portion of the public who subscribe to these Magazines (through sheer pity), and hence we have Magazine publishers (who sometimes take upon themselves the duplicate title of "editor *and* proprietor,") — publishers, we say, who, under certain conditions of good conduct, occasional puffs, and decent subserviency at all times, make it a point of conscience to encourage the poor devil author with a dollar or two, more or less as he behaves himself properly and abstains from the indecent habit of turning up his nose.

We hope, however, that we are not so prejudiced or so vindictive as to insinuate that what certainly does look like illiberality on the part of them (the Magazine publishers) is really an illiberality chargeable to *them*. In fact, it will be seen at once, that what we have said has a tendency directly the reverse of any such accusation. These publishers pay *something* — other publishers nothing at all. Here certainly is a difference — although a mathematician might contend that the difference might be infinitesimally small. Still, these Magazine editors and proprietors *pay* (that is the word), and with your true poor devil author the smallest favors are sure to be thankfully received. No: the illiberality lies at the door of the demagogue-ridden public, who suffer their anointed delegates (or perhaps arointed — which is it?) to insult the common sense of them (the public) by making orations in our national halls on the beauty and conveniency of robbing the Lit-

erary Europe on the highway, and on the gross absurdity in especial of admitting so unprincipled a principle, that a man has any right and title either to his own brains or to the flimsy material that he chooses to spin out of them, like a confounded caterpillar as he is. If anything of this gossamer character stands in need of protection, why we have our hands full at once with the silk-worms and the *morus multicaulis*.

But if we cannot, under the circumstances, complain of the absolute illiberality of the Magazine publishers (since pay they do), there is at least one particular in which we have against them good grounds of accusation. Why (since pay they must) do they not pay with a good grace, and *promptly?* Were we in an ill humor at this moment, we could a tale unfold which would erect the hair on the head of Shylock. A young author, struggling with Despair itself in the shape of a ghastly poverty, which has no alleviation — no sympathy from an every-day world, that cannot understand his necessities, and that would pretend not to understand them if it comprehended them ever so well — this young author is politely requested to compose an article, for which he will "be handsomely paid." Enraptured, he neglects perhaps for a month the sole employment which affords him the chance of a livelihood, and having starved through the month (he and his family) completes at length the month of starvation and the article, and despatches the latter (with a broad hint about the former) to the pursy "editor" and bottle-nosed "proprietor" who has condescended to honor him (the poor devil) with his patronage. A month (starving still), and no reply. Another month — still none. Two months more — still none. A second letter, modestly hinting that the article may not

have reached its destination — still no reply. At the expiration of six additional months, personal application is made at the "editor's" and "proprietor's" office. Call again. The poor devil goes out, and does not fail to call again. Still call again; — and call again is the word for three or four months more. His patience exhausted, the article is demanded. No — he can't have it (the truth is, it was too good to be given up so easily) — "it is in print," and "contributions of this character are never paid for (it is a *rule* we have) under six months after publication. Call in six months after the issue of your affair, and your money is ready for you — for we are business men, ourselves — prompt." With this the poor devil is satisfied, and makes up his mind that the "editor and proprietor" is a gentleman, and that of course he (the poor devil) will wait as requested. And it is supposable that he would have waited if he could — but Death in the mean time would not. He dies, and by the good luck of his decease (which came by starvation) the fat "editor and proprietor" is fat henceforward and for ever to the amount of five and twenty dollars, very cleverly saved, to be spent generously in canvas-backs and champagne.

There are two things which we hope the reader will not do, as he runs over this article; first, we hope that he will not believe that we write from any personal experience of our own, for we have only the reports of actual sufferers to depend upon, and second, that he will not make any personal application of our remarks to any Magazine publisher now living, it being well known that they are all as remarkable for their generosity and urbanity, as for their intelligence, and appreciation of Genius.

STREET PAVING.

[Text: *Broadway Journal*, I. 16.]

THERE is, perhaps, no point in the history of the useful arts more remarkable than the fact, that during the last two thousand years, the world has been able to make no essential improvements in road-making. It may well be questioned if the Gothamites of 3845 will distinguish any traces of our Third Avenue: — and in the matter of street pavement, properly so called, although of late, universal attention has been directed to the subject, and experiment after experiment has been tried, exhausting the ingenuity of all modern engineers, it appears that we have at last settled on a result which differs in no material degree, and in principle not at all, from that which the Romans attained, as if instinctively, in the Via Appia, the Via Flaminia, the Via Valeria, the Via Tusculana, and others. There are streets in Pompeii to-day constructed on the very principle which is considered best by the moderns: or if there be any especial variation, it certainly is not to the credit of modern ingenuity.

The most durable and convenient of the Roman roads were thus composed: — The direction and breadth were first marked out by two shallow parallel furrows or trenches (sulci) from 15 to 8 feet apart, according to the importance of the *via*. The loose earth between the trenches was then taken away, and the soil farther removed until a sufficiently solid foundation was reached upon which to deposit the materials of the bed; if from

any cause, such as swampiness, no such natural basis was attainable, piles (fistucationes) were driven. Above the natural or artificial basis (the *gremium*) four strata were laid, of which the first (statumen) consisted of stones about three times the size of those employed by us in Macadamizing; next came the *rudus*, broken stones cemented with lime (answering to our rubble-work) — this was generally nine inches thick, and densely rammed. Then came the *nucleus* of broken earthenware, six inches thick, and also cemented with lime. Lastly came the true pavement (pavimentum), which was composed of irregular polygons of *silex*, commonly basaltic lava. These blocks, however, were fitted together with great nicety, and presented just such an appearance as do our best built polygonal stone walls. The centre of the way was slightly elevated, as with us, above the curbstones. Now and then, in cities, rectangular slabs of softer stone were substituted for the irregular lava polygons — and here the resemblance to the favorite modern mode was nearly complete. When the road or street passed over or through solid rock, the *statumen* and *rudus* were neglected, but the *nucleus* was never dispensed with. On each side of the way were elevated foot-paths, gravelled, and well-supported; and at regular intervals were stone blocks, corresponding to our own steps, for the convenience of horsemen or carriages. Our milestones were also employed.

We are aware that all this is very school-boyish information — but we venture to place it before our readers by way of fairly collating the ancient and modern ideas on the general topic of road-making, and by way, also, of insisting on the observation with which we commenced — that it is exceedingly remarkable how

little we have done to advance an art of so vast an importance, notwithstanding the continuous endeavors which have been made, and are still making, to advance it.

The Roman road (and our own quadrangular stone-block pavement is but a weak imitation of it) is beyond doubt exceedingly *durable;* and, *so far*, wherever the experiment has been tried, it has fully succeeded. By *so far* we mean so far as concerns durability. The objections are first, its cost, which is very great when the proper material is employed; and secondly the street *din* which is wrought by the necessity of having the upper surfaces of the blocks roughened, to afford a hold for the hoof. The noise from these roughened stones is less, certainly, than the *tintamarre* proceeding from the round ones — but nevertheless is intolerable still. The first objection (cost) is trivial where funds are at command; for in the end this species of pavement is the *cheapest* which has ever been invented, or probably ever will be invented — for repairs are scarcely needed at all. But it is *cheap* only in a save-at-the-spigot understanding of the term — for our second objection is one of a vital importance. The loss of time (not to mention temper) through the insufferable nuisance of street-noise in many of our most frequented thoroughfares, would overwhelm all reasonable people with astonishment if but once fairly and mathematically *put;* and that time *is* money — to an American at least — is a proposition not for an instant to be disputed. Nor have we dwelt upon the vast inconvenience, and often fatal injury resulting to invalids from the nuisance of which we complain — and of which all classes complain, without ever mentioning the necessity of getting it abated.

It is generally admitted, we believe, that as long as they last, the *wooden* pavements have the advantage over all others. They occasion little *noise* (we place this item first and are serious in so placing it as the most important consideration of all); they are kept clean with little labor; they save a great deal in horse power; they are pleasant to the hoof and thus save the health of the horse — as well as some twenty or thirty per cent. in the wear and tear of vehicles — and as much more, in time, to all travellers through the increased rapidity of passage to and fro.

The first objection is that of injury to the public health from *miasmata* arising from the wood. Whether such injury actually does occur is very questionable — but there is no need of mooting the question, since all admit that the source of *miasma* (decay) can be prevented. It is demonstrated that by the process very improperly called Kyanizing (since Kyan had not the slightest claim to the invention) even the greenest wood may be preserved for centuries, or if need be for a hundred, or far more. The experiments by which this effect is, as we say, demonstrated, have been tried in every variety of way, with nearly identical results. Blocks properly prepared, for example, were subjected for many years, in the fungus pit of the dockyard at Woolwich, England, to all the known decomposing agents which can ever naturally be brought to act against a wooden pavement, and yet were taken from the pit, at the close of the experiments, in as sound a condition as when originally deposited.

The preservative agent employed was that of corrosive sublimate — the Bi-Chloride of Mercury. Let a pound of the sublimate be dissolved in fifteen or sixteen gallons of water, and a piece of wood (not decayed)

be immersed for seventy-two hours in the solution, and the wood *cannot afterwards be rotted.* An instantaneous mineralization can be effected, if necessary, by injection of the fluid *in vacuo* into the pores of the wood. It is rendered much heavier, and more brittle by the process, and has altogether a slightly metallic character.

The cost of the Bi-chloride of Mercury is we presume, at present, something less than one dollar per pound — but the cost would be greatly reduced should the mineralizing process occasion an unusual demand. The South American quicksilver mines, now unworked, would be put into operation, and we should get the article, perhaps, for forty or even thirty cents per pound. But even now the cost of Kyanizing is trifling in comparison with that of cutting, squaring, and roughening stone — to say nothing of the difference in cost between wood itself, and such stone as our present pavements demand.

Decay being thus prevented, all danger from *miasma* is of course to be left out of the question; and although it has been frequently asserted that the mercurial *effluvium* is injurious to the health — the assertion has been as frequently refuted in the most positive and satisfactory manner. The mercury is too closely assimilated with the wooden fibre to admit of any perceptible *effluvium*. Even where sailors have lived for months in the most confined holds of vessels built of mineralized wood, no ill consequences have been found to arise.

We write this article with no books before us, and are by no means positive about the accuracy of our details. The general principles and facts, however, are not, we believe, matters of dispute. We confess

ourselves, therefore, at a loss to understand how, or why it is, that a Kyanized wooden pavement to a limited extent, has not been laid (if only by way of a forlorn-hope-like experiment) in some of our public thoroughfares. Or are we merely ignorant of the case — and has the experiment been fairly tried, and found wanting?

FIFTY SUGGESTIONS.[1]

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, May, June, 1845.]

I.

It is observable that, while among all nations the omni-color, white, has been received as an emblem of the Pure, the no-color, black, has by no means been generally admitted as *sufficiently* typical of Impurity. There are blue devils as well as black; and when we think *very* ill of a woman, and wish to *blacken* her character, we merely call her "a *blue*-stocking," and advise her to read, in Rabelais' "*Gargantua*," the chapter "*de ce qui est signifié par les couleurs blanc et bleu.*" There is far more difference between these "*couleurs*," in fact, than that which exists between simple *black* and white. Your "blue," when we come to talk of stockings, is black in *issimo* — "*nigrum nigrius nigro*" — like the matter from which Raymond Lully first manufactured his alcohol.

II.

Mr. ——, I perceive, has been appointed Librarian to the new —— Athenæum. To him, the appointment is advantageous in many respects. Especially: — "*Mon cousin, voici une belle occasion pour apprendre à lire!*"

[1] The title in Graham's; the Suggestions are numbered as above. — Ed.

III.

As far as I can understand the "loving our enemies," it implies the hating our friends.

IV.

In commencing our dinners with gravy soup, no doubt we have taken a hint from Horace —

——— Da, he says, si *grave* non est,
Quæ prima iratum ventrem placaverit iusa.

V.

Of much of our cottage architecture we may safely say, I think, (admitting the good intention,) that it *would* have been Gothic if it had not felt it its duty to be Dutch.

VI.

James's multitudinous novels seem to be written upon the plan of "the songs of the Bard of Schiraz," in which, we are assured by Fadladeen, "the same beautiful thought occurs again and again in every possible variety of phrase."

VII.

Some of our foreign lions resemble the human brain in one very striking particular. They are without any sense themselves, and yet are the centres of sensation.

VIII.

Mirabeau, I fancy, acquired his wonderful tact at foreseeing and meeting *contingencies*, during his residence in the stronghold of *If*.

IX.

Cottle's "Reminiscences of Coleridge" is just such a book as damns its perpetrator forever in the opinion of every gentleman who reads it. More and more every day do we moderns *pavoneggiarsi* about our Christianity; yet, so far as the *spirit* of Christianity is concerned, we are immeasurably behind the ancients. Mottoes and proverbs are the indices of national character; and the Anglo-Saxons are disgraced in having no proverbial equivalent to the "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*" Moreover — where, in all statutory Christendom, shall we find a *law* so Christian as the "*Defuncti injuriâ ne afficiantur*" of the Twelve Tables? The simple *negative* injunction of the Latin law and proverb — the injunction *not to do ill* to the dead — seems at a first glance, scarcely susceptible of improvement in the delicate respect of its terms. I cannot help thinking, however, that the sentiment, if not the idea intended, is more forcibly conveyed in an apothegm by one of the old English moralists, James Puckle. By an ingenious figure of speech he contrives to imbue the negation of the Roman command with a spirit of active and positive beneficence. "When speaking of the dead," he says, in his "Grey Cap for a Green Head," "*so fold up your discourse that their virtues may be outwardly shown, while their vices are wrapped up in silence.*"

X.

I have no doubt that the Fourierites honestly fancy "a nasty poet fit for nothing" to be the true translation of "*poeta nascitur, non fit.*"

XI.

There surely can*not* be "more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of" (oh, Andrew Jackson Davis!) "in *your* philosophy."

XII.

"It is only as the Bird of Paradise quits us in taking wing," observes, or should observe, some poet, "that we obtain a full view of the beauty of its plumage;" and it is only as the politician is about being "turned out" that — like the snake of the Irish Chronicle when touched by St. Patrick — he "awakens to a sense of his *situation*."

XIII.

Newspaper editors seem to have constitutions closely similar to those of the Deities in "Walhalla," who cut each other to pieces every day, and yet get up perfectly sound and fresh every morning.

XIV.

As far as I can comprehend the modern cant in favor of "unadulterated Saxon," it is fast leading us to the language of that region where, as Addison has it, "they sell the best fish and speak the plainest English."

XV.

The frightfully long money-pouches — "like the Cucumber called the Gigantic" — which have come in vogue among our belles — are *not* of Parisian origin, as many suppose, but are strictly indigenous here. The fact is, such a fashion would be quite out of place

in Paris, where it is money *only* that women keep in a purse. The purse of an American lady, however, must be large enough to carry both her money and the soul of its owner.

XVI.

I can see no objection to gentlemen "standing for Congress" — provided they stand on one side — nor to their "running for Congress" — if they are in a very great hurry to get there — but it would be a blessing if some of them could be persuaded into sitting still, for Congress, after they arrive.

XVII.

If *Envy*, as Cyprian has it, be "the moth of the soul," whether shall we regard *Content* as its Scotch snuff or its camphor?

XVIII.

M——, having been "used up" in the "—— Review," goes about town lauding his critic — as an epicure lauds the best London mustard — with tears in his eyes.

XIX.

"*Con tal que las costumbres de un autor sean puras y castas,*" says the Catholic Don Tomas de las Torres, in the Preface to his "Amatory Poems," "*importa muy poco que no sean igualmente severas sus obras:*" meaning, in plain English, that, provided the personal morals of an author are pure, it matters little what those of his books are.

For so unprincipled an idea, Don Tomas, no doubt, is still having a hard time of it in Purgatory; and, by

way of most pointedly manifesting their disgust at his philosophy on the topic in question, many modern theologians and divines are now busily squaring their conduct by his proposition exactly *conversed.*

XX.

Children are never too tender to be whipped: — like tough beefsteaks, the more you beat them the more tender they become.

XXI.

Lucian, in describing the statue "with its surface of Parian marble and its interior filled with rags," must have been looking with a prophetic eye at some of our great "moneyed institutions."

XXII.

That poets (using the word comprehensively, as including artists in general) are a *genus irritabile*, is well understood; but the *why*, seems not to be commonly seen. An artist *is* an artist only by dint of his exquisite sense of Beauty — a sense affording him rapturous enjoyment, but at the same time implying, or involving, an equally exquisite sense of Deformity or disproportion. Thus a wrong — an injustice — done a poet who is really a poet, excites him to a degree which, to ordinary apprehension, appears disproportionate with the wrong. Poets *see* injustice — *never* where it does not exist — but very often where the unpoetical see no injustice whatever. Thus the poetical irritability has no reference to "temper" in the vulgar sense, but merely to a more than usual clear-sightedness in respect to Wrong: — this clear-sightedness

being nothing more than a corollary from the vivid perception of Right — of justice — of proportion — in a word, of τὸ καλόν. But one thing is clear — that the man who is *not* "irritable," (to the ordinary apprehension,) is *no poet*.

XXIII.

Let a man succeed ever so evidently — ever so demonstrably — in many different displays of *genius*, the envy of criticism will agree with the popular voice in denying him more than *talent* in any. Thus a poet who has achieved a great (by which I mean an effective) poem, should be cautious not to distinguish himself in any other walk of Letters. In especial — let him make no effort in Science — unless anonymously, or with the view of waiting patiently the judgment of posterity. Because universal or even versatile geniuses have rarely or never been known, *therefore*, thinks the world, none such can ever be. A "therefore" of this kind is, with the world, conclusive. But what is the *fact*, as taught us by analysis of mental power? Simply, that *highest* genius — that the genius which all men instantaneously acknowledge as such — which acts upon individuals, as well as upon the mass, by a species of magnetism incomprehensible but irresistible and *never resisted* — that this genius which demonstrates itself in the simplest gesture — or even by the absence of all — this genius which speaks without a voice and flashes from the unopened eye — is but the result of generally large mental power existing in a state of *absolute proportion* — so that no one faculty has undue predominance. *That* factitious "genius" — that "genius" in the popular sense —

which is but the manifestation of the abnormal predominance of some one faculty over all the others — and, of course, at the expense and to the detriment, of all the others — is a result of mental disease or rather, of organic malformation of mind: — it is this and nothing more. Not only will such "genius" fail, if turned aside from the path indicated by its predominant faculty; but, even when pursuing this path — when producing those works in which, certainly, it is *best* calculated to succeed — will give unmistakeable indications of *unsoundness*, in respect to general intellect. Hence, indeed, arises the just idea that

"Great wit to madness nearly is allied."

I say "*just* idea;" for by "great wit," in this case, the poet intends precisely the pseudo-genius to which I refer. The true genius, on the other hand, is necessarily, if not universal in its manifestations, at least capable of universality; and if, attempting all things, it succeeds in one rather better than in another, this is merely on account of a certain bias by which *Taste* leads it with more earnestness in the one direction than in the other. With equal zeal, it would succeed equally in all.

To sum up our results in respect to this very simple, but much *vexata quæstio*: —

What the world calls "genius" is the state of mental disease arising from the undue predominance of some one of the faculties. The works of such genius are never sound in themselves and, in especial, always betray the general mental insanity.

The *proportion* of the mental faculties, in a case where the general mental power is *not* inordinate, gives that result which we distinguish as *talent*: — and the

talent is greater or less, first, as the general mental power is greater or less; and, secondly, as the proportion of the faculties is more or less absolute.

The proportion of the faculties, in a case where the mental power is inordinately great, gives that result which *is* the true *genius* (but which, on account of the proportion and seeming simplicity of its works, is seldom acknowledged to *be* so;) and the genius is greater or less, first, as the general mental power is more or less inordinately great; and, secondly, as the proportion of the faculties is more or less absolute.

An objection will be made: — that the greatest excess of mental power, however proportionate, does not seem to satisfy our idea of genius, unless we have, in addition, sensibility, passion, energy. The reply is, that the "absolute proportion spoken of, when applied to inordinate mental power, gives, as a result, the appreciation of Beauty and a horror of Deformity which we call sensibility, together with that intense vitality, which is implied when we speak of "Energy" or "Passion."

XXIV.

"And Beauty draws us by a single hair." — Capillary attraction, of course.

XXV.

It is by no means clear, as regards the present revolutionary spirit of Europe, that it is a spirit which "moveth altogether if it moveth at all." In Great Britain it may be kept quiet for half a century yet, by placing at the head of affairs an experienced medical man. He should keep his forefinger constantly on

the pulse of the patient, and exhibit *panem* in gentle doses, with as much *circenses* as the stomach can be made to retain.

XXVI.

The taste manifested by our transcendental poets, *is* to be treated "reverentially," beyond doubt, as one of Mr. Emerson's friends suggests — for the fact is, it is Taste on her death-bed — Taste kicking *in articulo mortis*.

XXVII.

I should not say, of Taglioni, exactly that she dances, but that she laughs with her arms and legs, and that if she takes vengeance on her present oppressors, she will be amply justified by the *lex Talionis*.

XXVIII.

The world is infested, just now, by a new sect of philosophers, who have not yet suspected themselves of forming a sect, and who, consequently, have adopted no name. They are the *Believers in everything Old*. Their High Priest in the East, is Charles Fourier — in the West, Horace Greeley; and high priests they are to some purpose. The only common bond among the sect, is Credulity: — let us call it Insanity at once, and be done with it. Ask any one of them *why* he believes this or that, and, if he be conscientious, (ignorant people usually are,) he will make you very much such a reply as Talleyrand made when asked why he believed in the Bible. "I believe in it first," said he, "because I am Bishop of Autun; and, secondly, *because I know nothing about it at all.*"

What these philosophers call "argument," is a way they have "*de nier ce qui est et d'expliquer ce qui n'est pas.*" [1]

XXIX.

K——, the publisher, trying to be critical, talks about books pretty much as a washerwoman would about Niagara falls or a poulterer about a phœnix.

XXX.

The ingenuity of critical malice would often be laughable but for the disgust which, even in the most perverted spirits, injustice never fails to excite. A common *trick* is that of decrying, impliedly, the higher, by insisting upon the lower, merits of an author. Macaulay, for example, deeply feeling how much critical acumen is enforced by cautious attention to the mere "rhetoric" which is its vehicle, has at length become the best of modern rhetoricians. His *brother* reviewers — anonymous, of course, and likely to remain so forever — extol "the acumen of Carlyle, the analysis of Schlegel, *and* the style of Macaulay." Bancroft is a philosophical historian; but no amount of philosophy has yet taught him to despise a minute accuracy in point of fact. His *brother* historians talk of "the grace of Prescott, the erudition of Gibbon, *and* the painstaking precision of Bancroft." Tennyson, perceiving how vividly an imaginative effect is aided, now and then, by a certain quaintness judiciously introduced, brings this latter, at times, in support of his most glorious and most delicate imagination: — whereupon his *brother* poets hasten to laud the imagination of Mr. Somebody,

[1] Nouvelle Héloïse.

whom nobody imagined to have any, "*and* the somewhat affected quaintness of Tennyson."—Let the noblest poet add to his other excellences—if he dares—that of faultless versification and scrupulous attention to grammar, he is damned at once. His rivals have it in their power to discourse of "A. the true poet, *and* B. the versifier and disciple of Lindley Murray."

XXXI.

The goddess Laverna, who is a head without a body, could not do better, perhaps, than make advances to "La Jeune France," which, for some years to come at least, must otherwise remain a body without a head.

XXXII.

H—— calls his verse a "poem," very much as Francis the First bestowed the title, *mes déserts*, upon his snug little deer-park at Fontainebleau.

XXXIII.

Mr. A—— is frequently spoken of as "one of our most industrious writers;" and, in fact, when we consider how much he has written, we perceive, at once, that he *must* have been industrious, or he could never (like an honest woman as he is) have so thoroughly succeeded in keeping himself from being "talked about."

XXXIV.

That a cause leads to an effect, is scarcely more certain than that, so far as Morals are concerned, a repeti-

tion of effect tends to the generation of cause. Herein lies the principle of what we so vaguely term "Habit."

XXXV.

With the exception of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," I have never read a poem combining so much of the fiercest passion with so much of the most delicate imagination, as the "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" of Miss Barrett. I am forced to admit, however, that the latter work *is* a palpable imitation of the former, which it surpasses in thesis as much as it falls below it in a certain calm energy, lustrous and indomitable — such as we might imagine in a broad river of molten gold.

XXXVI.

What has become of the inferior planet which Decuppis, about nine years ago, declared he saw traversing the disc of the sun?

XXXVII.

"Ignorance *is* bliss" — but, that the bliss be real, the ignorance must be so profound as not to suspect itself ignorant. With this understanding, Boileau's line may be read thus:

> Le plus fou *toujours* est le plus satisfait,

— "*toujours*" in place of "*souvent*."

XXXVIII.

Bryant and Street are both, essentially, descriptive poets; and descriptive poetry, even in its happiest manifestation, is *not* of the highest order. But the

distinction between Bryant and Street is very broad. While the former, in reproducing the sensible images of Nature, reproduces the sentiments with which he regards them, the latter gives us the images and nothing beyond. He never forces us to feel what we feel he must have felt.

XXXIX.

In lauding Beauty, Genius merely evinces a filial affection. To Genius Beauty gives life — reaping often a reward in Immortality.

XL.

And this is the "American Drama" of ——! Well! — that "Conscience which makes cowards of us all" will permit me to say, in praise of the performance, only that it is not quite so bad as I expected it to be. But then I always expect too much.

XLI.

What we feel to be *Fancy* will be found fanciful still, whatever be the theme which engages it. No *subject* exalts it into Imagination. When Moore is termed "a fanciful poet," the epithet is applied with precision. He *is*. He is fanciful in "Lalla Rookh," and had he written the "Inferno," in the "Inferno" he would have contrived to be still fanciful and nothing beyond.

XLII.

When we speak of "a suspicious man," we may mean either one who suspects, or one to be suspected. Our language needs either the adjective "suspectful," or the adjective "suspectable."

XLIII.

"To love," says Spenser, "is

> To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
> To speed, to give, to want, to be undone."

The philosophy, here, might be rendered more profound, by the mere omission of a comma. We all know the *willing* blindness — the *voluntary* madness of Love. We express this in thus punctuating the last line:

> To speed, to give — *to want to be undone.*

It is a case, in short, where we gain a point by omitting it.

XLIV.

Miss Edgeworth seems to have had only an approximate comprehension of "Fashion," for she says: "If it was the fashion to burn me, and I at the stake, I hardly know ten persons of my acquaintance who would refuse to throw on a fagot."

There are *many* who, in such a case, would "refuse to throw on a fagot" — for fear of smothering out the fire.

XLV.

I am beginning to think with Horsely — that "the People have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them."

XLVI.

"It is not fair to review my book without reading it," says Mr. Mathews, talking at the critics, and, as usual, expecting impossibilities. The man who is clever enough to *write* such a work, is clever enough to read it, no doubt; but we should not look for so

much talent in the world at large. Mr. Mathews will not imagine that I mean to blame *him*. The book alone is in fault, after all. The fact is that, "*es lässt sich nicht lesen*" — it will not *permit* itself to be read. Being a hobby of Mr. Mathews', and brimful of spirit, it will let nobody mount it but Mr. Mathews.

XLVII.

It is only to teach his children Geography, that G—— wears a boot the picture of Italy upon the map.

XLVIII.

In his great Dictionary, Webster seems to have had an idea of being more English than the English — "*plus Arabe qu'en Arabie.*" [1]

XLIX.

That there were once "seven wise men" is by no means, strictly speaking, an historical *fact*; and I am rather inclined to rank the idea among the Kabbala.

L.

Painting their faces to look like Macaulay, some of our critics manage to resemble him, at length, as a Massaccian does a Raffaellian Virgin; and, except that the former is feebler and thinner than the other — suggesting the idea of its being the ghost of the other — not one connoisseur in ten can perceive any difference. But then, unhappily, even the street lazzaroni can feel the distinction.

[1] Count Anthony Hamilton.

A CHAPTER OF SUGGESTIONS.

[Text: *The Opal*, 1845.]

In the life of every man there occurs at least one epoch when the spirit seems to abandon, for a brief period, the body, and, elevating itself above mortal affairs just so far as to get a comprehensive and *general* view, makes thus an estimate of its humanity, as accurate as is possible, under any circumstances, to that particular spirit. The soul here separates itself from its own idiosyncrasy, or individuality, and considers its own being, not as appertaining solely to itself, but as a portion of the universal Ens. All the important good resolutions which we keep — all startling, marked regenerations of character — are brought about at these *crises* of life. And thus it is our *sense of self* which debases, and which keeps us debased.

The theory of chance, or as the mathematicians term it, the Calculus of Probabilities, has this remarkable peculiarity, that its truth in general is in direct proportion with its fallacy in particular.

We may judge of the degree of abstraction in one who meditates, by the manner in which he receives an interruption. If he is much startled, his revery was not profound; and the converse. Thus the affectation of the tribe of pretended mental-absentees, becomes transparent. These people awake from their musings

with a start, and an air of bewilderment, as men naturally awake from dreams that have a close semblance of reality. But they are, clearly, ignorant that the phenomena of dreaming differ, radically, from those of reverie — of which latter the mesmeric condition is the extreme.

There are few thinkers who will not be surprised to find, upon retrospect of the world of thought, how *very* frequently the first, or intuitive, impressions have been the true ones. A poem, for example, enraptures us in our childhood. In adolescence, we perceive it to be full of fault. In the first years of manhood, we utterly despise and condemn it; and it is not until mature age has given tone to our feelings, enlarged our knowledge, and perfected our understanding, that we recur to our original sentiment and primitive admiration, with the additional pleasure which is always deduced from knowing *how* it was that we once were pleased, and *why* it is that we still admire.

That the imagination has not been unjustly ranked as supreme among the mental faculties, appears from the intense consciousness, on the part of the imaginative man, that the faculty in question brings his soul often to a glimpse of things supernal and eternal — to the very verge of the *great secrets*. There are moments, indeed, in which he perceives the faint perfumes, and hears the melodies of a happier world. Some of the most profound knowledge — perhaps all *very* profound knowledge — has originated from a highly stimulated imagination. Great intellects *guess* well. The laws of Kepler were, professedly, *guesses*.

An excellent magazine paper might be written upon the subject of the progressive steps by which any great work of art — especially of literary art — attained completion. How vast a dissimilarity always exists between the germ and the fruit — between the work and its original conception! Sometimes the original conception is abandoned, or left out of sight altogether. Most authors sit down to write with *no* fixed design, trusting to the inspiration of the moment; it is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that *most* books are valueless. Pen should never touch paper, until at least a well-digested *general* purpose be established. In fiction, the *dénouement* — in all other composition the intended *effect*, should be definitely considered and arranged, before writing the first word; and *no* word should be then written which does not tend, or form a part of a sentence which tends to the development of the *dénouement*, or to the strengthening of the effect. Where *plot* forms a portion of the contemplated interest, too much preconsideration cannot be had. *Plot* is very imperfectly understood, and has never been rightly defined. Many persons regard it as mere complexity of incident. In its most rigorous acceptation, it is *that from which no component atom can be removed, and in which none of the component atoms can be displaced, without ruin to the whole;* and although a sufficiently good plot may be constructed, without attention to the whole rigor of this definition, still it is the definition which the true artist should always keep in view, and always endeavor to consummate in his works. Some authors appear, however, to be totally deficient in constructiveness, and thus, even with plentiful invention, fail signally in plot. Dickens belongs to this class. His "Barnaby Rudge" shows

not the least ability to *adapt*. Godwin and Bulwer are the best constructors of plot in English literature. The former has left a preface to his "Caleb Williams," in which he says that the novel was *written backwards;* the author first completing the second volume, in which the hero is involved in a maze of difficulties, and then casting about him for sufficiently probable cause of these difficulties, out of which to concoct volume the first. This mode cannot surely be recommended, but evinces the idiosyncrasy of Godwin's mind. Bulwer's "Pompeii" is an instance of admirably managed plot. His "Night and Morning," sacrifices to *mere* plot interests of far higher value.

All men of genius have their detractors; but it is merely a *non distributio medii* to argue, thence, that all men who have their detractors are men of genius. Yet, undoubtedly, of all despicable things, your habitual sneerer at real greatness, is the most despicable. What names excite, in mankind, the most unspeakable — the most insufferable disgust? The Dennises — the Frérons — the Desfontaines. Their littleness is measured by the greatness of those whom they have reviled. And yet, in the face of this well-known and natural principle, there will always exist a set of *homunculi*, eager to grow notorious by the pertinacity of their yelpings at the heels of the distinguished. And this eagerness arises, less frequently from inability to appreciate genius, than from a species of cat-and-dog antipathy to it, which no suggestions of worldly prudence are adequate to quell.

That intuitive and seemingly casual perception by which we often attain knowledge, when reason herself

falters and abandons the effort, appears to resemble the sudden glancing at a star, by which we see it more clearly than by a direct gaze; or the half-closing the eyes in looking at a plot of grass the more fully to appreciate the intensity of its green.

There are few men of that peculiar sensibility which is at the root of genius, who, in early youth, have not expended much of their mental energy in *living too fast;* and, in later years, comes the unconquerable desire to goad the imagination up to that point which it would have attained in an ordinary, normal, or well-regulated life. The earnest longing for artificial excitement, which, unhappily, has characterized too many eminent men, may thus be regarded as a psychal want, or necessity, — an effort to regain the lost, — a struggle of the soul to assume the position which, under other circumstances, would have been its due.

The great variety of melodious expression which is given out from the keys of a piano, might be made, in proper hands, the basis of an excellent fairy-tale. Let the poet press his finger steadily upon each key, keeping it down, and imagine each prolonged series of undulations the history, of joy or of sorrow, related by a good or evil spirit imprisoned within. There are some of the notes which almost tell, of their own accord, true and intelligible histories.

A precise or *clear* man, in conversation or in composition, has a very important consequential advantage — more especially in matters of logic. As he proceeds with his argument, the person addressed, exactly comprehending, for that reason, and often for that reason

only, agrees. Few minds, in fact, can immediately perceive the distinction between the comprehension of a proposition and an agreement of the reason with the thing proposed. Pleased at comprehending, we often are so excited as to take it for granted that we assent. Luminous writers may thus indulge, for a long time, in pure sophistry, without being detected. Macaulay is a remarkable instance of this species of mystification. We coincide with what he says, too frequently, because we so very distinctly understand what it is that he intends to say. His essay on Bacon has been long and deservedly admired; but its concluding portions (wherein he endeavors to depreciate the *Novum Organum*,) although logical *to a fault*, are irrational in the extreme. But not to confine myself to mere assertion. Let us refer to this great essayist's review of Ranke's "History of the Popes." His strength is here put forth to account for the progress of Romanism, by maintaining that divinity is not a progressive science. "The enigmas," says he, in substance, "which perplex the natural theologian, are the same in all ages, while the Bible, where alone we are to seek revealed truth, has been always what it is." Here Mr. Macaulay confounds the nature of that proof from which we reason of the concerns of earth, considered as man's habitation, with the nature of that evidenee from which we reason of the same earth, regarded as a unit of the universe. In the former case, the *data* being palpable, the proof is direct; in the latter it is purely *analogical*. Were the indications we derive from science, of the nature and designs of Deity, and thence, by inference, of man's destiny, — were these indications proof *direct*, it is then very true that no advance in science could strengthen them; for, as the

essayist justly observes, "nothing can be added to the force of the argument which the mind finds in every beast, bird, and flower;" but, since these indications are rigidly analogical, every step in human knowledge, every astronomical discovery, in especial, throws additional light upon the august subject, *by extending the range of analogy*. That we know no more, to-day, of the nature of Deity, of its purposes, and thus of man himself, than we did even a dozen years ago, is a proposition disgracefully absurd. "If Natural Philosophy," says a greater than Macaulay, "should continue to be improved in its various branches, the bounds of moral philosophy would be enlarged also." These words of the prophetic Newton are felt to be true, and will be fulfilled.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF COMPOSITION.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, April, 1846.]

CHARLES DICKENS, in a note now lying before me, alluding to an examination I once made of the mechanism of "Barnaby Rudge," says — "By the way, are you aware that Godwin wrote his 'Caleb Williams' backwards? He first involved his hero in a web of difficulties, forming the second volume, and then, for the first, cast about him for some mode of accounting for what had been done."

I cannot think this the *precise* mode of procedure on the part of Godwin — and indeed what he himself acknowledges, is not altogether in accordance with Mr. Dickens' idea — but the author of "Caleb Williams" was too good an artist not to perceive the advantage derivable from at least a somewhat similar process. Nothing is more clear than that every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its *dénouement* before anything be attempted with the pen. It is only with the *dénouement* constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causation, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention.

There is a radical error, I think, in the usual mode of constructing a story. Either history affords a thesis — or one is suggested by an incident of the day — or,

at best, the author sets himself to work in the combination of striking events to form merely the basis of his narrative — designing, generally, to fill in with description, dialogue, or autorial comment, whatever crevices of fact, or action, may, from page to page, render themselves apparent.

I prefer commencing with the consideration of an *effect*. Keeping originality *always* in view — for he is false to himself who ventures to dispense with so obvious and so easily attainable a source of interest — I say to myself, in the first place, "Of the innumerable effects, or impressions, of which the heart, the intellect, or (more generally) the soul is susceptible, what one shall I, on the present occasion, select?" Having chosen a novel, first, and secondly a vivid effect, I consider whether it can be best wrought by incident or tone — whether by ordinary incidents and peculiar tone, or the converse, or by peculiarity both of incident and tone — afterward looking about me (or rather within) for such combinations of event, or tone, as shall best aid me in the construction of the effect.

I have often thought how interesting a magazine paper might be written by any author who would — that is to say who could — detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion. Why such a paper has never been given to the world, I am much at a loss to say — but, perhaps, the autorial vanity has had more to do with the omission than any one other cause. Most writers — poets in especial — prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy — an ecstatic intuition — and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes, at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of

thought — at the true purposes seized only at the last moment — at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrived not at the maturity of full view — at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable — at the cautious selections and rejections — at the painful erasures and interpolations — in a word, at the wheels and pinions — the tackle for scene-shifting — the step-ladders and demon-traps — the cock's feathers, the red paint and the black patches, which, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, constitute the properties of the literary *bistrio*.

I am aware, on the other hand, that the case is by no means common, in which an author is at all in condition to retrace the steps by which his conclusions have been attained. In general, suggestions, having arisen pell-mell, are pursued and forgotten in a similar manner.

For my own part, I have neither sympathy with the repugnance alluded to, nor, at any time the least difficulty in recalling to mind the progressive steps of any of my compositions; and, since the interest of an analysis, or reconstruction, such as I have considered a *desideratum*, is quite independent of any real or fancied interest in the thing analyzed, it will not be regarded as a breach of decorum on my part to show the *modus operandi* by which some one of my own works was put together. I select "The Raven," as most generally known. It is my design to render it manifest that no one point in its composition is referrible either to accident or intuition — that the work proceeded, step by step, to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem.

Let us dismiss, as irrelevant to the poem, *per se*, the circumstance — or say the necessity — which, in the

first place, gave rise to the intention of composing *a* poem that should suit at once the popular and the critical taste.

We commence, then, with this intention.

The initial consideration was that of extent. If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression — for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and every thing like totality is at once destroyed. But since, *ceteris paribus*, no poet can afford to dispense with *any thing* that may advance his design, it but remains to be seen whether there is, in extent, any advantage to counterbalance the loss of unity which attends it. Here I say no, at once. What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones — that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. For this reason, at least one half of the "Paradise Lost" is essentially prose — a succession of poetical excitements interspersed, *inevitably*, with corresponding depressions — the whole being deprived, through the extremeness of its length, of the vastly important artistic element, totality, or unity, of effect.

It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art — the limit of a single sitting — and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as "Robinson Crusoe," (demanding no unity,) this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem. Within this limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation

to its merit — in other words, to the excitement or elevation — again in other words, to the degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing; for it is clear that the brevity must be in direct ratio of the intensity of the intended effect — this, with one proviso — that a certain degree of duration is absolutely requisite for the production of any effect at all.

Holding in view these considerations, as well as that degree of excitement which I deemed not above the popular, while not below the critical, taste, I reached at once what I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem — a length of about one hundred lines. It is, in fact, a hundred and eight.

My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed: and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable. I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which, with the poetical, stands not in the slightest need of demonstration — the point, I mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. A few words, however, in elucidation of my real meaning, which some of my friends have evinced a disposition to misrepresent. That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect — they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of *soul* — *not* of intellect, or of heart — upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in con-

sequence of contemplating "the beautiful." Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem, merely because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring from direct causes — that objects should be attained through means best adapted for their attainment — no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation alluded to is *most readily* attained in the poem. Now the object, Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect, and the object Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable, to a certain extent, in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose. Truth, in fact, demands a precision, and Passion a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me) which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul. It by no means follows from any thing here said, that passion, or even truth, may not be introduced, and even profitably introduced, into a poem — for they may serve in elucidation, or aid the general effect, as do discords in music, by contrast — but the true artist will always contrive, first, to tone them into proper subservience to the predominant aim, and, secondly, to enveil them, as far as possible, in that Beauty which is the atmosphere and the essence of the poem.

Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the *tone* of its highest manifestation — and all experience has shown that this tone is one of *sadness*. Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones.

The length, the province, and the tone, being thus determined, I betook myself to ordinary induction,

with the view of obtaining some artistic piquancy which might serve me as a key-note in the construction of the poem — some pivot upon which the whole structure might turn. In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects — or more properly *points*, in the theatrical sense — I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*. The universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value, and spared me the necessity of submitting it to analysis. I considered it, however, with regard to its susceptibility of improvement, and soon saw it to be in a primitive condition. As commonly used, the *refrain*, or burden, not only is limited to lyric verse, but depends for its impression upon the force of monotone — both in sound and thought. The pleasure is deduced solely from the sense of identity — of repetition. I resolved to diversify, and so heighten, the effect, by adhering, in general, to the monotone of sound, while I continually varied that of thought: that is to say, I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the variation *of the application* of the *refrain* — the *refrain* itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried.

These points being settled, I next bethought me of the *nature* of my *refrain*. Since its application was to be repeatedly varied, it was clear that the *refrain* itself must be brief, for there would have been an insurmountable difficulty in frequent variations of application in any sentence of length. In proportion to the brevity of the sentence, would, of course, be the facility of the variation. This led me at once to a single word as the best *refrain*.

The question now arose as to the *character* of the word. Having made up my mind to a *refrain*, the

division of the poem into stanzas was, of course, a corollary: the *refrain* forming the close of each stanza. That such a close, to have force, must be sonorous and susceptible of protracted emphasis, admitted no doubt: and these considerations inevitably led me to the long *o* as the most sonorous vowel, in connection with *r* as the most producible consonant.

The sound of the *refrain* being thus determined, it became necessary to select a word embodying this sound, and at the same time in the fullest possible keeping with that melancholy which I had predetermined as the tone of the poem. In such a search it would have been absolutely impossible to overlook the word "Nevermore." In fact, it was the very first which presented itself.

The next *desideratum* was a pretext for the continuous use of the one word "nevermore." In observing the difficulty which I at once found in inventing a sufficiently plausible reason for its continuous repetition, I did not fail to perceive that this difficulty arose solely from the pre-assumption that the word was to be so continuously or monotonously spoken by *a human* being — I did not fail to perceive, in short, that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word. Here, then, immediately arose the idea of a *non*-reasoning creature capable of speech; and, very naturally, a parrot, in the first instance, suggested itself, but was superseded forthwith by a Raven, as equally capable of speech, and infinitely more in keeping with the intended *tone*.

I had now gone so far as the conception of a Raven — the bird of ill omen — monotonously repeating the one word, "Nevermore," at the conclusion of each

stanza, in a poem of melancholy tone, and in length about one hundred lines. Now, never losing sight of the object *supremeness*, or perfection, at all points, I asked myself — "Of all melancholy topics, what, according to the *universal* understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?" Death — was the obvious reply. "And when," I said, "is this most melancholy of topics most poetical?" From what I have already explained at some length, the answer, here also, is obvious — "When it most closely allies itself to *Beauty*: the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world — and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover."

I had now to combine the two ideas, of a lover lamenting his deceased mistress and a Raven continuously repeating the word "Nevermore." — I had to combine these, bearing in mind my design of varying, at every turn, the *application* of the word repeated; but the only intelligible mode of such combination is that of imagining the Raven employing the word in answer to the queries of the lover. And here it was that I saw at once the opportunity afforded for the effect on which I had been depending — that is to say, the effect of the *variation of application*. I saw that I could make the first query propounded by the lover — the first query to which the Raven should reply "Nevermore" — that I could make this first query a commonplace one — the second less so — the third still less, and so on — until at length the lover, startled from his original *nonchalance* by the melancholy character of the word itself — by its frequent repetition — and by a consideration of the ominous reputation of the fowl that uttered it — is at length excited to

superstition, and wildly propounds queries of a far different character — queries whose solution he has passionately at heart — propounds them half in superstition and half in that species of despair which delights in self-torture — propounds them not altogether because he believes in the prophetic or demoniac character of the bird (which, reason assures him, is merely repeating a lesson learned by rote) but because he experiences a phrenzied pleasure in so modeling his questions as to receive from the *expected* "Nevermore" the most delicious because the most intolerable of sorrow. Perceiving the opportunity thus afforded me — or, more strictly, thus forced upon me in the progress of the construction — I first established in mind the climax, or concluding query — that query to which "Nevermore" should be in the last place an answer — that in reply to which this word "Nevermore" should involve the utmost conceivable amount of sorrow and despair.

Here then the poem may be said to have its beginning — at the end, where all works of art should begin — for it was here, at this point of my preconsiderations, that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza:

"Prophet," said I, "thing of evil! prophet still if bird or devil!
By that heaven that bends above us — by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore —
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the raven "Nevermore."

I composed this stanza, at this point, first that, by establishing the climax, I might the better vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance, the preceding queries of the lover — and, secondly, that

I might definitely settle the rhythm, the metre, and the length and general arrangement of the stanza — as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmical effect. Had I been able, in the subsequent composition, to construct more vigorous stanzas, I should, without scruple, have purposely enfeebled them, so as not to interfere with the climacteric effect.

And here I may as well say a few words of the versification. My first object (as usual) was originality. The extent to which this has been neglected, in versification, is one of the most unaccountable things in the world. Admitting that there is little possibility of variety in mere *rhythm*, it is still clear that the possible varieties of metre and stanza are absolutely infinite — and yet, *for centuries, no man, in verse, has ever done, or ever seemed to think of doing, an original thing.* The fact is, that originality (unless in minds of very unusual force) is by no means a matter, as some suppose, of impulse or intuition. In general, to be found, it must be elaborately sought, and although a positive merit of the highest class, demands in its attainment less of invention than negation.

Of course, I pretend to no originality in either the rhythm or metre of the "Raven." The former is trochaic — the latter is octameter acatalectic alternating with heptameter catalectic repeated in the *refrain* of the fifth verse, and terminating with tetrameter catalectic. Less pedantically — the feet employed throughout (trochees) consist of a long syllable followed by a short: the first line of the stanza consists of eight of these feet — the second of seven and a half (in effect two-thirds) — the third of eight — the fourth of seven and a half — the fifth the same — the sixth three and

a half. Now, each of these lines, taken individually, has been employed before, and what originality the "Raven" has, is in their *combination into stanza;* nothing even remotely approaching this combination has ever been attempted. The effect of this originality of combination is aided by other unusual, and some altogether novel effects, arising from an extension of the application of the principles of rhyme and alliteration.

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven — and the first branch of this consideration was the *locale.* For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields — but it has always appeared to me that a close *circumscription of space* is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident: — it has the force of a frame to a picture. It has an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place.

I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber — in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. The room is represented as richly furnished — this in mere pursuance of the ideas I have already explained on the subject of Beauty, as the sole true poetical thesis.

The *locale* being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird — and the thought of introducing him through the window, was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the wings of the bird against the shutter, is a "tapping" at the door, originated in a wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader's curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the

lover's throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked.

I made the night tempestuous, first, to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage — it being understood that the bust was absolutely *suggested* by the bird — the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and, secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, Pallas, itself.

About the middle of the poem, also, I have availed myself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression. For example, an air of the fantastic — approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible — is given to the Raven's entrance. He comes in "with many a flirt and flutter."

Not the *least obeisance made he* — not a moment stopped or stayed he,
But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door.

In the two stanzas which follow, the design is more obviously carried out : —

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the *grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore*,
"Though thy *crest be shorn and shaven* thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the nightly shore —
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore?"
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled *this ungainly fowl* to hear discourse so plainly
Though its answer little meaning — little relevancy bore ;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door —
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

The effect of the *dénouement* being thus provided for, I immediately drop the fantastic for a tone of the most profound seriousness : — this tone commencing in the stanza directly following the one last quoted, with the line,

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only, etc.

From this epoch the lover no longer jests — no longer sees any thing even of the fantastic in the Raven's demeanor. He speaks of him as a "grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore," and feels the "fiery eyes" burning into his "bosom's core." This revolution of thought, or fancy, on the lover's part, is intended to induce a similar one on the part of the reader — to bring the mind into a proper frame for the *dénouement* — which is now brought about as rapidly and as *directly* as possible.

With the *dénouement* proper — with the Raven's reply, "Nevermore," to the lover's final demand if he shall meet his mistress in another world — the poem, in its obvious phase, that of a simple narrative, may be said to have its completion. So far, every thing is within the limits of the accountable — of the real. A raven, having learned by rote the single word "Nevermore," and having escaped from the custody of its owner, is driven at midnight, through the violence of a storm, to seek admission at a window from which a light still gleams — the chamber-window of a student, occupied half in poring over a volume, half in dreaming of a beloved mistress deceased. The casement

being thrown open at the fluttering of the bird's wings, the bird itself perches on the most convenient seat out of the immediate reach of the student, who, amused by the incident and the oddity of the visitor's demeanor, demands of it, in jest and without looking for a reply, its name. The raven addressed, answers with its customary word, "Nevermore" — a word which finds immediate echo in the melancholy heart of the student, who, giving utterance aloud to certain thoughts suggested by the occasion, is again startled by the fowl's repetition of "Nevermore." The student now guesses the state of the case, but is impelled, as I have before explained, by the human thirst for self-torture, and in part by superstition, to propound such queries to the bird as will bring him, the lover, the most of the luxury of sorrow, through the anticipated answer "Nevermore." With the indulgence, to the extreme, of this self-torture, the narration, in what I have termed its first or obvious phase, has a natural termination, and so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real.

But in subjects so handled, however skilfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required — first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness — some under-current, however indefinite, of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with *the ideal*. It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning — it is the rendering this the upper instead of the under current of the theme — which turns

into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so called poetry of the so called transcendentalists.

Holding these opinions, I added the two concluding stanzas of the poem — their suggestiveness being thus made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them. The under-current of meaning is rendered first apparent in the lines —

> "Take thy beak from out *my heart*, and take thy form from off my door!"
>
> Quoth the Raven "Nevermore!"

It will be observed that the words, "from out my heart," involve the first metaphorical expression in the poem. They, with the answer, "Nevermore," dispose the mind to seek a moral in all that has been previously narrated. The reader begins now to regard the Raven as emblematical — but it is not until the very last line of the very last stanza, that the intention of making him emblematical of *Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance* is permitted distinctly to be seen:

> And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting,
> On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door;
> And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
> And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
> And my soul *from out that shadow* that lies floating on the floor
> Shall be lifted — nevermore.

THE RATIONALE OF VERSE.[1]

[Text: *The Pioneer*, March, 1843, as "Notes on English Verse," in its first draft; *Southern Literary Messenger*, October–November, 1848, elaborated.]

The word "Verse" is here used not in its strict or primitive sense, but as the term most convenient for expressing generally and without pedantry all that is involved in the consideration of rhythm, rhyme, metre, and versification.

There is, perhaps, no topic in polite literature which has been more pertinaciously discussed, and there is certainly not one about which so much inaccuracy, confusion, misconception, misrepresentation, mystification, and downright ignorance on all sides, can be fairly said to exist. Were the topic really difficult, or did it lie, even, in the cloudland of metaphysics, where the doubt-vapors may be made to assume any and every shape at the will or at the fancy of the gazer, we should have less reason to wonder at all this contradiction and perplexity; but in fact the subject is exceedingly simple; one tenth of it, possibly, may be called ethical; nine tenths, however, appertain to the mathematics; and the whole is included within the limits of the commonest common sense.

"But, if this is the case, how," it will be asked, "can so much misunderstanding have arisen? Is it conceivable that a thousand profound scholars, investigat-

[1] Cf. "The Poetic Principle," the review of Griswold's "Poets and Poetry of America," and the "Outis Controversy." — Ed.

ing so very simple a matter for centuries, have not been able to place it in the fullest light, at least, of which it is susceptible?" These queries, I confess, are not easily answered: — at all events a satisfactory reply to them might cost more trouble than would, if properly considered, the whole *vexata quæstio* to which they have reference. Nevertheless, there is little difficulty or danger in suggesting that the "thousand profound scholars" *may* have failed, first, because they were scholars, secondly, because they were profound, and thirdly because they were a thousand — the impotency of the scholarship and profundity having been thus multiplied a thousand fold. I am serious in these suggestions; for, first again, there is something in "scholarship" which seduces us into blind worship of Bacon's Idol of the Theatre — into irrational deference to antiquity; secondly, the proper "profundity" is rarely profound — it is the nature of Truth in general, as of some ores in particular, to be richest when most superficial; thirdly, the clearest subject may be overclouded by mere superabundance of talk. In chemistry, the best way of separating two bodies is to add a third; in speculation, fact often agrees with fact and argument with argument, until an additional well-meaning fact or argument sets everything by the ears. In one case out of a hundred a point is excessively discussed because it is obscure; in the ninety-nine remaining it is obscure because excessively discussed. When a topic is thus circumstanced, the readiest mode of investigating it is to forget that any previous investigation has been attempted.

But, in fact, while much has been written on the Greek and Latin rhythms, and even on the Hebrew, little effort has been made at examining that of any of

the modern tongues. As regards the English, comparatively nothing has been done. It may be said, indeed, that we are without a treatise on our own verse. In our ordinary grammars and in our works on rhetoric or prosody in general, may be found occasional chapters, it is true, which have the heading, "Versification," but these are, in all instances, exceedingly meagre. They pretend to no analysis; they propose nothing like system; they make no attempt at even rule; every thing depends upon "authority." They are confined, in fact, to mere exemplification of the supposed varieties of English feet and English lines; — although in no work with which I am acquainted are these feet correctly given or these lines detailed in anything like their full extent. Yet what has been mentioned is all — if we except the occasional introduction of some pedagogue-ism, such as this, borrowed from the Greek Prosodies: — "When a syllable is wanting, the verse is said to be catalectic; when the measure is exact, the line is acatalectic; when there is a redundant syllable it forms hypermeter." Now whether a line be termed catalectic or acatalectic is, perhaps, a point of no vital importance; — it is even possible that the student may be able to decide, promptly, when the *a* should be employed and when omitted, yet be incognizant, at the same time, of *all* that is worth knowing in regard to the structure of verse.

A leading defect in each of our treatises, (if treatises they can be called,) is the confining the subject to mere *Versification*, while *Verse* in general, with the understanding given to the term in the heading of this paper, is the real question at issue. Nor am I aware of even one of our Grammars which so much as properly de-

fines the word versification itself. "Versification," says a work now before me, of which the accuracy is far more than usual — the "English Grammar" of Goold Brown — "Versification is the art of arranging words into lines of correspondent length, so as to produce harmony by the regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity." The commencement of this definition might apply, indeed, to the *art* of versification, but not versification itself. Versification is not the art of arranging, &c., but the actual arranging — a distinction too obvious to need comment. The error here is identical with one which has been too long permitted to disgrace the initial page of every one of our school grammars. I allude to the definitions of English Grammar itself. "English Grammar," it is said, "is the art of speaking and writing the English language correctly." This phraseology, or something essentially similar, is employed, I believe, by Bacon, Miller, Fisk, Greenleaf, Ingersoll, Kirkland, Cooper, Flint, Pue, Comly, and many others. These gentlemen, it is presumed, adopted it without examination from Murray, who derived it from Lily, (whose work was "*quam solam Regia Majestas in omnibus scholis docendam præcipit,*") and who appropriated it without acknowledgment, but with some unimportant modification, from the Latin Grammar of Leonicenus. It may be shown, however, that this definition, so complacently received, is not, and cannot be, a proper definition of English Grammar. A definition is that which so describes its object as to distinguish it from all others: — it is no definition of any one thing if its terms are applicable to any one other. But if it be asked — "What is the design — the end — the aim of English Grammar?" our obvious answer is, "The art of

speaking and writing the English language correctly:" — that is to say, we must use the precise words employed as the definition of English Grammar itself. But the object to be obtained by any means is, assuredly, not the means. English Grammar and the end contemplated by English Grammar, are two matters sufficiently distinct; nor can the one be more reasonably regarded as the other than a fishing-hook as a fish. The definition, therefore, which is applicable in the latter instance, *cannot*, in the former, be true. Grammar in general is the analysis of language; English Grammar of the English.

But to return to Versification as defined in our extract above. "It is the art," says the extract, "of arranging words into lines *of correspondent length*." Not so: — a correspondence in the length of lines is by no means essential. Pindaric odes are, surely, instances of versification, yet these compositions are noted for extreme diversity in the length of their lines.

The arrangement is moreover said to be for the purpose of producing "*harmony* by the regular alternation," &c. But *harmony* is not the sole aim — not even the principal one. In the construction of verse, *melody* should never be left out of view; yet this is a point which all our Prosodies have most unaccountably forborne to touch. Reasoned rules on this topic should form a portion of all systems of rhythm.

"So as to produce harmony," says the definition, "by the *regular alternation*," &c. A *regular* alternation, as described, forms no part of any principle of versification. The arrangement of spondees and dactyls, for example, in the Greek hexameter, is an arrangement which may be termed *at random*. At least it is arbitrary. Without interference with the

line as a whole, a dactyl may be substituted for a spondee, or the converse, at any point other than the ultimate and penultimate feet, of which the former is always a spondee, the latter nearly always a dactyl. Here, it is clear, we have no "*regular* alternation of syllables differing in quantity."

"So as to produce harmony," proceeds the definition, "by the regular alternation of *syllables differing in quantity*," — in other words by the alternation of long and short syllables; for in rhythm all syllables are necessarily either short or long. But not only do I deny the necessity of any *regularity* in the succession of feet and, by consequence, of syllables, but dispute the essentiality of any *alternation*, regular or irregular, of syllables long and short. Our author, observe, is now engaged in a definition of versification in general, not of English versification in particular. But the Greek and Latin metres abound in the spondee and pyrrhic — the former consisting of two long syllables; the latter of two short; and there are innumerable instances of the immediate succession of many spondees and many pyrrhics.

Here is a passage from Silius Italicus:

> Fallit te mensas inter quod credis inermem.
> Tot bellis quæsita viro, tot cædibus armat
> Majestas æterna ducem: si admoveris ora,
> Cannas et Trebiam ante oculos Trasymenaque busta,
> Et Pauli stare ingentem miraberis umbram.

Making the elisions demanded by the classic Prosodies, we should scan these Hexameters thus:

> Fāllĭt | tē mēn | sās ĭn | tēr qŭod | crēdĭs ĭn | ērmēm |
> Tōt bēl | lĭs qŭæ | sītă vĭ | rō tōt | cædĭbŭs | ārmāt |
> Mājēs | tās ǣ | tērnă dŭ | cēm s'ăd | mōvĕrĭs | ōrā | ,
> Cānnās | ēt Trĕbĭ' | ānt'ŏcŭ | lōs Trăsy | mēnăqŭe | bŭstā
> Ĕt Pău | lĭ stă | r'ĭngēn | tēm mĭ | răbĕrĭs | ŭmbrăm |

It will be seen that, in the first and last of these lines, we have only two short syllables in thirteen, with an uninterrupted succession of no less than *nine* long syllables. But how are we to reconcile all this with a definition of versification which describes it as "the art of arranging words into lines of correspondent length so as to produce harmony by the *regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity?*"

It may be urged, however, that our prosodist's *intention* was to speak of the English metres alone, and that, by omitting all mention of the spondee and pyrrhic, he has virtually avowed their exclusion from our rhythms. A grammarian is never excusable on the ground of good intentions. We demand from him, if from any one, rigorous precision of style. But grant the design. Let us admit that our author, following the example of all authors on English Prosody, has, in defining versification at large, intended a definition merely of the English. All these prosodists, we will say, reject the spondee and pyrrhic. Still all admit the iambus, which consists of a short syllable followed by a long; the trochee, which is the converse of the iambus; the dactyl, formed of one long syllable followed by two short; and the anapæst — two short succeeded by a long. The spondee is improperly rejected, as I shall presently show. The pyrrhic is rightfully dismissed. Its existence in either ancient or modern rhythm is purely chimerical, and the insisting on so perplexing a nonentity as a foot of *two short* syllables, affords, perhaps, the best evidence of the gross irrationality and subservience to authority which characterize our Prosody. In the meantime the acknowledged dactyl and anapæst are enough to sustain my proposition about the "alternation," &c., without ref-

erence to feet which are assumed to exist in the Greek and Latin metres alone: for an anapæst and a dactyl may meet in the same line: when of course we shall have an uninterrupted succession of four short syllables. The meeting of these two feet, to be sure, is an accident not contemplated in the definition now discussed; for this definition, in demanding a "regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity," insists on a regular succession of similar *feet*. But here is an example:

Sĭng tŏ mĕ | Isăbĕlle.

This is the opening line of a little ballad now before me, which proceeds in the same rhythm — a peculiarly beautiful one. More than all this: — English lines are often well composed, entirely, of a regular succession of syllables *all of the same quantity*: — the first lines, for instance, of the following quatrain by Arthur C. Coxe:

March! march! march!
Making sounds as they tread,
Ho! ho! how they step,
Going down to the dead!

The line italicised is formed of three cæsuras. The cæsura, of which I have much to say hereafter, is rejected by the English Prosodies and grossly misrepresented in the classic. It is a perfect foot — the most important in all verse — and consists of a single *long syllable; but the length of this syllable varies.*

It has thus been made evident that there is *not one* point of the definition in question which does not involve an error. And for anything more satisfactory or more intelligible we shall look in vain to any published treatise on the topic.

So general and so total a failure can be referred only to radical misconception. In fact the English Prosodists have blindly followed the pedants. These latter, like *les moutons de Panurge*, have been occupied in incessant tumbling into ditches, for the excellent reason that their leaders have so tumbled before. The Iliad, being taken as a starting point, was made to stand instead of Nature and common sense. Upon this poem, in place of facts and deduction from fact, or from natural law, were built systems of feet, metres, rhythms, rules, — rules that contradict each other every five minutes, and for nearly all of which there may be found twice as many exceptions as examples. If any one has a fancy to be thoroughly confounded — to see how far the infatuation of what is termed "classical scholarship" can lead a book-worm in the manufacture of darkness out of sunshine, let him turn over, for a few moments, any of the German Greek Prosodies. The only thing clearly made out in them is a very magnificent contempt for Leibnitz's principle of "a sufficient reason."

To divert attention from the real matter in hand by any farther reference to these works, is unnecessary, and would be weak. I cannot call to mind, at this moment, one essential particular of information that is to be gleaned from them; and I will drop them here with merely this one observation: that, employing from among the numerous "*ancient*" feet the spondee, the trochee, the iambus, the anapæst, the dactyl, and the cæsura alone, I will engage to scan *correctly* any of the Horatian rhythms, or any true rhythm that human ingenuity can conceive. And this excess of chimerical feet is, perhaps, the very least of the scholastic supererogations. *Ex uno disce omnia.* The fact is

that *Quantity* is a point in whose investigation the lumber of mere learning may be dispensed with, if ever in any. Its appreciation is universal. It appertains to no region, nor race, nor æra in especial. To melody and to harmony the Greeks hearkened with ears precisely similar to those which we employ for similar purposes at present; and I should not be condemned for heresy in asserting that a pendulum at Athens would have vibrated much after the same fashion as does a pendulum in the city of Penn.

Verse originates in the human enjoyment of equality, fitness. To this enjoyment, also, all the moods of verse — rhythm, metre, stanza, rhyme, alliteration, the *refrain*, and other analogous effects — are to be referred. As there are some readers who habitually confound rhythm and metre, it may be as well here to say that the former concerns the *character* of feet (that is, the arrangements of syllables) while the latter has to do with the *number* of these feet. Thus by "a dactylic *rhythm*" we express a sequence of dactyls. By "a dactylic hexa*meter*" we imply a line or measure consisting of six of these dactyls.

To return to *equality*. Its idea embraces those of similarity, proportion, identity, repetition, and adaptation or fitness. It might not be very difficult to go even behind the idea of equality, and show both how and why it is that the human nature takes pleasure in it, but such an investigation would, for any purpose now in view, be supererogatory. It is sufficient that the *fact* is undeniable — the fact that man derives enjoyment from his perception of equality. Let us examine a crystal. We are at once interested by the equality between the sides and between the angles of one of its faces: the equality of the sides pleases us; that of

the angles doubles the pleasure. On bringing to view a second face in all respects similar to the first, this pleasure seems to be squared; on bringing to view a third it appears to be cubed, and so on. I have no doubt, indeed, that the delight experienced, if measurable, would be found to have exact mathematical relations such as I suggest; that is to say, as far as a certain point, beyond which there would be a decrease in similar relations.

The perception of pleasure in the equality of *sounds* is the principle of *Music*. Unpractised ears can appreciate only simple equalities, such as are found in ballad airs. While comparing one simple sound with another they are too much occupied to be capable of comparing the equality subsisting between these two simple sounds, taken conjointly, and two other similar simple sounds taken conjointly. Practised ears, on the other hand, appreciate both equalities at the same instant — although it is absurd to suppose that both are *heard* at the same instant. One is heard and appreciated from itself: the other is heard by the memory; and the instant glides into and is confounded with the secondary, appreciation. Highly cultivated musical taste in this manner enjoys not only these double equalities, all appreciated at once, but takes pleasurable cognizance, through memory, of equalities the members of which occur at intervals so great that the uncultivated taste loses them altogether. That this latter can properly estimate or decide on the merits of what is called scientific music, is of course impossible. But scientific music has no claim to intrinsic excellence — it is fit for scientific ears alone. In its excess it is the triumph of the *physique* over the *morale* of music. The sentiment is overwhelmed by the sense. On the whole,

the advocates of the simpler melody and harmony have infinitely the best of the argument; — although there has been very little of real argument on the subject.

In *verse*, which cannot be better designated than as an inferior or less capable Music, there is, happily, little chance for complexity. Its rigidly simple character not even Science — not even Pedantry can greatly pervert.

The rudiment of verse may, possibly, be found in the *spondee*. The very germ of a thought seeking satisfaction in equality of sound, would result in the construction of words of two syllables, equally accented. In corroboration of this idea we find that spondees most abound in the most ancient tongues. The second step we can easily suppose to be the comparison, that is to say, the collocation, of two spondees — of two words composed each of a spondee. The third step would be the juxta-position of three of these words. By this time the perception of monotone would induce farther consideration: and thus arises what Leigh Hunt so flounders in discussing under the title of "The *Principle* of Variety in Uniformity." Of course there is no principle in the case — nor in maintaining it. The "Uniformity" is the principle: — the "Variety" is but the principle's natural safeguard from self-destruction by excess of self. "Uniformity," besides, is the very worst word that could have been chosen for the expression of the *general* idea at which it aims.

The perception of monotone having given rise to an attempt at its relief, the first thought in this new direction would be that of collating two or more words formed each of two syllables differently accented (that is to say, short and long) but having the same order in each word: — in other terms, of collating two or more iambuses, or two or more trochees. And here

let me pause to assert that more pitiable nonsense has been written on the topic of *long* and *short* syllables than on any other subject under the sun. In general, a syllable is long or short, just as it is difficult or easy of enunciation. The *natural* long syllables are those encumbered — the *natural* short syllables are those *un*encumbered, with consonants ; all the rest is mere artificiality and jargon. The Latin Prosodies have a rule that "a vowel before two consonants is long." This rule is deduced from "authority" — that is, from the observation that vowels so circumstanced, in the ancient poems, are always in syllables long by the laws of scansion. The philosophy of the rule is untouched, and lies simply in the physical difficulty of giving voice to such syllables — of performing the lingual evolutions necessary for their utterance. Of course, it is not the *vowel* that is long, (although the rule says so) but the syllable of which the vowel is a part. It will be seen that the length of a syllable, depending on the facility or difficulty of its enunciation, must have great variation in various syllables ; but for the purposes of verse we suppose a long syllable equal to two short ones : — and the natural deviation from this relativeness we correct in perusal. The more closely our long syllables approach this relation with our short ones, the better, *ceteris paribus*, will be our verse : but if the relation does not exist of itself, we force it by emphasis, which can, of course, make any syllable as long as desired ; — or, by an effort we can pronounce with unnatural brevity a syllable that is naturally too long. *Accented* syllables are of course always long — but, where *un*encumbered with consonants, must be classed among the *unnaturally* long. Mere custom has declared that we shall accent them — that is to say, dwell upon them ;

but no inevitable lingual difficulty forces us to do so. In fine, every long syllable must of its own accord occupy in its utterance, or must be *made* to occupy, precisely the time demanded for two short ones. The only exception to this rule is found in the cæsura — of which more anon.

The success of the experiment with the trochees or iambuses (the one would have suggested the other) must have led to a trial of dactyls or anapæsts — natural dactyls or anapæsts — dactylic or anapæstic *words*. And now some degree of complexity has been attained. There is an appreciation, first, of the equality between the several dactyls, or anapæsts, and, secondly, of that between the long syllable and the two short conjointly. But here it may be said, that step after step would have been taken, in continuation of this routine, until all the feet of the Greek Prosodies became exhausted. Not so: — these remaining feet have no existence except in the brains of the scholiasts. It is needless to imagine men inventing these things, and folly to explain how and why they invented them, until it shall be first shown that they are actually invented. All other "feet" than those which I have specified, are, if not impossible at first view, merely combinations of the specified; and, although this assertion is rigidly true, I will, to avoid misunderstanding, put it in a somewhat different shape. I will say, then, that at present I am aware of no *rhythm* — nor do I believe that any one can be constructed — which, in its last analysis, will not be found to consist altogether of the feet I have mentioned, either existing in their individual and obvious condition, or interwoven with each other in accordance with simple natural laws which I will endeavor to point out hereafter.

We have now gone so far as to suppose men constructing indefinite sequences of spondaic, iambic, trochaic, dactylic, or anapæstic words. In *extending* these sequences, they would be again arrested by the sense of monotone. A succession of spondees would *immediately* have displeased; one of iambuses or of trochees, on account of the variety included within the foot itself, would have taken longer to displease; one of dactyls or anapæsts, still longer: but even the last, if extended very far, must have become wearisome. The idea, first, of curtailing, and, secondly, of defining the length of, a sequence, would thus at once have arisen. Here then is the *line*, or verse proper.[1] The principle of equality being constantly at the bottom of the whole process, lines would naturally be made, in the first instance, equal in the number of their feet; in the second instance there would be variation in the mere number; one line would be twice as long as another; then one would be some less obvious multiple of another; then still less obvious proportions would be adopted: — nevertheless there would be *proportion*, that is to say, a phase of equality, still.

Lines being once introduced, the necessity of distinctly defining these lines *to the ear*, (as yet written verse does not exist,) would lead to a scrutiny of their capabilities *at their terminations:* — and now would spring up the idea of equality in sound between the final syllables — in other words, of *rhyme*. First, it would be used only in the iambic, anapæstic, and

[1] Verse, from the Latin *vertere*, to turn, is so called on account of the turning or re-commencement of the series of feet. Thus a verse, strictly speaking, is a line. In this sense, however, I have preferred using the latter word alone; employing the former in the general acceptation given it in the heading of this paper.

spondaic rhythms, (granting that the latter had not been thrown aside, long since, on account of its tameness;) because in these rhythms the concluding syllable being long, could best sustain the necessary protraction of the voice. No great while could elapse, however, before the effect, found pleasant as well as useful, would be applied to the two remaining rhythms. But as the chief force of rhyme must lie in the accented syllable, the attempt to create rhyme at all in these two remaining rhythms, the trochaic and dactylic, would necessarily result in double and triple rhymes, such as *beauty* with *duty* (trochaic,) and *beautiful* with *dutiful* (dactylic).

It must be observed that in suggesting these processes, I assign them no date; nor do I even insist upon their order. Rhyme is supposed to be of modern origin, and were this proved, my positions remain untouched. I may say, however, in passing, that several instances of rhyme occur in the "Clouds" of Aristophanes, and that the Roman poets occasionally employ it. There is an effective species of ancient rhyming which has never descended to the moderns; that in which the ultimate and penultimate syllables rhyme with each other. For example:

> Parturiunt montes et nascitur ridicu*lus mus*.

and again —

> Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilicib*us sus*.

The terminations of Hebrew verse, (as far as understood,) show no signs of rhyme; but what thinking person can doubt that it did actually exist? That men have so obstinately and blindly insisted, *in general*, even up to the present day, in confining rhyme to the *ends* of lines, when its effect is even better applicable

elsewhere, intimates, in my opinion, the sense of some *necessity* in the connexion of the end with the rhyme — hints that the origin of rhyme lay in a necessity which connected it with the end — shows that neither mere accident nor mere fancy gave rise to the connexion — points, in a word, at the very necessity which I have suggested, (that of some mode of defining lines *to the ear*,) as the true origin of rhyme. Admit this, and we throw the origin far back in the night of Time — beyond the origin of written verse.

But, to resume. The amount of complexity I have now supposed to be attained is very considerable. Various systems of equalization are appreciated at once (or nearly so) in their respective values and in the value of each system with reference to all the others. As our present *ultimatum* of complexity, we have arrived at triple-rhymed, natural-dactylic lines, existing proportionally as well as equally with regard to other triple-rhymed, natural-dactylic lines. For example:

> Virginal Lilian, rigidly, humblily dutiful;
> Saintlily, lowlily,
> Thrillingly, holily
> Beautiful!

Here we appreciate, first, the absolute equality between the long syllable of each dactyl and the two short conjointly; secondly, the absolute equality between each dactyl and any other dactyl — in other words, among all the dactyls; thirdly, the absolute equality between the two middle lines; fourthly, the absolute equality between the first line and the three others taken conjointly; fifthly, the absolute equality between the last two syllables of the respective words "dutiful" and "beautiful;" sixthly, the absolute

equality between the two last syllables of the respective words "lowlily" and "holily;" seventhly, the proximate equality between the first syllable of "dutiful" and the first syllable of "beautiful;" eighthly, the proximate equality between the first syllable of "lowlily" and that of "holily;" ninthly, the proportional equality (that of five to one,) between the first line and each of its members, the dactyls; tenthly, the proportional equality (that of two to one,) between each of the middle lines and its members, the dactyls; eleventhly, the proportional equality between the first line and each of the two middle — that of five to two; twelfthly, the proportional equality between the first line and the last — that of five to one; thirteenthly, the proportional equality between each of the middle lines and the last — that of two to one; lastly, the proportional equality, as concerns number, between all the lines, taken collectively and any individual line — that of four to one.

The consideration of this last equality would give birth immediately to the idea of *stanza*[1] — that is to say, the insulation of lines into equal or obviously proportional masses. In its primitive, (which was also its best,) form, the stanza would most probably have had absolute unity. In other words, the removal of any one of its lines would have rendered it imperfect; as in the case above, where, if the last line, for example, be taken away, there is left no rhyme to the "dutiful" of the first. Modern stanza is excessively loose — and where so, ineffective, as a matter of course.

Now, although in the deliberate written statement which I have here given of these various systems of

[1] A stanza is often vulgarly, and with gross impropriety, called a *verse*.

equalities, there seems to be an infinity of complexity — so much that it is hard to conceive the mind taking cognizance of them all in the brief period occupied by the perusal or recital of the stanza — yet the difficulty is in fact apparent only when we will it to become so. Any one fond of mental experiment may satisfy himself, by trial, that, in listening to the lines, he does actually, (although with a seeming unconsciousness, on account of the rapid evolutions of sensation,) recognize and instantaneously appreciate, (more or less intensely as his ear is cultivated,) each and all of the equalizations detailed. The pleasure received, or receivable, has very much such progressive increase, and in very nearly such mathematical relations, as those which I have suggested in the case of the crystal.

It will be observed that I speak of merely a proximate equality between the first syllable of "dutiful" and that of "beautiful;" and it may be asked why we cannot imagine the earliest rhymes to have had absolute instead of proximate equality of sound. But absolute equality would have involved the use of identical words; and it is the duplicate sameness or monotony — that of sense as well as that of sound — which would have caused these rhymes to be rejected in the very first instance.

The narrowness of the limits within which verse composed of natural feet alone, must necessarily have been confined, would have led, after a *very* brief interval, to the trial and immediate adoption of artificial feet — that is to say of feet *not* constituted each of a single word, but two or even three words; or of parts of words. These feet would be intermingled with natural ones. For example:

ă brēath | căn māke | thĕm ăs | ă breāth | hăs māde.

This is an iambic line in which each iambus is formed of two words. Again:

Thĕ ūn | īmā | gīnā | blĕ mīght | ŏf Jōve. |

This is an iambic line in which the first foot is formed of a word and a part of a word; the second and third of parts taken from the body or interior of a word; the fourth of a part and a whole; the fifth of two complete words. There are no *natural* feet in either lines. Again:

Cān it bĕ | fāncĭĕd thăt | Dēity | ēvĕr vĭn | dĭctĭvely |
Māde in his | īmāge ā | mānnĭkin | mĕrely tŏ | mādděn it? |

These are two dactylic lines in which we find natural feet, ("Deity," "mannikin;") feet composed of two words ("fancied that," "image a," "merely to," "madden it;") feet composed of three words ("can it be," "made in his;") a foot composed of a part of a word ("dictively;") and a foot composed of a word and a part of a word ("ever vin.")

And now, in our supposititious progress, we have gone so far as to exhaust all the *essentialities* of verse. What follows may, strictly speaking, be regarded as embellishment merely — but even in this embellishment, the rudimental sense of *equality* would have been the never-ceasing impulse. It would, for example, be simply in seeking farther administration to this sense that men would come, in time, to think of the *refrain*, or burden, where, at the closes of the several stanzas of a poem, one word or phrase is *repeated;* and of alliteration, in whose simplest form a consonant is *repeated* in the commencements of various words. This effect would be extended so as to embrace repetitions both of vowels and of consonants, in the bodies

as well as in the beginnings of words; and, at a later period, would be made to infringe on the province of rhyme, by the introduction of general similarity of sound between whole feet occurring in the body of a line: — all of which modifications I have exemplified in the line above,

Made in his image a *manikin* merely to *madden it.*

Farther cultivation would improve also the *refrain* by relieving its monotone in slightly varying the phrase at each repetition, or, (as I have attempted to do in "The Raven,") in retaining the phrase and varying its application — although this latter point is not strictly a rhythmical effect *alone*. Finally, poets when fairly wearied with following precedent — following it the more closely the less they perceived it in company with Reason — would adventure so far as to indulge in positive rhyme at other points than the ends of lines. First, they would put it in the middle of the line; then at some point where the multiple would be less obvious; then, alarmed at their own audacity, they would undo all their work by cutting these lines in two. And here is the fruitful source of the infinity of "short metre," by which modern poetry, if not distinguished, is at least disgraced. It would require a high degree, indeed, both of cultivation and of courage, on the part of any versifier, to enable him to place his rhymes — and let them remain — at unquestionably their best position, that of unusual and *unanticipated* intervals.

On account of the stupidity of some people, or, (if talent be a more respectable word,) on account of their talent for misconception — I think it necessary to add here, first, that I believe the "processes" above detailed to be nearly if not accurately those which *did*

occur in the gradual creation of what we now call verse; secondly, that, although I so believe, I yet urge neither the assumed fact nor my belief in it, as a part of the true propositions of this paper; thirdly, that in regard to the aim of this paper, it is of no consequence whether these processes did occur either in the order I have assigned them, or at all; my design being simply, in presenting a general type of what such processes *might* have been and *must* have resembled, to help *them*, the "some people," to an easy understanding of what I have farther to say on the topic of Verse.

There is one point which, in my summary of the processes, I have purposely forborne to touch; because this point, being the most important of all, on account of the immensity of error usually involved in its consideration, would have led me into a series of detail inconsistent with the object of a summary.

Every reader of verse must have observed how seldom it happens that even any one line proceeds uniformly with a succession, such as I have supposed, of absolutely equal feet; that is to say, with a succession of iambuses only, or of trochees only, or of dactyls only, or of anapæsts only, or of spondees only. Even in the most musical lines we find the succession interrupted. The iambic pentameters of Pope, for example, will be found on examination, frequently varied by trochees in the beginning, or by (what seem to be) anapæsts in the body, of the line.

Ŏh thōu | whătē | vĕr tĭ | tlĕ pleăse | thĭne eăr |
Dĕan Drā | piĕr Bĭck | ĕrstăff | ŏr Gŭll | ĭvĕr |
Whēthĕr | thŏu choōse | Cĕrvăn | tĕs' sē | rĭoŭs ăir |
Ŏr laŭgh | ănd shăke | ĭn Răb | ĕlaĭs' eā | sy chaĭr. |

Were any one weak enough to refer to the Prosodies for the solution of the difficulty here, he would find it

solved as usual by a *rule*, stating the fact, (or what it, the rule, supposes to be the fact,) but without the slightest attempt at the *rationale*. "By a *synæresis* of the two short syllables," say the books, "an anapæst may sometimes be employed for an iambus, or a dactyl for a trochee. . . . In the beginning of a line a trochee is often used for an iambus."

Blending is the plain English for *synæresis* — but there should be *no* blending; neither is an anapæst *ever* employed for an iambus, or a dactyl for a trochee. These feet differ in time; and *no* feet so differing can ever be legitimately used in the same line. An anapæst is equal to four short syllables — an iambus only to three. Dactyls and trochees hold the same relation. The principle of *equality*, in verse, admits, it is true, of variation at certain points, for the relief of monotone, as I have already shown, but the point of *time* is that point which, being the rudimental one, must never be tampered with at all.

To explain: — In farther efforts for the relief of monotone than those to which I have alluded in the summary, men soon came to see that there was no absolute necessity for adhering to the precise number of syllables, provided the time required for the whole foot was preserved inviolate. They saw, for instance, that in such a line as

ŏr lāugh | ănd shāke | in Rāb | ĕlaĭs' ēa | sy chāir, |

the equalization of the three syllables *elais ea* with the two syllables composing any of the other feet, could be readily effected by pronouncing the two syllables *elais* in double quick time. By pronouncing each of the syllables *e* and *lais* twice as rapidly as the syllable *sy*, or the syllable *in*, or any other short syllable, they

could bring the two of them, taken together, to the length, that is to say to the time, of any one short syllable. This consideration enabled them to effect the agreeable variation of three syllables in place of the uniform two. And variation was the object — variation to the ear. What sense is there, then, in supposing this object rendered null by the *blending* of the two syllables so as to render them, in absolute effect, one? Of course, there must be *no* blending. Each syllable must be pronounced as distinctly as possible, (or the variation is lost,) but with twice the rapidity in which the ordinary short syllable is enunciated. That the syllables *elais ea* do not compose an *anapæst* is evident, and the signs (ăăă) of their accentuation are erroneous. The foot might be written thus (aaa) the inverted crescents expressing double quick time; and might be called a bastard iambus.

Here is a trochaic line:

Sēe thĕ | dēlĭcăte | fōotĕd | rēin-deĕr. |

The prosodies — that is to say the most considerate of them — would here decide that "*delicate*" is a dactyl used in place of a trochee, and would refer to what they call their "rule," for justification. Others, varying the stupidity, would insist upon a Procrustean adjustment thus (del'cate) — an adjustment recommended to all such words as *silvery*, *murmuring*, etc., which, it is said, should be not only pronounced, but written *silv'ry*, *murm'ring*, and so on, whenever they find themselves in trochaic predicament. I have only to say that "delicate," when circumstanced as above, is neither a dactyl nor a dactyl's equivalent; that I would suggest for it this (aaa = inverted) accentuation; that I think it as well to call it a bastard trochee; and that all

words, at all events, should be written and pronounced *in full*, and as nearly as possible as nature intended them.

About eleven years ago, there appeared in "The American Monthly Magazine," (then edited, I believe, by Mess. Hoffman and Benjamin,) a review of Mr. Willis' Poems; the critic putting forth his strength, or his weakness, in an endeavor to show that the poet was either absurdly affected, or grossly ignorant of the laws of verse; the accusation being based altogether on the fact that Mr. W. made occasional use of this very word "delicate" and other similar words, in "the Heroic measure which every one knew consisted of feet of two syllables." Mr. W. has often, for example, such lines as

> That binds him to a woman's *delicate* love —
> In the gay sunshine, *reverent* in the storm —
> With its *invisible* fingers my loose hair.

Here, of course, the feet *licate love*, *verent in*, and *sible fin*, are bastard iambuses; are *not* anapæsts; and are *not* improperly used. Their employment, on the contrary, by Mr. Willis, is but one of the innumerable instances he has given of keen sensibility in all those matters of taste which may be classed under the general head of *fanciful embellishment*.

It is also about eleven years ago, if I am not mistaken, since Mr. Horne, (of England,) the author of "Orion," one of the noblest epics in any language, thought it necessary to preface his "Chaucer Modernized" by a very long and evidently a very elaborate essay, of which the greater portion was occupied in a discussion of the seemingly anomalous foot of which we have been speaking. Mr. Horne upholds Chaucer in its frequent use; maintains his superiority, *on account*

of his so frequently using it, over all English versifiers; and, indignantly repelling the common idea of those who make verse on their fingers — that the superfluous syllable is a roughness and an error — very chivalrously makes battle for it as "a grace." That a grace it *is*, there can be no doubt; and what I complain of is, that the author of the most happily versified long poem in existence, should have been under the necessity of discussing this grace merely *as* a grace, through forty or fifty vague pages, solely because of his inability to show *how* and *why* it is a grace — by which showing the question would have been settled in an instant.

About the trochee used for an iambus, as we see in the beginning of the line,

Whēthĕr thou choose Cervantes' serious air,

there is little that need be said. It brings me to the general proposition that, in all rhythms, the prevalent or distinctive feet may be varied at will, and nearly at random, by the *occasional* introduction of equivalent feet — that is to say, feet the sum of whose syllabic times is equal to the sum of the syllabic times of the distinctive feet. Thus the trochee, *whēthĕr*, is equal, in the sum of the times of its syllables, to the iambus, *thŏu choōse*, in the sum of the times of *its* syllables; each foot being, in time, equal to three short syllables. Good versifiers who happen to be, also, good poets, contrive to relieve the monotone of a series of feet, by the use of equivalent feet only at rare intervals, and at such points of their subject as seem in accordance with the *startling* character of the variation. Nothing of this care is seen in the line quoted above — although Pope has some fine instances of the duplicate effect. Where vehemence is to be strongly expressed, I am

not sure that we should be wrong in venturing on *two consecutive* equivalent feet — although I cannot say that I have ever known the adventure made, except in the following passage, which occurs in "Al Aaraaf," a boyish poem, written by myself when a boy. I am referring to the sudden and rapid advent of a star.

> Dim was its little disk, and angel eyes
> Alone could see the phantom in the skies,
> Whĕn first thē phāntōm's cōurse wăs fōund tŏ bē
> *Hēadlōng hĭthĕr*ward o'er the starry sea.

In the "general proposition" above, I speak of the *occasional* introduction of equivalent feet. It sometimes happens that unskilful versifiers, without knowing what they do, or why they do it, introduce so many "variations" as to exceed in number the "distinctive" feet; when the ear becomes at once balked by the *bouleversement* of the rhythm. Too many trochees, for example, inserted in an iambic rhythm, would convert the latter to a trochaic. I may note here, that, in all cases, the rhythm designed should be commenced and continued, *without* variation, until the ear has had full time to comprehend what *is* the rhythm. In violation of a rule so obviously founded in common sense, many even of our best poets, do not scruple to begin an iambic rhythm with a trochee, or the converse; or a dactylic with an anapæst, or the converse; and so on.

A somewhat less objectionable error, although still a decided one, is that of commencing a rhythm, not with a different equivalent foot, but with a "bastard" foot of the rhythm intended. For example:

> Mănÿ ă | thoūght will | cōme tŏ | mēmŏry. |

Here *many a* is what I have explained to be a bastard trochee, and to be understood should be accented with inverted crescents. It is objectionable solely on account of its position as the *opening* foot of a trochaic rhythm. *Memory*, similarly accented, is also a bastard trochee, but *un*objectionable, although by no means demanded.

The farther illustration of this point will enable me to take an important step.

One of our finest poets, Mr. Christopher Pearse Cranch, begins a very beautiful poem thus:

> Many are the thoughts that come to me
> In my lonely musing;
> And they drift so strange and swift
> There's no time for choosing
> Which to follow; for to leave
> Any, seems a losing.

"A losing" to Mr. Cranch, of course — but this *en passant*. It will be seen here that the intention is trochaic; — although we do *not* see this intention by the opening foot, as we should do — or even by the opening line. Reading the whole stanza, however, we perceive the trochaic rhythm as the general design, and so, after some reflection, we divide the first line thus:

> Many are the | thōughts thăt | cŏme tŏ | mē. |

Thus scanned, the line will seem musical. It *is* — highly so. And it is because there is no end to instances of just such lines of apparently incomprehensible music, that Coleridge thought proper to invent his nonsensical *system* of what he calls "scanning by accents" — as if "scanning by accents" were anything more than a phrase. Whenever "Christabel" is really *not rough*, it can be as readily scanned by the

true *laws* (not the supposititious *rules*) of verse, as can the simplest pentameter of Pope; and where it *is* rough (*passim*) these same laws will enable any one of common sense to show *why* it is rough and to point out, instantaneously, the remedy for the roughness.

A reads and re-reads a certain line, and pronounces it false in rhythm — unmusical. *B*, however, reads it *to A*, and *A* is at once struck with the perfection of the rhythm, and wonders at his dulness in not "catching" it before. Henceforward he admits the line to be musical. *B*, triumphant, asserts, that, to be sure, the line is musical — for it is the work of Coleridge — and that it is *A* who is *not;* the fault being in *A's* false reading. Now here *A* is right and *B* wrong. *That* rhythm is erroneous, (at some point or other more or less obvious,) which *any* ordinary reader *can*, without design, read improperly. It is the business of the poet so to construct his line that the intention *must* be caught *at once*. Even when these men have precisely the same understanding of a sentence, they differ and often widely, in their modes of enunciating it. Any one who has taken the trouble to examine the topic of emphasis, (by which I here mean not *accent* of particular syllables, but the dwelling on entire words,) must have seen that men emphasize in the most singularly arbitrary manner. There are certain large classes of people, for example, who persist in emphasizing their monosyllables. Little uniformity of emphasis prevails; because the thing itself — the idea, emphasis, — is referable to no natural — at least, to no well comprehended and therefore uniform law. Beyond a very narrow and vague limit, the whole matter is conventionality. And if we differ in emphasis even when we agree in comprehension, how much more

so in the former when in the latter too! Apart, however, from the consideration of natural disagreement, is it not clear that, by tripping here and mouthing there, any sequence of words may be twisted into any species of rhythm? But are we thence to deduce that all sequences of words are rhythmical in a rational understanding of the term? — for this is the deduction, precisely to which the *reductio ad absurdum* will, in the end, bring all the propositions of Coleridge. Out of a hundred readers of "Christabel," fifty will be able to make nothing of its rhythm, while forty-nine of the remaining fifty will, with some ado, fancy they comprehend it, after the fourth or fifth perusal. The one out of the whole hundred who shall both comprehend and admire it at first sight — must be an unaccountably clever person — and I am by far too modest to assume, for a moment, that that very clever person is myself.

In illustration of what is here advanced I cannot do better than quote a poem:

> Pease porridge hot — pease porridge cold —
> Pease porridge in the pot — nine days old.

Now those of my readers who have never *heard* this poem pronounced according to the nursery conventionality, will find its rhythm as obscure as an explanatory note; while those who *have* heard it, will divide it thus, declare it musical, and wonder how there can be any doubt about it.

> Pease | porridge | hot | pease | porridge | cold |
> Pease | porridge | in the | pot | nine | days | old. |

The chief thing in the way of this species of rhythm, is the necessity which it imposes upon the poet of trav-

elling in constant company with his compositions, so as to be ready at a moment's notice, to avail himself of a well understood poetical license — that of reading aloud one's own doggrel.

In Mr. Cranch's line,

Many are the | thoughts that | come to | me, |

the general error of which I speak is, of course, very partially exemplified, and the purpose for which, chiefly, I cite it, lies yet further on in our topic.

The two divisions (*thoughts that*) and (*come to*) are ordinary trochees. Of the last division (*me*) we will talk hereafter. The first division (*many are the*) would be thus accented by the Greek Prosodies (mānȳ ăre thĕ) and would be called by them ἀστρόλογος. The Latin books would style the foot *Pæon Primus*, and both Greek and Latin would swear that it was composed of a trochee and what they term a pyrrhic — that is to say, a foot of two *short* syllables — a thing that *cannot be*, as I shall presently show.

But now, there is an obvious difficulty. The *astrologos*, according to the Prosodies' own showing, is equal to *five* short syllables, and the trochee to *three* — yet, in the line quoted, these two feet are equal. They occupy *precisely* the same time. In fact, the whole music of the line depends upon their being *made* to occupy the same time. The Prosodies then, have demonstrated what all mathematicians have stupidly failed in demonstrating — that three and five are one and the same thing.

After what I have already said, however, about the bastard trochee and the bastard iambus, no one can have any trouble in understanding that *many are the* is of similar character. It is merely a bolder variation

than usual from the routine of trochees, and introduces to the bastard trochee one additional syllable. But this syllable is not *short*. That is, it is not short in the sense of "*short*" as applied to the final syllable of the ordinary trochee, where the word means merely *the half of long*.

In this case (that of the additional syllable) "short," if used at all, must be used in the sense of *the sixth of long*. And all the three final syllables can be called *short* only with the same understanding of the term. The three together are equal only to the one short syllable (whose place they supply) of the ordinary trochee. It follows that there is no sense in thus (˘) accenting these syllables. We must devise for them some new character which shall denote the sixth of long. Let it be (ϵ) — the crescent placed with the curve to the left. The whole foot (mănÿ arĕ thĕ) might be called a *quick trochee*.

We come now to the final division (*me*) of Mr. Cranch's line. It is clear that this foot, short as it appears, is fully equal in time to each of the preceding. It is in fact the cæsura — the foot which, in the beginning of this paper, I called the most important in all verse. Its chief office is that of pause or termination; and here — at the end of a line — its use is easy, because there is no danger of misapprehending its value. We pause on it, by a seeming necessity, just so long as it has taken us to pronounce the preceding feet, whether iambuses, trochees, dactyls, or anapæsts. It is thus a *variable foot*, and, with some care, may be well introduced into the body of a line, as in a little poem of great beauty by Mrs. Welby:

I have | a lit | tle step | s͡on | of on | ly three | years old. |

Here we dwell on the cæsura, *son*, just as long as it requires us to pronounce either of the preceding or succeeding iambuses. Its value, therefore, in this line, is that of three short syllables. In the following dactylic line its value is that of four short syllables.

Pale as a | lily was | Emily | Gray.

I have accented the cæsura with a (⏑⏑) by way of expressing this variability of value.

I observed, just now, that there could be no such foot as one of two short syllables. What we start from in the very beginning of all idea on the topic of verse, is quantity, *length*. Thus when we enunciate an independent syllable it is long, as a matter of course. If we enunciate two, dwelling on both equally, we express equality in the enumeration, or length, and have a right to call them two long syllables. If we dwell on one more than the other, we have also a right to call one short, because it is short in relation to the other. But if we dwell on both equally and with a tripping voice, saying to ourselves here are two short syllables, the query might well be asked of us — "in relation to what are they short?" Shortness is but the negation of length. To say, then, that two syllables, placed independently of any other syllable, are short, is merely to say that they have no positive length, or enunciation — in other words that they are no syllables — that they do not exist at all. And if, persisting, we add anything about their equality, we are merely floundering in the idea of an identical equation, where, x being equal to x, nothing is shown to be equal to zero. In a word, we can form no conception of a pyrrhic as of an independent foot. It is a mere chimera bred in the mad fancy of a pedant.

From what I have said about the equalization of the several feet of a *line*, it must not be deduced that any *necessity* for equality in time exists between the rhythm of *several* lines. A poem, or even a stanza, may begin with iambuses, in the first line, and proceed with anapæsts in the second, or even with the less accordant dactyls, as in the opening of quite a pretty specimen of verse by Miss Mary A. S. Aldrich:

> The wa | ter li | ly sleeps | in pride |
> Dŏwn in thĕ | dēpths ŏf thĕ | āzūre | lake. |

Here *azure* is a spondee, equivalent to a dactyl; *lake* a cæsura.

I shall now best proceed in quoting the initial lines of Byron's "Bride of Abydos:"

> Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
> Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime —
> Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle
> Now melt into softness, now madden to crime?
> Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
> Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine,
> And the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
> Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in their bloom?
> Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit
> And the voice of the nightingale never is mute —
> . . . . . .
> Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
> And all save the spirit of man is divine?
> 'Tis the land of the East — 'tis the clime of the Sun —[1]
> Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?
> Oh, wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
> Are the hearts that they bear and the tales that they tell.

Now the flow of these lines, (as times go,) is very sweet and musical. They have been often admired, and justly — as times go — that is to say, it is a rare thing to find better versification of its kind. And

[1] So quoted.

where verse is pleasant to the ear, it is silly to find fault with it because it refuses to be scanned. Yet I have heard men, professing to be scholars, who made no scruple of abusing these lines of Byron's on the ground that they were musical in spite of *all law*. Other gentlemen, *not* scholars, abused "all law" for the same reason: — and it occurred neither to the one party nor to the other that the law about which they were disputing might possibly be no law at all — an ass of a law in the skin of a lion.

The Grammars said something about dactylic lines, and it was easily seen that *these* lines were at least meant for dactylic. The first one was, therefore, thus divided:

Knōw yĕ thĕ | lānd whĕre thĕ | cyprĕss ănd | mȳrtlĕ. |

The concluding foot was a mystery; but the Prosodies said something about the dactylic "measure" calling now and then for a double rhyme; and the court of inquiry were content to rest in the double rhyme, without exactly perceiving what a double rhyme had to do with the question of an irregular foot. Quitting the first line, the second was thus scanned:

Arē ĕmblĕms | ōf deĕds thăt | āre dŏne ĭn | thēir clīme. |

It was immediately seen, however, that *this* would not do: — it was at war with the whole emphasis of the reading. It could not be supposed that Byron, or any one in his senses, intended to place stress upon such monosyllables as "are," "of," and "their," nor could "their clime," collated with "to crime," in the corresponding line below, be fairly twisted into anything like a "double rhyme," so as to bring everything within the category of the Grammars. But farther

these Grammars spoke not. The inquirers, therefore, in spite of their sense of harmony in the lines, when considered without reference to scansion, fell back upon the idea that the "Are" was a blunder — an excess for which the poet should be sent to Coventry — and, striking it out, they scanned the remainder of the line as follows:

—— ēmblēms ŏf | deēds thăt ăre | dōne ĭn thĕir | clĭme. |

This answered pretty well; but the Grammars admitted no such foot as a foot of one syllable; and besides the rhythm was dactylic. In despair, the books are well searched, however, and at last the investigators are gratified by a full solution of the riddle in the profound "Observation" quoted in the beginning of this article: — "When a syllable is wanting, the verse is said to be catalectic; when the measure is exact, the line is acatalectic; when there is a redundant syllable it forms hypermeter." This is enough. The anomalous line is pronounced to be catalectic at the head and to form hypermeter at the tail: — and so on, and so on; it being soon discovered that nearly all the remaining lines are in a similar predicament, and that what flows so smoothly to the ear, although so roughly to the eye, is, after all, a mere jumble of catalecticism, acatalecticism, and hypermeter — not to say worse.

Now, had this court of inquiry been in possession of even the shadow of the *philosophy* of Verse, they would have had no trouble in reconciling this oil and water of the eye and ear, by merely scanning the passage without reference to lines, and, continuously, thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle Are | emblems of | deeds that are | done in their | clime Where the | rage of the | vulture the | love of the | turtle Now | melt into | soft-

ness now | madden to | *crime* | Know ye the | land of the | cedar and | vine Where the | flowers ever | blossom the | beams ever | shine Where the | light wings of | Zephyr op | pressed by per | *fume Wax* | faint o'er the | gardens of | Gul in their | bloom Where the | citron and | olive are | fairest of | fruit And the | voice of the | nightingale | never is | mute Where the | virgins are | soft as the | roses they | *twine And* | all save the | spirit of | man is di | vine 'Tis the | land of the | East 'tis the | clime of the | Sun Can he | smile on such | deeds as his | children have | *done Oh* | wild as the | accents of | lovers' fare | well Are the | hearts that they | bear and the | tales that they | *tell*.

Here "crime" and "tell" (italicized) are cæsuras, each having the value of a dactyl, four short syllables; while "fume Wax," "twine and," and "done Oh," are spondees which, of course, being composed of two long syllables, are also equal to four short, and are the dactyl's natural equivalent. The nicety of Byron's ear has led him into a succession of feet which, with two trivial exceptions as regards melody, are absolutely accurate — a very rare occurrence this in dactylic or anapæstic rhythms. The exceptions are found in the spondee "*twine And*," and the dactyl, "*smile on such*." Both feet are false in point of melody. In "*twine And*," to make out the rhythm, we must force "*And*" into a length which it will not naturally bear. We are called on to sacrifice either the proper length of the syllable as demanded by its position as a member of a spondee, or the customary accentuation of the word in conversation. There is no hesitation, and should be none. We at once give up the sound for the sense; and the rhythm is imperfect. In this instance it is *very* slightly so; — not one person in ten thousand could, by ear, detect the inaccuracy. But the *perfection* of verse, as regards melody, consists in its *never* demanding any such sacrifice as is here

demanded. The rhythmical must agree, *thoroughly*, with the reading, flow. This perfection has in no instance been attained — but is unquestionably attainable. "*Smile on such*," the dactyl, is incorrect, because "*such*," from the character of the two consonants *ch*, cannot *easily* be enunciated in the ordinary time of a short syllable, which its position declares that it is. Almost every reader will be able to appreciate the slight difficulty here; and yet the error is by no means so important as that of the "*And*" in the spondee. By dexterity we *may* pronounce "*such*" in the true time; but the attempt to remedy the rhythmical deficiency of the *And* by drawing it out, merely aggravates the offence against natural enunciation, by directing attention to the offence.

My main object, however, in quoting these lines, is to show that, in spite of the Prosodies, the length of a line is entirely an arbitrary matter. We might divide the commencement of Byron's poem thus:

Know ye the | land where the. |

or thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and. |

or thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle are. |

or thus:

Know ye the | land where the | cypress and | myrtle are | emblems of. |

In short, we may give it any division we please, and the lines will be good — provided we have at least *two* feet in a line. As in mathematics two units are required to form number, so rhythm, (from the Greek ἀριθμος, number,) demands for its formation at least two feet. Beyond doubt, we often see such lines as

Know ye the —
Land where the —

lines of one foot; and our Prosodies admit such; but with impropriety; for common sense would dictate that every so obvious division of a poem as is made by a line, should include within itself all that is necessary for its own comprehension; but in a line of one foot we can have no appreciation of *rhythm*, which depends upon the equality between *two* or more pulsations. The false lines, consisting sometimes of a single cæsura, which are seen in mock Pindaric odes, are of course "rhythmical" only in connection with some other line; and it is this want of independent rhythm which adapts them to the purposes of burlesque alone. Their effect is that of incongruity (the principle of mirth;) for they include the blankness of prose amid the harmony of verse.

My second object in quoting Byron's lines, was that of showing how absurd it often is to cite a single line from amid the body of a poem, for the purpose of instancing the perfection or imperfection of the line's rhythm. Were we to see by itself

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle,

we might justly condemn it as defective in the final foot, which is equal to only three, instead of being equal to four, short syllables.

In the foot (*flowers ever*) we shall find a further exemplification of the principle of the bastard iambus, bastard trochee, and quick trochee, as I have been at some pains in describing these feet above. All the Prosodies on English verse would insist upon making an elision in "flowers," thus (flow'rs,) but this is nonsense. In the quick trochee (mănŷ ăre thĕ) oc-

curring in Mr. Cranch's *trochaic* line, we had to equalize the time of the three syllables (*ny*, *are*, *the*,) to that of the one *short* syllable whose position they usurp. Accordingly each of these syllables is equal to the third of a short syllable, that is to say, the *sixth of a long*. But in Byron's *dactylic* rhythm, we have to equalize the time of the three syllables (*ers*, *ev*, *er*,) to that of the one *long* syllable whose position they usurp or, (which is the same thing,) of the *two short*. Therefore the value of each of the syllables (*ers*, *ev*, and *er*) is the *third of a long*. We enunciate them with only half the rapidity we employ in enunciating the three final syllables of the quick trochee — which latter is a rare foot. The "*flowers ever*," on the contrary, is as common in the dactylic rhythm as is the *bastard* trochee in the trochaic, or the bastard iambus in the iambic. We may as well accent it with the curve of the crescent to the right, and call it a *bastard dactyl*. A *bastard anapæst*, whose nature I now need be at no trouble in explaining, will of course occur, now and then, in an anapæstic rhythm.

In order to avoid any chance of that confusion which is apt to be introduced in an essay of this kind by too sudden and radical an alteration of the conventionalities to which the reader has been accustomed, I have thought it right to suggest for the accent marks of the bastard trochee, bastard iambus, etc., etc., certain characters which, in merely varying the direction of the ordinary short accent (˘) should imply, what is the fact, that the feet themselves are not *new* feet, in any proper sense, but simply modifications of the feet, respectively, from which they derive their names. Thus a bastard iambus is, in its essentiality, that is to say, in its time, an iambus. The variation lies only in

the *distribution* of this time. The time, for example, occupied by the one short (or *half of long*) syllable, in the ordinary iambus, is, in the bastard, spread equally over two syllables, which are accordingly the *fourth of long*.

But this fact — the fact of the essentiality, or whole time, of the foot being unchanged, is now so fully before the reader, that I may venture to propose, finally, an accentuation which shall answer the real purpose — that is to say, what should be the real purpose of all accentuation — the purpose of expressing to the eye the exact relative value of every syllable employed in Verse.

I have already shown that enunciation, or *length*, is the point from which we start. In other words, we begin with a *long syllable*. This then is our unit; and there will be no need of accenting it at all. An unaccented syllable, in a system of accentuation, is to be regarded always as a long syllable. Thus a spondee would be without accent. In an iambus, the first syllable being "short," or the *half* of long, should be accented with a small 2, placed *beneath* the syllable; the last syllable, being long, should be unaccented; — the whole would be thus (control.) In a trochee, these accents would be merely converse[2]d, thus (manly.) In a dactyl, each of the two final syllables, being the half[2] of long, should, also, be accented with a small 2 beneath the syllable; and, the first syllable left unaccented, the whole would be thus (happiness.) In an anapæst we should converse the dactyl[2] thus[2], (in the land.) In the bastard dactyl, each of the three con[2]cluding[2] syllables being the *third* of long, should be accented with a small 3 beneath the syllable and the

whole foot would stand thus, (flowers ever.) In the bastard anapæst we should converse the bastard dactyl thus, (in the rebound.) In the bastard iambus, each of the two initial syllables, being the fourth of long, should be accented, below with a small 4; the whole foot would be thus, (in the rain.) In the bastard trochee, we should converse the bastard iambus thus, (many a.) In the quick trochee, each of the three concluding syllables, being the *sixth* of long, should be accented, below, with a small 6; the whole foot would be thus, (many are the.) The quick iambus is not yet created, and most probably never will be, for it will be excessively useless, awkward, and liable to misconception — as I have already shown that even the quick trochee is: — but, should it appear, we must accent it by conversing the quick trochee. The cæsura, being variable in length, but always *longer than "long,"* should be accented, *above*, with a number expressing the length, or value, of the distinctive foot of the rhythm in which it occurs. Thus a cæsura, occurring in a spondaic rhythm, would be accented with a small 2 above the syllable, or, rather, foot. Occurring in a dactylic or anapæstic rhythm, we also accent it with the 2, above the foot. Occurring in an iambic rhythm, however, it must be accented, above, with $1\frac{1}{4}$; for this is the relative value of the iambus. Occurring in the trochaic rhythm, we give it, of course, the same accentuation. For the complex $1\frac{1}{2}$, however, it would be advisable to substitute the simpler expression $\frac{3}{2}$ which amounts to the same thing.

In this system of accentuation Mr. Cranch's lines, quoted above, would thus be written:

Many are the | thoughts that | come to | me
In my | lonely | musing, |

And they | drift so | strange and | swift
There's no | time for | choosing |

Which to | follow | for to | leave
Any, | seems a | losing. |

In the ordinary system the accentuation would be thus :

Mānÿ arĕ thĕ | thōughts thăt | cōme tŏ | mē
Īn mÿ | lōnelÿ | mūsing, |
Ănd thĕy | drīft sŏ | strānge ănd | swīft |
Thēre's nŏ | tīme fŏr | choōsing |
Whīch tŏ | fŏllŏw, | fŏr tŏ | lēave
Ānÿ, | seēms ă | lōsing. |

It must be observed, here, that I do not grant this to be the "ordinary" *scansion*. On the contrary, I never yet met the man who had the faintest comprehension of the true scanning of these lines, or of such as these. But granting this to be the mode in which our Prosodies would divide the feet, they would accentuate the syllables as just above.

Now, let any reasonable person compare the two modes. The first advantage seen in my mode is that of simplicity — of time, labor, and ink saved. Counting the fractions as *two* accents, even, there will be found only *twenty-six* accents to the stanza. In the common accentuation there are *forty-one*. But admit that all this is a trifle, which it is *not*, and let us proceed to points of importance. Does the common accentuation express the truth, in particular, in general,

or in any regard? Is it consistent with itself? Does it convey either to the ignorant or to the scholar a just conception of the rhythm of the lines? Each of these questions must be answered in the negative. The crescents, being precisely similar, must be understood as expressing, all of them, one and the same thing; and so all Prosodies have always understood them and wished them to be understood. They express, indeed, "short" — but this word has all kinds of meanings. It serves to represent (the reader is left to guess *when*) sometimes the half, sometimes the third, sometimes the fourth, sometimes the sixth, of "long" — while "long" itself, in the books, is left undefined and undescribed. On the other hand, the horizontal accent, it may be said, expresses sufficiently well, and unvaryingly, the syllables which are meant to be long. It does nothing of the kind. This horizontal accent is placed over the cæsura (wherever, as in the Latin Prosodies, the cæsura is recognized) as well as over the ordinary long syllable, and implies anything and everything, just as the crescent. But grant that it does express the ordinary long syllables, (leaving the cæsura out of question,) have I not given the identical expression, by not employing any expression at all? In a word, while the Prosodies, with a certain number of accents, express *precisely nothing whatever*, I, with scarcely half the number, have expressed everything which, in a system of accentuation, demands expression. In glancing at my mode in the lines of Mr. Cranch, it will be seen that it conveys not only the exact relation of the syllables and feet, among themselves, in those particular lines, but their precise value in relation to any other existing or conceivable feet or syllables, in any existing or conceivable system of rhythm.

The object of what we call *scansion* is the distinct marking of the rhythmical flow. Scansion with accents or perpendicular lines between the feet — that is to say scansion *by* the voice only — is scansion *to* the ear only; and all very good in its way. The written scansion addresses the ear through the eye. In either case the object is the distinct marking of the rhythmical, musical, or reading flow. There *can* be no other object and there is none. Of course, then, the scansion and the reading flow should go hand in hand. The former must agree with the latter. The former represents and expresses the latter; and is good or bad as it truly or falsely represents and expresses it. If by the written scansion of a line we are not enabled to perceive any rhythm or music in the line, then either the line is unrhythmical or the scansion false. Apply all this to the English lines which we have quoted, at various points, in the course of this article. It will be found that the scansion exactly conveys the rhythm, and thus thoroughly fulfils the only purpose for which scansion is required.

But let the scansion *of the schools* be applied to the Greek and Latin verse, and what result do we find? — that the verse is one thing and the scansion quite another. The ancient verse, *read* aloud, is in general musical, and occasionally *very* musical. *Scanned* by the Prosodial rules we can, for the most part, make nothing of it whatever. In the case of the English verse, the more emphatically we dwell on the divisions between the feet, the more distinct is our perception of the kind of rhythm intended. In the case of the Greek and Latin, the more we dwell the *less* distinct is this perception. To make this clear by an example:

Mæcenas, atavis edite regibus,
O, et præsidium et dulce decus meum,
Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
Collegisse juvat, metaque fervidis
Evitata rotis, palmaque nobilis
Terrarum dominos evehit ad Deos.

Now in *reading* these lines, there is scarcely one person in a thousand who, if even ignorant of Latin, will not immediately feel and appreciate their flow — their music. A prosodist, however, informs the public that the *scansion* runs thus :

Mæce | nas ata | vis | edite | regibus |
O, et | præsidi' | et | dulce de | cus meum |
Sunt quos | curricu | lo | pulver' O | lympicum |
Colle | gisse ju | vat | metaque | fervidis |
Evi | tata ro | tis | palmaque | nobilis |
Terra | rum domi | nos | evehit | ad Deos. |

Now I do not deny that we get a *certain sort* of music from the lines if we read them according to this scansion, but I wish to call attention to the fact that this scansion and the certain sort of music which grows out of it, are entirely at war not only with the reading flow which any ordinary person would naturally give the lines, but with the reading flow universally given them, and never denied them, by even the most obstinate and stolid of scholars.

And now these questions are forced upon us — "Why exists this discrepancy between the modern verse with its scansion, and the ancient verse with its scansion?" — "Why, in the former case, are there agreement and representation, while in the latter there is neither the one or the other?" or, to come to the point, — "How are we to reconcile the ancient verse with the scholastic scansion of it?" This absolutely necessary conciliation — shall we bring it about by

supposing the scholastic scansion wrong because the ancient verse is right, or by maintaining that the ancient verse is wrong because the scholastic scansion is not to be gainsaid?

Were we to adopt the latter mode of arranging the difficulty, we might, in some measure, at least simplify the expression of the arrangement by putting it thus — Because the pedants have no eyes, therefore the old poets had no ears.

"But," say the gentlemen without the eyes, "the scholastic scansion, although certainly not handed down to us in form from the old poets themselves (the gentlemen without the ears,) is nevertheless deduced from certain facts which are supplied us by careful observation of the old poems."

And let us illustrate this strong position by an example from an American poet — who must be a poet of some eminence, or he will not answer the purpose. Let us take Mr. Alfred B. Street. I remember these two lines of his:

> His sinuous path, by blazes, wound
> Among trunks grouped in myriads round.

With the *sense* of these lines I have nothing to do. When a poet is in a "fine phrenzy," he may as well imagine a large forest as a small one — and "by blazes!" is *not* intended for an oath. My concern is with the rhythm, which is iambic.

Now let us suppose that, a thousand years hence, when the "American language" is dead, a learned prosodist should be deducing from "careful observation" of our best poets, a system of scansion for our poetry. And let us suppose that this prosodist had so little dependence in the generality and immutability

of the laws of Nature, as to assume in the outset, that, because we lived a thousand years before his time and made use of steam-engines instead of mesmeric balloons, we must therefore have had a *very* singular fashion of mouthing our vowels, and altogether of hudsonizing our verse. And let us suppose that with these and other fundamental propositions carefully put away in his brain, he should arrive at the line, —

Among | trunks grouped | in my | riads round.

Finding it an obviously iambic rhythm, he would divide it as above, and observing that "trunks" made the first member of an iambus, he would call it short, as Mr. Street intended it to be. Now farther: — if instead of admitting the possibility that Mr. Street, (who by that time would be called Street simply, just as we say Homer) — that Mr. Street might have been in the habit of writing carelessly, as the poets of the prosodist's own era did, and as all poets will do (on account of being geniuses) — instead of admitting this, suppose the learned scholar should make a "rule" and put it in a book, to the effect that, in the American verse, the vowel *u, when found imbedded among nine consonants* was *short:* what, under such circumstances, would the sensible people of the scholar's day have a right not only to think, but to say of that scholar? — why, that he was "a fool, — by blazes!"

I have put an extreme case, but it strikes at the root of the error. The "rules" are grounded in "authority" — and this "authority" — can any one tell us what it means? or can any one suggest anything that it may *not* mean? Is it not clear that the "scholar" above referred to, might as readily have deduced from authority a totally false system as a partially true one?

To deduce from authority a consistent prosody of the ancient metres would indeed have been within the limits of the barest possibility; and the task has *not* been accomplished, for the reason that it demands a species of ratiocination altogether out of keeping with the brain of a bookworm. A rigid scrutiny will show that the very few "rules" which have not as many exceptions as examples, are those which have, by accident, their true bases not in authority, but in the omniprevalent laws of syllabification; such, for example, as the rule which declares a vowel before two consonants to be long.

In a word, the gross confusion and antagonism of the scholastic prosody, as well as its marked inapplicability to the reading flow of the rhythms it pretends to illustrate, are attributable, first, to the utter absence of natural principle as a guide in the investigations which have been undertaken by inadequate men; and secondly, to the neglect of the obvious consideration that the ancient poems, which have been the *criteria* throughout, were the work of men who must have written as loosely, and with as little definitive system, as ourselves.

Were Horace alive to-day, he would divide for us his first Ode thus, and "make great eyes" when assured by the prosodists that he had no business to make any such division!

Mæcenas | atavis | edite | regibus |
O et præ | sidium et | dulce de | cus meum |
Sunt quos cur | riculo | pulverem O | lympicum |
Collegisse | juvat | metaque | fervidis |
Evitata | rotis | palmaque | nobilis |
Terrarum | dominos | evehit | ad Deos. |

Read by this scansion, the flow is preserved; and the more we dwell on the divisions, the more the intended rhythm becomes apparent. Moreover, the feet have all the same time; while, in the scholastic scansion, trochees — admitted trochees — are absurdly employed as equivalents to spondees and dactyls. The books declare, for instance, that *Colle*, which begins the fourth line, is a trochee, and seem to be gloriously unconscious that to put a trochee in opposition with a longer foot, is to violate the inviolable principle of all music, *time*.

It will be said, however, by "some people," that I have no business to make a dactyl out of such obviously long syllables as *sunt*, *quos*, *cur*. Certainly I have no business to do so. I *never* do so. And Horace should not have done so. But he did. Mr. Bryant and Mr. Longfellow do the same thing every day. And merely because these gentlemen, now and then, forget themselves in this way, it would be hard if some future prosodist should insist upon twisting the "Thanatopsis," or the "Spanish Student," into a jumble of trochees, spondees, and dactyls.

It may be said, also, by some other people, that in the word *decus*, I have succeeded no better than the books, in making the scansional agree with the reading flow; and that *decus* was not pronounced de*cus*. I reply, that there can be no doubt of the word having been pronounced, in this case, de*cus*. It must be observed, that the Latin inflection, or variation of a word in its terminating syllables, caused the Romans — *must* have caused them, to pay greater attention to the termination of a word than to its commencement, or than we do to the terminations of our words. The end of the Latin word established that relation of the

word with other words which we establish by prepositions or auxiliary verbs. Therefore, it would seem infinitely less odd to them than it does to us, to dwell at any time, for any slight purpose, abnormally, on a terminating syllable. In verse, this license — scarcely a license — would be frequently admitted. These ideas unlock the secret of such lines as the

> Litoreis ingens inventa sub ilici*bus sus*,

and the

> Parturiunt montes et nascitur ridicu*lus mus*,

which I quoted, some time ago, while speaking of rhyme.

As regards the prosodial elisions, such as that of *rem* before O, in *pulverem Olympicum*, it is really difficult to understand how so dismally silly a notion could have entered the brain even of a pedant. Were it demanded of me why the books cut off one *vowel* before another, I might say — it is, perhaps, because the books think that, since a bad reader is so apt to slide the one vowel into the other at any rate, it is just as well to print them *ready-slided*. But in the case of the terminating *m*, which is the most readily pronounced of all consonants, (as the infantile *mama* will testify,) and the most impossible to cheat the ear of by any system of sliding — in the case of the *m*, I should be driven to reply that, to the best of my belief, the prosodists did the thing, because they had a fancy for doing it, and wished to see how funny it would look after it was done. The thinking reader will perceive that, from the great facility with which *em* may be enunciated, it is admirably suited to form one of the rapid short syllables in the bastard dactyl (pulverem O ;) but because the books had no conception of a bastard dactyl, they

knocked it in the head at once — by cutting off its tail!

Let me now give a specimen of the true scansion of another Horatian measure; embodying an instance of proper elision.

Integer | vitæ | scelerisque | purus |
3 2 3 3 2
Non eget | Mauri | jaculis ne | que arcu |
2 2 3 3 3
Nec vene | natis | gravida sa | gittis,
2 2 3 3 3
Fusce, pha | retrâ.
2 3

Here the regular recurrence of the bastard dactyl, gives great animation to the rhythm. The *e* before the *a* in *que arcu*, is, almost of sheer necessity, cut off — that is to say, run into the *a* so as to preserve the spondee. But even this license it would have been better not to take.

Had I space, nothing would afford me greater pleasure than to proceed with the scansion of *all* the ancient rhythms, and to show how easily, by the help of common sense, the intended music of each and all can be rendered instantaneously apparent. But I have already overstepped my limits, and must bring this paper to an end.

It will never do, however, to omit all mention of the heroic hexameter.

I began the "processes" by a suggestion of the spondee as the first step towards verse. But the innate monotony of the spondee has caused its disappearance, as the basis of rhythm, from all modern poetry. We *may* say, indeed, that the French heroic — the most wretchedly monotonous verse in existence — is, to all intents and purposes, spondaic. But it is not designedly spondaic — and if the French were ever to

examine it at all, they would no doubt pronounce it iambic. It must be observed, that the French language is strangely peculiar in this point — *that it is without accentuation and consequently without verse.* The genius of the people, rather than the structure of the tongue, declares that their words are, for the most part, enunciated with an uniform dwelling on each syllable. For example — *we* say, "syl*la*bific*a*tion." A Frenchman would say, syl-la-bi-fi-ca-ti-on; dwelling on no one of the syllables with any noticeable particularity. Here again I put an extreme case, in order to be well understood; but the general fact is as I give it — that, comparatively, the French have *no* accentuation. And there can be nothing worth the name of verse, without. Therefore, the French have no verse worth the name — which is the fact, put in sufficiently plain terms. Their iambic rhythm so superabounds in absolute spondees as to warrant me in calling its basis spondaic; but French is the *only* modern tongue which has any rhythm with such basis; and even in the French, it is, as I have said, unintentional.

Admitting, however, the validity of my suggestion, that the spondee was the first approach to verse, we should expect to find, first, natural spondees (words each forming just a spondee,) most abundant in the most ancient languages; and, secondly, we should expect to find spondees forming the basis of the most ancient rhythms. These expectations are in both cases confirmed.

Of the Greek hexameter, the intentional basis is spondaic. The dactyls are the *variation* of the theme. It will be observed that there is no absolute certainty about *their* points of interposition. The penultimate foot, it is true, is usually a dactyl; but not uniformly

so; while the ultimate, on which the ear *lingers* is always a spondee. Even that the penultimate is usually a dactyl may be clearly referred to the necessity of winding up with the *distinctive* spondee. In corroboration of this idea, again, we should look to find the penultimate spondee most usual in the most ancient verse; and, accordingly, we find it more frequent in the Greek than in the Latin hexameter.

But besides all this, spondees are not only more prevalent in the heroic hexameter than dactyls, but occur to such an extent as is even unpleasant to modern ears, on account of monotony. What the modern chiefly appreciates and admires in the Greek hexameter, is the *melody of the abundant vowel sounds*. The Latin hexameters *really* please very few moderns — although so many pretend to fall into ecstasies about them. In the hexameters quoted, several pages ago, from Silius Italicus, the preponderance of the spondee is strikingly manifest. Besides the natural spondees of the Greek and Latin, numerous artificial ones arise in the verse of these tongues on account of the tendency which *case* has to throw full accentuation on terminal syllables; and the preponderance of the spondee is farther ensured by the comparative infrequency of the small prepositions which *we* have to serve us *instead* of case, and also the absence of the diminutive auxiliary verbs with which *we* have to eke out the expression of our primary ones. These are the monosyllables whose abundance serve to stamp the poetic genius of a language as tripping or dactylic.

Now paying no attention to these facts, Sir Philip Sidney, Professor Longfellow, and innumerable other persons more or less modern, have busied themselves in constructing what they supposed to be "English

hexameters on the model of the Greek." The only difficulty was that (even leaving out of question the melodious masses of vowel,) these gentlemen never could get their English hexameters to *sound* Greek. Did they *look* Greek? — that should have been the query; and the reply might have led to a solution of the riddle. In placing a copy of ancient hexameters side by side with a copy (in similar type) of such hexameters as Professor Longfellow, or Professor Felton, or the Frogpondian Professors collectively, are in the shameful practice of composing "on the model of the Greek," it will be seen that the latter (hexameters, not professors) are about one third longer *to the eye*, on an average, than the former. The more abundant dactyls make the difference. And it is the greater number of spondees in the Greek than in the English — in the ancient than in the modern tongue — which has caused it to fall out that while these eminent scholars were groping about in the dark for a Greek hexameter, which is a spondaic rhythm varied now and then by dactyls, they merely stumbled, to the lasting scandal of scholarship, over something which, on account of its long-leggedness, we may as well term a Feltonian hexameter, and which is a dactylic rhythm, interrupted, rarely, by artificial spondees which are no spondees at all, and which are curiously thrown in by the heels at all kinds of improper and impertinent points.

Here is a specimen of the Longfellownian hexameter,

Also the | church with | in was a | dorned for | this was the | season |
In which the | young their | parents' | hope and the | loved ones of | Heaven | [1]
Should at the | foot of the | altar re | new the | vows of their | baptism |

[1] So quoted.

Therefore each | nook and | corner was | swept and | cleaned and
the | dust was |
Blown from the | walls and | ceiling and | from the | oil-painted |
benches. |

Mr. Longfellow is a man of imagination — but *can* he imagine that any individual, with a proper understanding of the danger of lockjaw, would make the attempt of twisting his mouth into the shape necessary for the emission of such spondees as "par*ents*," or such dactyls as "cleaned and the" and "loved ones of?" "Baptism" is by no means a bad spondee — perhaps because it happens to be a dactyl; — of all the rest, however, I am dreadfully ashamed.

But these feet — dactyls and spondees, all together, — should thus be put at once into their proper position:

"Also, the church within was adorned; for this was the season in which the young, their parents' hope, and the loved ones of Heaven, should, at the feet of the altar, renew the vows of their baptism. Therefore, each nook and corner was swept and cleaned; and the dust was blown from the walls and ceiling, and from the oil-painted benches."

There! — that is respectable prose; and it will incur no danger of ever getting its character ruined by any body's mistaking it for verse.

But even when we let these modern hexameters go, as Greek, and merely hold them fast in their proper character of Longfellownian, or Feltonian, or Frogpondian, we must still condemn them as having been committed in a radical misconception of the philosophy of verse. The spondee, as I observed, is the *theme* of the Greek line. Most of the ancient hexameters

begin with spondees, for the reason that the spondee *is* the theme; and the ear is filled with it as with a burden. Now the Feltonian dactylics have, in the same way, dactyls for the theme, and most of them begin with dactyls — which is all very proper if not very Greek — but, unhappily, the one point at which they *are* very Greek is that point, precisely, at which they should be nothing but Feltonian. They always *close* with what is meant for a spondee. To be consistently silly, they should die off in a dactyl.

That a truly Greek hexameter *cannot*, however, be readily composed in English, is a proposition which I am by no means inclined to admit. I think I could manage the point myself. For example:

Do tell! | when may we | hope to make | men of sense | out of the | Pundits |
Born and brought | up with their | snouts deep | down in the | mud of the | Frog-pond?
Why ask? | who ever | yet saw | money made | out of a | fat old | Jew, or | downright | upright | nutmegs | out of a | pine-knot? |

The proper spondee predominance is here preserved. Some of the dactyls are not so good as I could wish — but, upon the whole, the rhythm is very decent — to say nothing of its excellent sense.

THE POETIC PRINCIPLE.

[Text: *Sartain's Union Magazine*, October, 1850.]

In speaking of the Poetic Principle, I have no design to be either thorough or profound. While discussing, very much at random, the essentiality of what we call Poetry, my principal purpose will be to cite for consideration, some few of those minor English or American poems which best suit my own taste, or which, upon my own fancy, have left the most definite impression. By "minor poems" I mean, of course, poems of little length. And here, in the beginning, permit me to say a few words in regard to a somewhat peculiar principle, which, whether rightfully or wrongfully, has always had its influence in my own critical estimate of the poem. I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase, "a long poem," is simply a flat contradiction in terms.

I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags — fails — a revulsion ensues — and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

There are, no doubt, many who have found difficulty in reconciling the critical dictum that the "Para-

dise Lost" is to be devoutly admired throughout, with the absolute impossibility of maintaining for it, during perusal, the amount of enthusiasm which that critical dictum would demand. This great work, in fact, is to be regarded as poetical, only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of Art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. If, to preserve its Unity — its totality of effect or impression — we read it (as would be necessary) at a single sitting, the result is but a constant alternation of excitement and depression. After a passage of what we feel to be true poetry, there follows, inevitably, a passage of platitude which no critical pre-judgment can force us to admire; but if, upon completing the work, we read it again; omitting the first book — that is to say, commencing with the second — we shall be surprised at now finding that admirable which we before condemned — that damnable which we had previously so much admired. It follows from all this that the ultimate, aggregate, or absolute effect of even the best epic under the sun, is a nullity: — and this is precisely the fact.

In regard to the Iliad, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics; but, granting the epic intention, I can say only that the work is based in an imperfect sense of art. The modern epic is, of the supposititious ancient model, but an inconsiderate and blindfold imitation. But the day of these artistic anomalies is over. If, at any time, any very long poem *were* popular in reality, which I doubt, it is at least clear that no very long poem will ever be popular again.

That the extent of a poetical work is, *ceteris paribus*, the measure of its merit, seems undoubtedly, when we thus state it, a proposition sufficiently absurd — yet we

are indebted for it to the Quarterly Reviews. Surely there can be nothing in mere *size*, abstractly considered — there can be nothing in mere *bulk*, so far as a volume is concerned, which has so continuously elicited admiration from these saturnine pamphlets! A mountain, to be sure, by the mere sentiment of physical magnitude which it conveys, *does* impress us with a sense of the sublime — but no man is impressed after *this* fashion by the material grandeur of even "The Columbiad." Even the Quarterlies have not instructed us to be so impressed by it. *As yet*, they have not *insisted* on our estimating Lamartine by the cubic foot, or Pollok by the pound — but what else are we to *infer* from their continual prating about "sustained effort?" If, by "sustained effort," any little gentleman has accomplished an epic, let us frankly commend him for the effort — if this indeed be a thing commendable — but let us forbear praising the epic on the effort's account. It is to be hoped that common sense, in the time to come, will prefer deciding upon a work of art, rather by the impression it makes, by the effect it produces, than by the time it took to impress the effect or by the amount of "sustained effort" which had been found necessary in effecting the impression. The fact is, that perseverance is one thing, and genius quite another — nor can all the Quarterlies in Christendom confound them. By-and-by, this proposition, with many which I have been just urging, will be received as self-evident. In the meantime, by being generally condemned as falsities, they will not be essentially damaged as truths.

On the other hand, it is clear that a poem may be improperly brief. Undue brevity degenerates into mere epigrammatism. A *very* short poem, while now

and then producing a brilliant or vivid, never produces a profound or enduring effect. There must be the steady pressing down of the stamp upon the wax. De Béranger has wrought innumerable things, pungent and spirit-stirring; but, in general, they have been too imponderous to stamp themselves deeply into the public attention; and thus, as so many feathers of fancy, have been blown aloft only to be whistled down the wind.

A remarkable instance of the effect of undue brevity in depressing a poem — in keeping it out of the popular view — is afforded by the following exquisite little Serenade:

I arise from dreams of thee
  In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
  And the stars are shining bright;
I arise from dreams of thee,
  And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me — who knows how? —
  To thy chamber-window, sweet!

The wandering airs, they faint
  On the dark, the silent stream —
The champak odours fail
  Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
  It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
  O, beloved as thou art!

O, lift me from the grass!
  I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
  On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
  My heart beats loud and fast:
Oh! press it close to thine again,
  Where it will break at last!

Very few, perhaps, are familiar with these lines — yet no less a poet than Shelley is their author. Their warm, yet delicate and ethereal imagination will be appreciated by all — but by none so thoroughly as by him who has himself arisen from sweet dreams of one beloved to bathe in the aromatic air of a southern midsummer night.

One of the finest poems by Willis — the very best, in my opinion, which he has ever written — has, no doubt, through this same defect of undue brevity, been kept back from its proper position, not less in the critical than in the popular view.

THE shadows lay along Broadway,
  'Twas near the twilight-tide —
And slowly there a lady fair
  Was walking in her pride.
Alone walk'd she; but, viewlessly,
  Walk'd spirits at her side.

Peace charm'd the street beneath her feet,
  And Honour charm'd the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
  And call'd her good and fair —
For all God ever gave to her
  She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
  From lovers warm and true —
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
  And the rich came not to woo —
But honour'd well are charms to sell,
  If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair —
  A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
  To make the spirit quail —
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walk'd forlorn,
  And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
  For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
  Her woman's heart gave way! —
But the sin forgiven by Christ in Heaven
  By man is cursed alway!

In this composition we find it difficult to recognise the Willis who has written so many mere "verses of society." The lines are not only richly ideal, but full of energy; while they breathe an earnestness — an evident sincerity of sentiment — for which we look in vain throughout all the other works of this author.

While the epic mania — while the idea that, to merit in poetry, prolixity is indispensable — has, for some years past, been gradually dying out of the public mind, by mere dint of its own absurdity — we find it succeeded by a heresy too palpably false to be long tolerated, but one which, in the brief period it has already endured, may be said to have accomplished more in the corruption of our Poetical Literature than all its other enemies combined. I allude to the heresy of *The Didactic*. It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral; and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronised this happy idea; and we Bostonians, very especially, have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true Poetic dignity and force: — but the simple fact is, that, would we but permit ourselves to look into our own

souls, we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor *can* exist any work more thoroughly dignified — more supremely noble than this very poem — this poem *per se* — this poem which is a poem and nothing more — this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

With as deep a reverence for the True as ever inspired the bosom of man, I would, nevertheless, limit, in some measure, its modes of inculcation. I would limit to enforce them. I would not enfeeble them by dissipation. The demands of Truth are severe. She has no sympathy with the myrtles. All *that* which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all *that* with which *she* has nothing whatever to do. It is but making her a flaunting paradox, to wreathe her in gems and flowers. In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. We must be simple, precise, terse. We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned. In a word, we must be in that mood which, as nearly as possible, is the exact converse of the poetical. *He* must be blind, indeed, who does not perceive the radical and chasmal differences between the truthful and the poetical modes of inculcation. He must be theory-mad beyond redemption who, in spite of these differences, shall still persist in attempting to reconcile the obstinate oils and waters of Poetry and Truth.

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense. I place Taste in the middle, because it is just this position which, in the mind, it occupies. It holds intimate relations with either extreme; but from the Moral Sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated

to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Nevertheless, we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful while the Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms: — waging war upon Vice solely on the ground of her deformity — her disproportion — her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious — in a word, to Beauty.

An immortal instinct, deep within the spirit of man, is thus, plainly, a sense of the Beautiful. This it is which administers to his delight in the manifold forms, and sounds, and odours, and sentiments amid which he exists. And just as the lily is repeated in the lake, or the eyes of Amaryllis in the mirror, so is the mere oral or written repetition of these forms, and sounds, and colours, and odours, and sentiments, a duplicate source of delight. But this mere repetition is not poetry. He who shall simply sing, with however glowing enthusiasm, or with however vivid a truth of description, of the sights, and sounds, and odours, and colours, and sentiments, which greet *him* in common with all mankind — he, I say, has yet failed to prove his divine title. There is still a something in the distance which he has been unable to attain. We have still a thirst unquenchable, to allay which he has not shown us the crystal springs. This thirst belongs to the immortality of Man. It is at once a consequence and an indication of his perennial existence. It is the desire of the moth for the star. It is no mere appreciation of the Beauty before us — but a wild effort to reach the Beauty above. Inspired by an ecstatic prescience of the glories

beyond the grave, we struggle, by multiform combinations among the things and thoughts of Time, to attain a portion of that Loveliness whose very elements, perhaps, appertain to eternity alone. And thus when by Poetry — or when by Music, the most entrancing of the Poetic moods — we find ourselves melted into tears — we weep then — not as the Abbate Gravina supposes — through excess of pleasure, but through a certain, petulant, impatient sorrow at our inability to grasp *now*, wholly, here on earth, at once and for ever, those divine and rapturous joys, of which *through* the poem, or *through* the music, we attain to but brief and indeterminate glimpses.

The struggle to apprehend the supernal Loveliness — this struggle, on the part of souls fittingly constituted — has given to the world all *that* which it (the world) has ever been enabled at once to understand and *to feel* as poetic.

The Poetic Sentiment, of course, may develope itself in various modes — in Painting, in Sculpture, in Architecture, in the Dance — very especially in Music — and very peculiarly, and with a wide field, in the composition of the Landscape Garden. Our present theme, however, has regard only to its manifestation in words. And here let me speak briefly on the topic of rhythm. Contenting myself with the certainty that Music, in its various modes of metre, rhythm, and rhyme, is of so vast a moment in Poetry as never to be wisely rejected — is so vitally important an adjunct, that he is simply silly who declines its assistance, I will not now pause to maintain its absolute essentiality. It is in Music, perhaps, that the soul most nearly attains the great end for which, when inspired by the Poetic Sentiment, it struggles — the creation of supernal

Beauty. It *may* be, indeed, that here this sublime end is, now and then, attained *in fact*. We are often made to feel, with a shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which *cannot* have been unfamiliar to the angels. And thus there can be little doubt that in the union of Poetry with Music in its popular sense, we shall find the widest field for the Poetic development. The old Bards and Minnesingers had advantages which we do not possess — and Thomas Moore, singing his own songs, was, in the most legitimate manner, perfecting them as poems.

To recapitulate, then: — I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth.

A few words, however, in explanation. *That* pleasure which is at once the most pure, the most elevating, and the most intense, is derived, I maintain, from the contemplation of the Beautiful. In the contemplation of Beauty we alone find it possible to attain that pleasurable elevation, or excitement, *of the soul*, which we recognise as the Poetic Sentiment, and which is so easily distinguished from Truth, which is the satisfaction of the Reason, or from Passion, which is the excitement of the heart. I make Beauty, therefore — using the word as inclusive of the sublime — I make Beauty the province of the poem, simply because it is an obvious rule of Art that effects should be made to spring as directly as possible from their causes: — no one as yet having been weak enough to deny that the peculiar elevation in question is at least *most readily* attainable in the poem. It by no means follows, how-

ever, that the incitements of Passion, or the precepts of Duty, or even the lessons of Truth, may not be introduced into a poem, and with advantage; for they may subserve, incidentally, in various ways, the general purposes of the work: — but the true artist will always contrive to tone them down in proper subjection to that *Beauty* which is the atmosphere and the real essence of the poem.

I cannot better introduce the few poems which I shall present for your consideration, than by the citation of the Proem to Mr. Longfellow's "Waif":

The day is done, and the darkness
  Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
  From an Eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
  Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,
  That my soul cannot resist;

A feeling of sadness and longing,
  That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
  As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
  Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
  And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
  Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
  Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
  Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavour;
  And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
  Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
  Or tears from the eyelids start;

Who through long days of labour,
  And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
  Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
  The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
  That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
  The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
  The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
  And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
  And as silently steal away.

With no great range of imagination, these lines have been justly admired for their delicacy of expression. Some of the images are very effective. Nothing can be better than —

——— The bards sublime,
  Whose distant footsteps echo
Down the corridors of Time.[1]

The idea of the last quatrain is also very effective. The poem, on the whole, however, is chiefly to be admired for the graceful *insouciance* of its metre, so well in accordance with the character of the sentiments, and especially for the *ease* of the general manner. This "ease," or naturalness, in a literary style, it has long been the fashion to regard as ease in appearance alone — as a point of really difficult attainment.

[1] So quoted.

But not so: — a natural manner is difficult only to him who should never meddle with it — to the unnatural. It is but the result of writing with the understanding, or with the instinct, that *the tone*, in composition, should always be that which the mass of mankind would adopt — and must perpetually vary, of course, with the occasion. The author who, after the fashion of "The North American Review," should be, upon *all* occasions, merely "quiet," must necessarily upon *many* occasions, be simply silly, or stupid; and has no more right to be considered "easy," or "natural," than a Cockney exquisite, or than the sleeping Beauty in the wax-works.

Among the minor poems of Bryant, none has so much impressed me as the one which he entitles "June." I quote only a portion of it:

There, through the long, long summer hours,
  The golden light should lie,
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
  Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale, close beside my cell;
  The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife-bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts, at noon,
  Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon,
  With fairy laughter blent?
And what, if in the evening light,
Betrothed lovers walk in sight
  Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know, I know I should not see[1]
  The season's glorious show,

[1] So quoted.

Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is — that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

The rhythmical flow, here, is even voluptuous — nothing could be more melodious. The poem has always affected me in a remarkable manner. The intense melancholy which seems to well up, perforce, to the surface of all the poet's cheerful sayings about his grave, we find thrilling us to the soul — while there is the truest poetic elevation in the thrill. The impression left is one of a pleasurable sadness. And if, in the remaining compositions which I shall introduce to you, there be more or less of a similar tone always apparent, let me remind you that (how or why we know not) this certain taint of sadness is inseparably connected with all the higher manifestations of true Beauty. It is, nevertheless,

A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

The taint of which I speak is clearly perceptible

even in a poem so full of brilliancy and spirit as the "Health" of Edward Coate Pinckney:

I fill this cup to one made up
  Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
  The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
  And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
  'Tis less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
  Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
  Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
  And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burden'd bee
  Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
  The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
  The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
  So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns, —
  The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
  A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
  A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
  So very much endears,
When death is nigh, my latest sigh
  Will not be life's but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
  Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
  The seeming paragon —

Her health! and would on earth there stood,
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

It was the misfortune of Mr. Pinckney to have been born too far south. Had he been a New Englander, it is probable that he would have been ranked as the first of American lyrists, by that magnanimous cabal which has so long controlled the destinies of American Letters, in conducting the thing called "The North American Review." The poem just cited is especially beautiful; but the poetic elevation which it induces, we must refer chiefly to our sympathy in the poet's enthusiasm. We pardon his hyperboles for the evident earnestness with which they are uttered.

It was by no means my design, however, to expatiate upon the *merits* of what I should read you. These will necessarily speak for themselves. Boccalini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that Zoilus once presented Apollo a very caustic criticism upon a very admirable book: — whereupon the god asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only busied himself about the errors. On hearing this, Apollo, handing him a sack of unwinnowed wheat, bade him pick out *all the chaff* for his reward.

Now this fable answers very well as a hit at the critics — but I am by no means sure that the god was in the right. I am by no means certain that the true limits of the critical duty are not grossly misunderstood. Excellence, in a poem especially, may be considered in the light of an axiom, which need only be properly *put*, to become self-evident. It is *not* excellence if it require to be demonstrated as such: — and thus, to

point out too particularly the merits of a work of Art, is to admit that they are *not* merits altogether.

Among the "Melodies" of Thomas Moore, is one whose distinguished character as a poem proper, seems to have been singularly left out of view. I allude to his lines beginning — "Come rest in this bosom." The intense energy of their expression is not surpassed by anything in Byron. There are two of the lines in which a sentiment is conveyed that embodies the *all in all* of the divine passion of love — a sentiment which, perhaps, has found its echo in more, and in more passionate, human hearts than any other single sentiment ever embodied in words:

Come, rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here;
Here still is the smile, that no cloud can o'ercast,
And a heart and a hand all thy own to the last.

Oh! what was love made for, if 't is not the same
Through joy and through torment, through glory and shame?
I know not, I ask not, if guilt 's in that heart,
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art.

Thou hast call'd me thy Angel in moments of bliss,
And thy Angel I 'll be, 'mid the horrors of this, —
Through the furnace, unshrinking, thy steps to pursue,
And shield thee, and save thee, — or perish there too!

It has been the fashion, of late days, to deny Moore imagination, while granting him fancy — a distinction originating with Coleridge — than whom no man more fully comprehended the great powers of Moore. The fact is, that the fancy of this poet so far predominates over all his other faculties, and over the fancy of all other men, as to have induced, very naturally, the idea that he is fanciful *only*. But never was there a greater mistake. Never was a grosser wrong done the fame

of a true poet. In the compass of the English language I can call to mind no poem more profoundly — more weirdly *imaginative*, in the best sense, than the lines commencing — "I would I were by that dim lake" — which are the composition of Thomas Moore. I regret that I am unable to remember them.

One of the noblest — and, speaking of fancy, one of the most singularly fanciful of modern poets, was Thomas Hood. His "Fair Ines" had always, for me, an inexpressible charm:

O saw ye not fair Ines!
  She's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
  And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
  The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
  And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
  Before the fall of night,
For fear the moon should shine alone,
  And stars unrivall'd bright;
And blessed will the lover be
  That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
  I dare not even write!

Would I had been, fair Ines,
  That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
  And whisper'd thee so near!
Were there no bonny dames at home,
  Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
  The dearest of the dear?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
  Descend along the shore,

With bands of noble gentlemen,
  And banners wav'd before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
  And snowy plumes they wore;
It would have been a beauteous dream,
  If it had been no more!

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
  She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
  And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad and felt no mirth,
  But only Music 's wrong,
In sounds that sang farewell, farewell,
  To her you 've loved so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines,
  That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
  Nor danced so light before, —
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
  And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that blest one lover's heart
  Has broken many more!

"The Haunted House," by the same author, is one of the truest poems ever written — one of the *truest* — one of the most unexceptionable — one of the most thoroughly artistic, both in its theme and in its execution. It is, moreover, powerfully ideal — imaginative. I regret that its length renders it unsuitable for the purposes of this Lecture. In place of it, permit me to offer the universally appreciated "Bridge of Sighs."

One more Unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care; —

Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing. —

Touch her not scornfully;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now, is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonour,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily,
Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity

Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed:
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence,
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river:
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd —
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran, —
Over the brink of it,
Picture it — think of it,
Dissolute Man!
Lave in it, drink of it
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, — kindly, —
Smooth, and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest, —
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!
Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

The vigour of this poem is no less remarkable than its pathos. The versification, although carrying the fanciful to the very verge of the fantastic, is nevertheless admirably adapted to the wild insanity which is the thesis of the poem.

Among the minor poems of Lord Byron, is one which has never received from the critics the praise which it undoubtedly deserves:

Though the day of my destiny 's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted
It shrunk not to share it with me,

And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shivered,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To pain — it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn —
They may torture, but shall not subdue me —
'T is of *thee* that I think — not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake, —
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one —
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'T was folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all:

In the desert a fountain is springing,
  In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
  Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

Although the rhythm here is one of the most difficult, the versification could scarcely be improved. No nobler *theme* ever engaged the pen of poet. It is the soul-elevating idea, that no man can consider himself entitled to complain of Fate while, in his adversity, he still retains the unwavering love of woman.

From Alfred Tennyson — although in perfect sincerity I regard him as the noblest poet that ever lived — I have left myself time to cite only a very brief specimen. I call him, and *think* him the noblest of poets — *not* because the impressions he produces are, at *all* times, the most profound — *not* because the poetical excitement which he induces is, at *all* times, the most intense — but because it *is*, at all times, the most ethereal — in other words, the most elevating and the most pure. No poet is so little of the earth, earthy. What I am about to read is from his last long poem, "The Princess":

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes

The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

Thus, although in a very cursory and imperfect manner, I have endeavoured to convey to you my conception of the Poetic Principle. It has been my purpose to suggest that, while this Principle itself is, strictly and simply, the Human Aspiration for Supernal Beauty, the manifestation of the Principle is always found in *an elevating excitement of the Soul* — quite independent of that passion which is the intoxication of the Heart — or of that Truth which is the satisfaction of the Reason. For, in regard to Passion, alas! its tendency is to degrade, rather than to elevate the Soul. Love, on the contrary — Love — the true, the divine Eros — the Uranian, as distinguished from the Dionæan Venus — is unquestionably the purest and truest of all poetical themes. And in regard to Truth — if, to be sure, through the attainment of a truth, we are led to perceive a harmony where none was apparent before, we experience, at once, the true poetical effect — but this effect is referable to the harmony alone, and not in the least degree to the truth which merely served to render the harmony manifest.

We shall reach, however, more immediately a distinct conception of what the true Poetry is, by mere reference to a few of the simple elements which induce in the Poet himself the true poetical effect. He recognises the ambrosia which nourishes his soul, in the bright orbs that shine in Heaven — in the volutes of

the flower — in the clustering of low shrubberies — in the waving of the grain-fields — in the slanting of tall, Eastern trees — in the blue distance of mountains — in the grouping of clouds — in the twinkling of half-hidden brooks — in the gleaming of silver rivers — in the repose of sequestered lakes — in the star-mirroring depths of lonely wells. He perceives it in the songs of birds — in the harp of Æolus — in the sighing of the night-wind — in the repining voice of the forest — in the surf that complains to the shore — in the fresh breath of the woods — in the scent of the violet — in the voluptuous perfume of the hyacinth — in the suggestive odour that comes to him, at eventide, from far-distant, undiscovered islands, over dim oceans, illimitable and unexplored. He owns it in all noble thoughts — in all unworldly motives — in all holy impulses — in all chivalrous, generous, and self-sacrificing deeds. He feels it in the beauty of woman — in the grace of her step — in the lustre of her eye — in the melody of her voice — in her soft laughter — in her sigh — in the harmony of the rustling of her robes. He deeply feels it in her winning endearments — in her burning enthusiasms — in her gentle charities — in her meek and devotional endurances — but above all — ah, far above all — he kneels to it — he worships it in the faith, in the purity, in the strength, in the altogether divine majesty — of her *love*.

Let me conclude — by the recitation of yet another brief poem — one very different in character from any that I have before quoted. It is by Motherwell, and is called "The Song of the Cavalier." With our modern and altogether rational ideas of the absurdity and impiety of warfare, we are not precisely in that frame of mind best adapted to sympathise with the

sentiments, and thus to appreciate the real excellence of the poem. To do this fully, we must identify ourselves, in fancy, with the soul of the old cavalier.

Then mounte! then mounte, brave gallants, all,
  And don your helmes amaine:
Deathe's couriers, Fame and Honour, call
  Us to the field againe.
No shrewish teares shall fill our eye
  When the sword-hilt 's in our hand, —
Heart-whole we 'll part, and no whit sighe
  For the fayrest of the land;
Let piping swaine, and craven wight,
  Thus weepe and puling crye,
Our business is like men to fight,
  And hero-like to die!

THE COMPLETE WORKS

OF

EDGAR ALLAN POE

VOLUME XV.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

Among the most interesting occurrences of Poe's chequered life was his contribution of the famous series of Literati papers to Godey's Lady's Book in the summer and fall of 1846. These papers, six in number, and entitled "The Literati of New York City," ran from May to October, and the first number proved so popular that it had to be reprinted, along with the autographs of the writers under discussion, in the June number. The writers discussed were thirty-eight in number, and embraced all the shining literary lights of the metropolis, — men and women distinguished in poetry, criticism, and journalism. Poe insists that the names were selected at random, and they were grouped together in the six numbers of Godey's without any special effort at order or arrangement. Thus, in the May group we find George Bush, G. H. Colton, N. P. Willis, W. M. Gillespie, C. F. Briggs, W. Kirkland, and J. W. Francis, — a collection of amiable nobodies (except Willis) who exercised a kind of haphazard sovereignty over the literary Cockaigne of the day. Men and women alike were admitted to the Pantheon of celebrities; poets and poetesses are found there in profusion, and nearly all are discussed in a strain of gentle laudation such as one would hardly have expected from the fierce and implacable Poe. The alarm excited at first by the announcement of the series

caused Mr. Godey to address a note to the agitated "Minor Contemporaries," but, as the reader will see, Zephyr himself could hardly have breathed more tenderly over the perturbed spirit than did Poe in these memorable papers. In this connection it will be of interest to read the following announcements which appeared in Godey's:

"The first number of our union is presented to the readers of 'Godey's Lady's Book' and 'Arthur's Magazine.' The union combines all the great contributors to both publications. Mr. Arthur, it will be seen, contributes to this number; and Mr. E. A. Poe commences No. 1 of the New York Literati. We are much mistaken if these papers of Mr. P. do not raise some commotion in the literary emporium." — *Editor's Book Table, Godey's Lady's Book, May, 1846.*

The Authors and Mr. Poe.

"We have received several letters from New York, anonymous, and from personal friends, requesting us to be careful what we allow Mr. Poe to say of the New York authors, many of whom are our personal friends. We reply to one and all that we have nothing to do but publish Mr. Poe's opinion, *not our own.* Whether we agree with Mr. Poe or not is another matter. We are not to be intimidated by a threat of the loss of friends, or turned from our purpose by honeyed words. Our course is onward. The May edition was exhausted before the first of May, and we have had orders for hundreds from Boston and New York, which we could not supply. The first number of the series (with autographs) is republished in this number, which also contains No. 2. The usual quantity of reading matter is given in addition to the notices.

"Many attempts have been made and are making by various persons to forestall public opinion. We have

the name of one person. Others are busy with reports of Mr. Poe's illness. Mr. Poe has been ill, but we have letters from him of very recent dates; also a new batch of the *Literati*, which show anything but feebleness either of body or mind. Almost every paper that we exchange with has praised our new enterprise — the Union — and spoken in high terms of No. 1 of Mr. Poe's opinions." — *Editor's Book Table, Godey's Lady's Book, June, 1846.*

"We hear of some complaints having been made by those writers who have already been noticed by Mr. Poe. Some of the ladies have suggested that the publisher has something to do with them. This we positively deny, and we as positively assert, that they are published as written by Mr. Poe, without any alteration or suggestion from us." — *Godey's Lady's Book, September, 1846.*

"In Mr. Poe's notice of Richard Adams Locke, in the October number of the Lady's Book for 1846, there occur some errors touching the 'Sun' newspaper in N. York, which we desire to correct. In the first place, the 'Sun' newspaper was started by Messrs. Day & Wisner, and not Moses Y. Beach. It is also stated that Beach employed Locke to write the moon hoax, when the fact is it was published in the 'Sun' some two or three years before Mr. Beach became interested in the paper — Benjamin H. Day being then the sole owner, who purchased the story of Mr. Locke." — *Godey's Lady's Book, May, 1847.*

"The Literati of New York City," now for the first time printed under its own title just as Poe wrote it, was "edited" by Griswold, who substituted, for Poe's papers on Thomas Dunn English, Mary E. Hewitt, James Lawson, C. F. Briggs, and Mrs. F. S. Osgood, other papers in the Poe manner. These Griswold versions will be found in the Appendix.

We have carefully disentangled what might well be called the snarl of the Literati by printing the dated divisions as the articles originally appeared, by editing every article carefully from the original Godey series, and by giving in every possible case Poe's own orthography and punctuation.

We fancy it will be an agreeable surprise to most readers and students of Poe to find reprinted in this volume for the first time the famous "Autography" papers of the "Southern Literary Messenger" of February–August, 1836. If we exclude "Hans Pfaall," this was the earliest of his celebrated hoaxes, and created an immense stir in its day. Its mixture of humor and audacity was prophetic even at this early age (26) of things yet to come in the way of sardonic satire, biting wit, and grotesque extravagance. It is accompanied in this volume by its "double," the paper of genuine autographs, reproduced exactly from "Graham's Magazine" for November, December, and January, 1841–42. Poe promised, in the latter series, one hundred autographs, with running comments thereon, but actually gave one hundred and twenty-eight or one hundred and twenty-nine in all. The autographs omitted by Griswold (among them his own!), have all been restored, as has also been reprinted here Poe's Appendix to the original series.

It may interest the reader to know that the type of the Messenger papers was set up from carefully prepared photographs of the yellowed pages of the old periodical. He will also find it interesting to compare Poe's judgments and criticisms in "The Literati" with those in "Autography."

THE

LITERATI OF NEW YORK CITY.

Some Honest Opinions at Random respecting their Autorial Merits, with occasional Words of Personality.

I.

Author's Introduction.

[Text: *Godey's Lady's Book*, May, 1846.[1]]

In a criticism on Bryant, published in the last number of this magazine, I was at some pains in pointing out the distinction between the popular "opinion" of the merits of cotemporary authors, and that held and expressed of them in private literary society. The former species of "opinion" can be called "opinion" only by courtesy. It is the public's

[1] The text here given is a variation from that found in Griswold, Vol. III. Griswold prefaced the material by the following note: "In 1846, Mr. Poe published in *The Lady's Book* a series of six articles, entitled 'The Literati of New-York City,' in which he professed to give 'some honest opinions at random respecting their autorial merits, with occasional words of personality.' The series was introduced by the following paragraphs, and the personal sketches were given in the order in which they are here reprinted, from 'George Bush' to 'Richard Adams Locke.' The other notices of American and foreign writers, were contributed by Mr. Poe to various journals, chiefly in the last four or five years of his life."

own, just as we consider a book our own when we have bought it. In general, this opinion is adopted from the journals of the day, and I have endeavoured to show that the cases are rare indeed in which these journals express any other sentiment about books than such as may be attributed directly or indirectly to the authors of the books. The most "popular," the most "successful" writers among us, (for a brief period, at least,) are, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, persons of mere address, perseverance, effrontery — in a word, busy-bodies, toadies, quacks. These people easily succeed in *boring* editors (whose attention is too often entirely engrossed by politics or other "business" matter) into the admission of favourable notices written or caused to be written by interested parties — or, at least, into the admission of *some* notice where, under ordinary circumstances, *no* notice would be given at all. In this way ephemeral "reputations" are manufactured which, for the most part, serve all the purposes designed — that is to say, the putting money into the purse of the quack and the quack's publisher; for there never was a quack who could be brought to comprehend the value of mere fame. Now, men of genius will not resort to these manœuvres, because genius involves in its very essence a scorn of chicanery; and thus for a time the quacks always get the advantage of them, both in respect to pecuniary profit and what *appears* to be public esteem.

There is another point of view, too. Your literary quacks court, in especial, the personal acquaintance of those "connected with the press." Now these latter, even when penning a voluntary, that is to say, an uninstigated notice of the book of an acquaintance, feel as if writing not so much for the eye of the public

as for the eye of the acquaintance, and the notice is fashioned accordingly. The bad points of the work are slurred over and the good ones brought out into the best light, all this through a feeling akin to that which makes it unpleasant to speak ill of one to one's face. In the case of men of genius, editors, as a general rule, have no such delicacy — for the simple reason that, as a general rule, they have no acquaintance with these men of genius, a class proverbial for shunning society.

But the very editors who hesitate at saying in print an ill word of an author personally known, are usually the most frank in speaking about him privately. In literary society, they seem bent upon avenging the wrongs self-inflicted upon their own consciences. Here, accordingly, the quack is treated as he deserves — even a little more harshly than he deserves — by way of striking a balance. True merit, on the same principle, is apt to be slightly overrated; but, upon the whole, there is a close approximation to absolute honesty of opinion; and this honesty is farther secured by the mere trouble to which it puts one in conversation to model one's countenance to a falsehood. We place on paper without hesitation a tissue of flatteries, to which in society we could not give utterance, for our lives, without either blushing or laughing outright.

For these reasons there exists a very remarkable discrepancy between the apparent public opinion of any given author's merits and the opinion which is expressed of him orally by those who are best qualified to judge. For example, Mr. Hawthorne, the author of "Twice-Told Tales," is scarcely recognised by the press or by the public, and when noticed at all, is

noticed merely to be damned by faint praise. Now, my own opinion of him is, that although his walk is limited and he is fairly to be charged with mannerism, treating all subjects in a similar tone of dreamy *innuendo*, yet in this walk he evinces extraordinary genius, having no rival either in America or elsewhere — and this opinion I have never heard gainsaid by any one literary person in the country. That this opinion, however, is a spoken and not a written one, is referable to the facts, first, that Mr. Hawthorne *is* a poor man, and, second, that he *is not* an ubiquitous quack.

Again, of Mr. Longfellow, who, although little quacky *per se*, has, through his social and literary position as a man of property and a professor at Harvard, a whole legion of active quacks at his control — of *him* what is the apparent popular opinion? Of course, that he is a poetical phenomenon, as entirely without fault as is the luxurious paper upon which his poems are invariably borne to the public eye. In private society he is regarded with one voice as a poet of far more than usual ability, a skillful artist and a well-read man, but as less remarkable in either capacity than as a determined imitator and a dexterous adapter of the ideas of other people. For years I have conversed with no literary person who did not entertain precisely these ideas of Professor L.; and, in fact, on all literary topics there is in society a seemingly wonderful coincidence of opinion. The author accustomed to seclusion, and mingling for the first time with those who have been associated with him only through their works, is astonished and delighted at finding common to all whom he meets conclusions which he had blindly fancied were attained by himself alone and in opposition to the judgment of mankind.

In the series of papers which I now propose, my design is, in giving my own unbiased opinion of the *literati* (male and female) of New York, to give at the same time, very closely if not with absolute accuracy, that of conversational society in literary circles. It must be expected, of course, that in innumerable particulars, I shall differ from the voice, that is to say, from what appears to be the voice of the public — but this is a matter of no consequence whatever.

New York literature may be taken as a fair representation of that of the country at large. The city itself is the focus of American letters. Its authors include, perhaps, one-fourth of all in America, and the influence they exert on their brethren, if seemingly silent, is not the less extensive and decisive. As I shall have to speak of many individuals, my limits will not permit me to speak of them otherwise than in brief, but this brevity will be merely consistent with the design, which is that of simple *opinion*, with little of either argument or detail. With one or two exceptions I am well acquainted with every author to be introduced, and I shall avail myself of the acquaintance to convey, generally, some idea of the personal appearance of all who, in this regard, would be likely to interest the readers of the magazine. As any precise order or arrangement seems unnecessary and may be inconvenient, I shall maintain none. It will be understood that, without reference to supposed merit or demerit, each individual is introduced absolutely at random.

George Bush.

The Reverend George Bush is Professor of Hebrew in the University of New York, and has long been distinguished for the extent and variety of his attainments in oriental literature; indeed, as an oriental linguist it is probable that he has no equal among us. He has published a great deal, and his books have always the good fortune to attract attention throughout the civilized world. His "Treatise on the Millennium" is, perhaps, that of his earlier compositions by which he is most extensively as well as most favourably known. Of late days he has created a singular commotion in the realm of theology by his "Anastasis, or the Doctrine of the Resurrection: in which it is shown that the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body is not sanctioned by Reason or Revelation." This work has been zealously attacked, and as zealously defended by the professor and his friends. There can be no doubt that, up to this period, the Bushites have had the best of the battle. The "Anastasis" is lucidly, succinctly, vigorously and logically written, and proves, in my opinion, everything that it attempts — provided we admit the imaginary axioms from which it starts; and this is as much as can be well said of any theological disquisition under the sun. It might be hinted, too, in reference as well to Professor Bush as to his opponents, "*que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas en ce qu'elles nient.*" A subsequent work on "The Soul," by the author of "Anastasis," has made nearly as much noise as the "Anastasis" itself.

Taylor, who wrote so ingeniously "The Natural History of Enthusiasm," might have derived many a valuable hint from the study of Professor Bush. No man is more ardent in his theories; and these latter are neither few nor commonplace. He is a Mesmerist and a Swedenborgian — has lately been engaged in editing Swedenborg's works, publishing them in numbers. He converses with fervour, and often with eloquence. Very probably he will establish an independent church.

He is one of the most amiable men in the world, universally respected and beloved. His frank, unpretending simplicity of demeanour, is especially winning.

In person, he is tall, nearly six feet, and spare, with large bones. His countenance expresses rather benevolence and profound earnestness than high intelligence. The eyes are piercing; the other features, in general, massive. The forehead, phrenologically, indicates causality and comparison, with deficient ideality — the organization which induces strict logicality from insufficient premises. He walks with a slouching gait and with an air of abstraction. His dress is exceedingly plain. In respect to the arrangement about his study, he has many of the Magliabechian habits. He is, perhaps, fifty-five years of age, and seems to enjoy good health.

George H. Colton.

Mr. Colton is noted as the author of "Tecumseh," and as the originator and editor of "The American Review," a Whig magazine of the higher

(that is to say, of the five dollar) class. I must not be understood as meaning any disrespect to the work. It is, in my opinion, by far the best of its order in this country, and is supported in the way of contribution by many of the very noblest intellects. Mr. Colton, if in nothing else, has shown himself a man of genius in his successful establishment of the magazine within so brief a period. It is now commencing its second year, and I can say, from my own personal knowledge, that its circulation exceeds two thousand—it is probably about two thousand five hundred. So marked and immediate a success has never been attained by any of our five dollar magazines, with the exception of "The Southern Literary Messenger," which, in the course of nineteen months, (subsequent to the seventh from its commencement,) attained a circulation of rather more than five thousand.

I cannot conscientiously call Mr. Colton a good editor, although I think that he will finally be so. He improves wonderfully with experience. His present defects are timidity and a lurking taint of partiality, amounting to positive prejudice (in the vulgar sense) for the literature of the Puritans. I do not think, however, that he is at all aware of such prepossession. His taste is rather unexceptionable than positively good. He has not, perhaps, sufficient fire within himself to appreciate it in others. Nevertheless, he endeavours to do so, and in this endeavour he is not inapt to take opinions at secondhand—to adopt, I mean, the opinions of others. He is nervous, and a very trifling difficulty disconcerts him, without getting the better of a sort of dogged perseverance, which will make a thoroughly successful man of him in the end. He is (classically) well educated.

As a poet he has done better things than "Tecumseh," in whose length he has committed a radical and irreparable error, sufficient in itself to destroy a far better book. Some portions of it are truly poetical; very many portions belong to a high order of eloquence; it is invariably well versified, and has no glaring defects, but, upon the whole, is insufferably tedious. Some of the author's shorter compositions, published anonymously in his magazine, have afforded indications even of genius.

Mr. Colton is marked in his personal appearance. He is probably not more than thirty, but an air of constant thought (with a pair of spectacles) causes him to seem somewhat older. He is about five feet eight or nine in height, and fairly proportioned—neither stout nor thin. His forehead is quite intellectual. His mouth has a peculiar expression difficult to describe. Hair light and generally in disorder. He converses fluently and, upon the whole, well, but grandiloquently, and with a tone half tragical, half pulpital.

In character he is in the highest degree estimable, a most sincere, high-minded and altogether honourable man. He is unmarried.

N. P. Willis.

Whatever may be thought of Mr. Willis's talents, there can be no doubt about the fact that, both as an author and as a man, he has made a good deal of noise in the world — at least for an American. His literary

life, in especial, has been one continual *émeute;* but then his literary character is modified or impelled in a very remarkable degree by his personal one. His success (for in point of fame, if of nothing else, he has certainly been successful) is to be attributed, one-third to his mental ability and two-thirds to his physical temperament — the latter goading him into the accomplishment of what the former merely gave him the means of accomplishing.

At a very early age Mr. Willis seems to have arrived at an understanding that, in a republic such as ours, the *mere* man of letters must ever be a cipher, and endeavoured, accordingly, to unite the *éclat* of the *littérateur* with that of the man of fashion or of society. He "pushed himself," went much into the world, made friends with the gentler sex, "delivered" poetical addresses, wrote "scriptural" poems, traveled, sought the intimacy of noted women, and got into quarrels with notorious men. All these things served his purpose — if, indeed, I am right in supposing that he had any purpose at all. It is quite probable that, as before hinted, he acted only in accordance with his physical temperament; but be this as it may, his *personnel* greatly advanced, if it did not altogether establish his literary fame. I have often carefully considered whether, without the *physique* of which I speak, there is that in the absolute *morale* of Mr. Willis which would have earned him reputation as a man of letters, and my conclusion is, that he could not have failed to become noted in *some* degree under almost any circumstances, but that about two-thirds (as above stated) of his appreciation by the public should be attributed to those *adventures* which grew immediately out of his animal constitution.

He received what is usually regarded as a "good education" — that is to say, he graduated at college; but his education, in the path he pursued, was worth to him, on account of his extraordinary *savoir faire*, fully twice as much as would have been its value in any common case. No man's knowledge is more available, no man has exhibited greater *tact* in the seemingly casual display of his wares. With *him*, at least, a little learning is *no* dangerous thing. He possessed at one time, I believe, the average quantum of American collegiate lore — "a little Latin and less Greek," a smattering of physical and metaphysical science, and (I should judge) a *very* little of the mathematics — but all this must be considered as mere *guess* on my part. Mr. Willis speaks French with some fluency, and Italian not quite so well.

Within the ordinary range of *belles lettres* authorship, he has evinced much versatility. If called on to designate him by any general literary title, I might term him a magazinist — for his compositions have invariably the species of *effect*, with the brevity which the magazine demands. We may view him as a paragraphist, an essayist, or rather "sketcher," a tale writer and a poet.

In the first capacity he fails. His points, however good when deliberately wrought, are too *recherchés* to be put hurriedly before the public eye. Mr. W. has by no means the *readiness* which the editing a newspaper demands. He composes (as did Addison, and as do many of the most brilliant and seemingly *dashing* writers of the present day,) with great labour and frequent erasure and interlineation. His MSS., in this regard, present a very singular appearance, and indicate the *vacillation* which is, perhaps, the leading

trait of his character. A newspaper, too, in its longer articles — its "leaders" — very frequently demands argumentation, and here Mr. W. is remarkably out of his element. His exuberant *fancy* leads him over hedge and ditch — anywhere from the main road; and, besides, he is far too readily self-dispossessed. With time at command, however, his great *tact* stands him instead of all argumentative power, and enables him to overthrow an antagonist without permitting the latter to see how he is overthrown. A fine example of this "management" is to be found in Mr. W.'s reply to a very inconsiderate attack upon his social standing made by one of the editors of the New York "Courier and Inquirer." I have always regarded this reply as the highest evidence of its author's ability, as a masterpiece of ingenuity, if not of absolute genius. The skill of the whole lay in this — that, without troubling himself to refute the charges themselves brought against him by Mr. Raymond, he put forth his strength in rendering them null, to all intents and purposes, by obliterating, incidentally and without letting his design be perceived, all *the impression* these charges were calculated to convey. But this reply can be called a newspaper article only on the ground of its having appeared in a newspaper.

As a writer of "sketches," properly so called, Mr. Willis is unequalled. Sketches — especially of society — are his *forte*, and they are so for no other reason than that they afford him the best opportunity of introducing the personal Willis — or, more distinctly, because this species of composition is most susceptible of impression from his personal character. The *dégagé* tone of this kind of writing, too, best admits and encourages that *fancy* which Mr. W.

possesses in the most extraordinary degree; it is in fancy that he reigns supreme: this, more than any one other quality, and, indeed, more than all his other *literary* qualities combined, has made him what he is.[1] It is this which gives him the originality, the

[1] As, by metaphysicians and in ordinary discourse, the word *fancy* is used with very little determinateness of meaning, I may be pardoned for repeating here what I have elsewhere said on this topic. I shall thus be saved much misapprehension in regard to the term — one which will necessarily be often employed in the course of this series.

"Fancy," says the author of "Aids to Reflection," (who aided reflection to much better purpose in his "Genevieve,") — "fancy combines — imagination creates." This was intended and has been received as a distinction, but it is a distinction without a difference — without a difference even of degree. The fancy as nearly creates as the imagination, and neither at all. Novel conceptions are merely unusual combinations. The mind of man can imagine nothing which does not really exist; if it could, it would create not only ideally but substantially, as do the thoughts of God. It may be said, "We imagine a griffin, yet a griffin does not exist." Not the griffin, certainly, but its component parts. It is no more than a collation of known limbs, features, qualities. Thus with all which claims to be new, which appears to be a creation of the intellect — all is re-soluble into the old. The wildest effort of the mind cannot stand the test of this analysis.

Imagination, fancy, fantasy and humour, have in common the elements combination and novelty. The imagination is the artist of the four. From novel arrangements of old forms which present themselves to it, it selects such only as are harmonious; the result, of course, is *beauty* itself — using the word in its most extended sense and as inclusive of the sublime. The pure imagination chooses, *from either beauty or deformity*, only the most combinable things hitherto uncombined; the compound, as a general rule, partaking in character of sublimity or beauty in the ratio of the respective sublimity or beauty of the things combined, which are themselves still to be considered as atomic — that is to say, as previous combinations. But, as often analogously happens in physical chemistry, so not unfrequently does it occur in this chemistry of the intellect, that the admixture of two elements will

freshness, the point, the piquancy, which appear to be the immediate, but which are, in fact, the mediate sources of his popularity.

result in a something that shall have nothing of the quality of one of them — or even nothing of the qualities of either. The range of imagination is thus unlimited. Its materials extend throughout the universe. Even out of deformities it fabricates that *beauty* which is at once its sole object and its inevitable test. But, in general, the richness of the matters combined, the facility of discovering combinable novelties worth combining, and *the absolute "chemical combination"* of the completed mass, are the particulars to be regarded in our estimate of imagination. It is this thorough harmony of an imaginative work which so often causes it to be undervalued by the undiscriminating, through the character of *obviousness* which is superinduced. We are apt to find ourselves asking *why it is that these combinations have never been imagined before?*

Now, when this question *does not occur*, when the harmony of the combination is comparatively neglected, and when, in addition to the element of novelty, there is introduced the sub-element of *unexpectedness* — when, for example, matters are brought into combination which not only have never been combined, but whose combination strikes us as a *difficulty happily overcome*, the result then appertains to the fancy, and is, to the majority of mankind, more grateful than the purely harmonious one — although, absolutely, it is less beautiful (or grand) for the reason that *it is* less harmonious.

Carrying its errors into excess — for, however enticing, they *are* errors still, or nature lies — fancy is at length found infringing upon the province of fantasy. The votaries of this latter delight not only in novelty and unexpectedness of combination, but in the *avoidance* of proportion. The result is, therefore, abnormal, and, to a healthy mind, affords less of pleasure through its novelty than of pain through its incoherence. When, proceeding a step farther, however, fancy seeks not merely disproportionate but incongruous or antagonistic elements, the effect is rendered more pleasurable by its greater positiveness; there is a merry effort of truth to shake from her that which is no property of hers, and we laugh outright in recognising humour.

The four faculties in question seem to me all of their class; but when either fancy or humour is expressed to gain an end, is pointed at a purpose — whenever either becomes objective in place of sub-

In *tales* (written with deliberation for the magazines) he has shown greater *constructiveness* than I should have given him credit for had I not read his compositions of this order — for in this faculty all his other works indicate a singular deficiency. The chief charm even of these tales, however, is still referable to *fancy*.

As a poet, Mr. Willis is not entitled, I think, to so high a rank as he may justly claim through his prose; and this for the reason that, although fancy is not inconsistent with any of the demands of those classes of prose compositions which he has attempted, and, indeed, is a vital element of most of them, still it is at war (as will be understood from what I have said in the foot note) with that purity and perfection of *beauty* which are the soul of the poem proper. I wish to be understood as saying this *generally* of our author's poems. In some instances, seeming to *feel* the truth of my proposition, (that fancy should have no place in the loftier poesy,) he has denied it a place, as in "Melanie," and his Scriptural pieces; but, unfortunately, he has been unable to supply the void with the true imagination, and these poems consequently are deficient in vigour, in *stamen*. The Scriptural pieces are quite "correct," as the French have it, and are much admired by a certain set of readers, who judge of a poem, not by its effect on themselves, but by the effect which they imagine it *might* have upon themselves were they not unhappily soulless, and by the effect which they take it for granted it *does* have upon others. It cannot be denied, however, that these pieces are, in general, tame, or indebted for what force they possess to the Scriptural

jective, then it becomes, also, pure wit or sarcasm, just as the purpose is benevolent or malevolent.

passages of which they are merely paraphrastic. I quote what, in my own opinion and in that of nearly all my friends, is really the truest poem ever written by Mr. Willis.

"UNSEEN SPIRITS.

"The shadows lay along Broadway,
'T was near the twilight tide,
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride —
Alone walked she, yet viewlessly
Walked spirits at her side.

"Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And honour charmed the air,
And all astir looked kind on her
And called her good as fair —
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

"She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true,
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo.
Ah, honoured well are charms to sell
When priests the selling do!

"Now, walking there was one more fair —
A slight girl, lily-pale,
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail —
'T wixt want and scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

"No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray —
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way;
And the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
By man is cursed alway."

There is about this little poem (evidently written in haste and through impulse) a true *imagination*. Its grace, dignity and pathos are impressive, and there is more in it of earnestness, of soul, than in anything I have seen from the pen of its author. His compositions, in general, have a taint of worldliness, of insincerity. The identical rhyme in the last stanza is very noticeable, and the whole *finale* is feeble. It would be improved by making the last two lines precede the first two of the stanza.

In classifying Mr. W.'s writings I did not think it worth while to speak of him as a dramatist, because, although he has written plays, what they have of merit is altogether in their character of poem. Of his "Bianca Visconti" I have little to say; — it deserved to fail, and did, although it abounded in *eloquent* passages. "Tortesa" abounded in the same, but had a great many dramatic *points* well calculated to tell with a conventional audience. Its characters, with the exception of Tomaso, a drunken buffoon, had no character at all, and the *plot* was a tissue of absurdities, inconsequences and inconsistencies; yet I cannot help thinking it, upon the whole, the best play ever written by an American.

Mr. Willis has made very few attempts at criticism, and those few (chiefly newspaper articles) have not impressed me with a high idea of his analytic abilities, although with a *very* high idea of his taste and discrimination.

His *style* proper may be called extravagant, *bizarre*, pointed, epigrammatic without being antithetical, (this is very rarely the case,) but, through all its whimsicalities, graceful, classic and *accurate*. He is very seldom to be caught tripping in the minor morals,

His English is *correct;* his most outrageous imagery is, at all events, unmixed.

Mr. Willis's career has naturally made him enemies among the envious host of dunces whom he has outstripped in the race for fame; and these his personal manner (a little tinctured with reserve, *brusquerie*, or even haughtiness) is by no means adapted to conciliate. He has innumerable warm friends, however, and is himself a warm friend. He is impulsive, generous, bold, impetuous, vacillating, irregularly energetic — apt to be hurried into error, but incapable of deliberate wrong.

He is yet young, and, without being handsome, in the ordinary sense, is a remarkably well-looking man. In height he is, perhaps, five feet eleven, and justly proportioned. His figure is put in the best light by the ease and assured grace of his carriage. His whole person and personal demeanour bear about them the traces of "good society." His face is somewhat too full, or rather heavy, in its lower portions. Neither his nose nor his forehead can be defended; the latter would puzzle phrenology. His eyes are a dull bluish gray, and small. His hair is of a rich brown, curling naturally and luxuriantly. His mouth is well cut; the teeth fine; the expression of the smile intellectual and winning. He converses little, *well* rather than fluently, and in a subdued tone. The portrait of him published about three years ago in "Graham's Magazine," conveys by no means so true an idea of the man as does the sketch (by Lawrence) inserted as frontispiece to a late collection of his poems. He is a widower, and has one child, a daughter.

William M. Gillespie.

Mr. William M. Gillespie aided Mr. Park Benjamin, I believe, some years ago, in the editorial conduct of "The New World," and has been otherwise connected with the periodical press of New York. He is more favourably known, however, as the author of a neat volume entitled "Rome as Seen by a New Yorker" — a good title to a good book. The endeavour to convey Rome only by those impressions which would naturally be made upon an American, gives the work a certain air of originality — the rarest of all qualities in descriptions of the Eternal City. The style is pure and sparkling, although occasionally flippant and *dilettantesque*. The love of remark is much in the usual way — *selon les règles* — never very exceptionable, and never very profound.

Mr. Gillespie is not unaccomplished, converses readily on many topics, has some knowledge of Italian, French, and, I believe, of the classical tongues, with such proficiency in the mathematics as has obtained for him a professorship of civil engineering at Union College, Schenectady.

In character he has much general amiability, is warm-hearted, excitable, nervous. His address is somewhat awkward, but "insinuating" from its warmth and vivacity. Speaks continuously and rapidly, with a lisp which, at times, is by no means unpleasing; is fidgety, and never knows how to sit or to stand, or what to do with his hands and feet, or his hat. In the street walks irregularly, mutters to himself, and, in general, appears in a state of profound abstraction.

and too frequently the faults are more pertinaciously exaggerated than the merits. Thus, the author of "Harry Franco" carries the simplicity of Smollett to insipidity, and his picturesque low-life is made to degenerate into sheer vulgarity. A fair idea of the general tone of the work may be gathered from the following passage: —

"'Come, colonel,' said the gentleman, slapping me on the shoulder, 'what 'll you take?'

"'Nothing, I thank you,' I replied; 'I have taken enough already.'

"'What! don't you liquorate?'

"I shook my head, for I did not exactly understand him.

"'Don't drink, hey?'

"'Sometimes,' I answered.

"'What! temperance man? — signed a pledge?'

"'No, I have not signed a pledge not to drink.'

"'Then you shall take a horn — so come along.'

"And so saying he dragged me up to the bar.

"'Now, what 'll you take — julep, sling, cocktail or sherry cobbler?'

"'Anything you choose,' I replied, for I had not the most remote idea what the drinks were composed of which he enumerated.

"'Then give us a couple of cocktails, barkeeper,' said the gentleman; 'and let us have them as quick as you damn please, for I am as thirsty as the great desert of Sahara which old Judith Paddock traveled over.'"

If Mr. Briggs has a *forte*, it is a Flemish fidelity that omits nothing, whether agreeable or disagreeable; but I cannot call this *forte* a virtue. He has also some humour, but nothing of an original character. Occa-

sionally he has written good things. A magazine article called "Dobbs and his Cantelope" was quite easy and clever in its way; but the way is necessarily a small one. Now and then he has attempted criticism, of which, as might be expected, he made a farce. The silliest thing of this kind ever penned, perhaps, was an elaborate attack of his on Thomas Babington Macaulay, published in "The Democratic Review;" — the force of folly could no farther go. Mr. Briggs has never composed in his life three consecutive sentences of grammatical English. He is grossly uneducated.

In connection with Mr. John Bisco he was the originator of the late "Broadway Journal" — my editorial association with that work not having commenced until the sixth or seventh number, although I wrote for it occasionally from the first. Among the principal papers contributed by Mr. B. were those discussing the paintings at the last exhibition of the Academy of Fine Arts in New York. I may be permitted to say that there was scarcely a point in his whole series of criticisms on this subject at which I did not radically disagree with him. Whatever taste he has in art is, like his taste in letters, Flemish.

Mr. Briggs's personal appearance is not prepossessing. He is about five feet six inches in height, somewhat slightly framed, with a sharp, thin face, narrow and low forehead, pert-looking nose, mouth rather pleasant in expression, eyes not so good, gray and small, although occasionally brilliant. In dress he is apt to affect the artist, priding himself especially upon his personal acquaintance with artists and his general connoisseurship. He is a member of the Art Union. He walks with a quick, nervous step. His address is quite good, frank and insinuating. His conversation

has now and then the merit of humour, but he has a perfect mania for contradiction, and it is impossible to utter an uninterrupted sentence in his hearing. He has much warmth of feeling, and is not a person to be disliked, although very apt to irritate and annoy. Two of his most marked characteristics are vacillation of purpose and a passion for being mysterious. His most intimate friends seem to know nothing of his movements, and it is folly to expect from him a direct answer about anything. He has, apparently, traveled; pretends to a knowledge of French (of which he is profoundly ignorant), has been engaged in an infinite variety of employments, and now, I believe, occupies a lawyer's office in Nassau street. He is married, goes little into society, and seems about forty years of age.

William Kirkland.

Mr. William Kirkland — husband of the author of "A New Home" — has written much for the magazines, but has made no collection of his works. A series of "Letters from Abroad" have been among his most popular compositions. He was in Europe for some time, and is well acquainted with the French language and literature, as also with the German. He aided Dr. Turner in the late translation of Von Raumer's "America," published by the Langleys. One of his best magazine papers appeared in "The Columbian" — a review of the London Foreign Quarterly for April, 1844. The arrogance, ignorance and self-glorification of the Quarterly, with its gross injustice

towards everything un-British, were severely and palpably exposed, and its narrow malignity shown to be especially *mal-à-propos* in a journal exclusively devoted to foreign concerns, and therefore presumably imbued with something of a cosmopolitan spirit. An article on "English and American Monthlies" in Godey's Magazine, and one entitled "Our English Visitors," in "The Columbian," have also been extensively read and admired. A valuable essay on "The Tyranny of Public Opinion in the United States," (published in "The Columbian" for December, 1845,) demonstrates the truth of Jefferson's assertion, that in this country, which has set the world an example of physical liberty, the inquisition of popular sentiment overrules in practice the freedom asserted in theory by the laws. "The West, the Paradise of the Poor," and "The United States' Census for 1830," the former in "The Democratic Review," the latter in "Hunt's Merchants' Magazine," with sundry essays in the daily papers, complete the list of Mr. Kirkland's works. It will be seen that he has written little, but that little is entitled to respect for its simplicity, and the evidence which it affords of scholarship and diligent research. Whatever Mr. Kirkland does is done carefully. He is occasionally very caustic, but seldom without cause. His style is vigorous, precise, and, notwithstanding his foreign acquirements, free from idiomatic peculiarities.

Mr. Kirkland is beloved by all who know him; in character mild, unassuming, benevolent, yet not without becoming energy at times; in person rather short and slight; features indistinctive; converses well and zealously, although his hearing is defective.

John W. Francis.

Doctor Francis, although by no means a *littérateur*, cannot well be omitted in an account of the New York *literati*. In his capacity of physician and medical lecturer he is far too well known to need comment. He was the pupil, friend and partner of Hossack — the pupil of Abernethy — connected in some manner with everything that has been well said or done medicinally in America. As a medical essayist he has always commanded the highest respect and attention. Among the *points* he has made at various times, I may mention his Anatomy of Drunkenness, his views of the Asiatic Cholera, his analysis of the Avon waters of the state, his establishment of the comparative immunity of the constitution from a second attack of yellow fever, and his pathological propositions on the changes wrought in the system by specific poisons through their assimilation — propositions remarkably sustained and enforced by recent discoveries of Liebig.

In unprofessional letters Doctor Francis has also accomplished much, although necessarily in a discursive manner. His biography of Chancellor Livingston, his Horticultural Discourse, his Discourse at the opening of the new hall of the New York Lyceum of Natural History, are (each in its way) models of fine writing just sufficiently toned down by an indomitable common sense. I had nearly forgotten to mention his admirable sketch of the personal associations of Bishop Berkeley, of Newport.

Doctor Francis is one of the old spirits of the New York Historical Society. His philanthropy, his active,

untiring beneficence, will forever render his name a household word among the truly Christian of heart. His professional services and his purse are always at the command of the needy; few of our wealthiest men have ever contributed to the relief of distress so bountifully — none certainly with greater readiness or with warmer sympathy.

His person and manner are richly peculiar. He is short and stout, probably five feet five in height, limbs of great muscularity and strength, the whole frame indicating prodigious vitality and energy — the latter is, in fact, the leading trait in his character. His head is large, massive — the features in keeping; complexion dark florid; eyes piercingly bright; mouth exceedingly mobile and expressive; hair gray, and worn in matted locks about the neck and shoulders — eyebrows to correspond, jagged and ponderous. His age is about fifty-eight. His general appearance is such as to arrest attention.

His address is the most genial that can be conceived, its *bonhomie* irresistible. He speaks in a loud, clear, hearty tone, dogmatically, with his head thrown back and his chest out; never waits for an introduction to anybody; slaps a perfect stranger on the back and calls him "Doctor" or "Learned Theban;" pats every lady on the head and (if she be pretty and *petite*) designates her by some such title as "My Pocket Edition of the Lives of the Saints." His conversation proper is a sort of Roman punch made up of tragedy, comedy, and the broadest of all possible farce. He has a natural, felicitous flow of talk, always overswelling its boundaries and sweeping everything before it right and left. He is very earnest, intense, emphatic; thumps the table with his fist; shocks the nerves of

the ladies. His *forte*, after all, is humour, the richest conceivable — a compound of Swift, Rabelais, and the clown in the pantomime. He is married.

II.

[Text: *Godey's Lady's Book*, June, 1846.]

Anna Cora Mowatt.

Mrs. Mowatt is in some respects a remarkable woman, and has undoubtedly wrought a deeper impression upon *the public* than any one of her sex in America.

She became first known through her recitations. To these she drew large and discriminating audiences in Boston, New York, and elsewhere to the north and east. Her subjects were much in the usual way of these exhibitions, including comic as well as serious pieces, chiefly in verse. In her selections she evinced no *very* refined taste, but was probably influenced by the elocutionary rather than by the literary value of her *programmes*. She read well; her voice was melodious; her youth and general appearance excited interest, but, upon the whole, she produced no great effect, and the enterprise may be termed unsuccessful, although the press, as is its wont, spoke in the most sonorous tones of her success.

It was during these recitations that her name, prefixed to occasional tales, sketches and brief poems in the magazines, first attracted an attention that, but for the recitations, it might not have attracted.

Her sketches and tales may be said to be *cleverly* written. They are lively, easy, *conventional*, scintillating with a species of sarcastic wit, which might be termed good were it in any respect original. In point of style — that is to say, of mere English, they are very respectable. One of the best of her prose papers is entitled "Ennui and its Antidote," published in "The Columbian Magazine" for June, 1845. The subject, however, is an exceedingly hackneyed one.

In looking carefully over her poems, I find no one entitled to commendation as a whole; in very few of them do I observe even noticeable passages, and I confess that I am surprised and disappointed at this result of my inquiry; nor can I make up my mind that there is not much latent poetical power in Mrs. Mowatt. From some lines addressed to Isabel M——, I copy the opening stanza as the most favorable specimen which I have seen of her verse.

> "Forever vanished from thy cheek
> Is life's unfolding rose —
> Forever quenched the flashing smile
> That conscious beauty knows!
> Thine orbs are lustrous with a light
> Which ne'er illumes the eye
> Till heaven is bursting on the sight
> And earth is fleeting by."

In this there is much force, and the idea in the concluding quatrain is so well *put* as to have the air of originality. Indeed, I am not sure that the thought of the last two lines is *not* original; — at all events it is exceedingly *natural* and impressive. I say "natural," because, in any imagined ascent from the orb we inhabit, when heaven should "burst on the sight"

— in other words, when the attraction of the planet should be superseded by that of another sphere, then instantly would the "earth" have the appearance of "fleeting by." The versification, also, is much better here than is usual with the poetess. In general she is rough, through excess of harsh consonants. The whole poem is of higher merit than any which I can find with her name attached; but there is little of the spirit of poesy in anything she writes. She evinces more feeling than ideality.

Her first decided success was with her comedy, "Fashion," although much of this success itself is referable to the interest felt in her as a beautiful woman and an authoress.

The play is not without merit. It may be commended especially for its simplicity of plot. What the Spanish playwrights mean by dramas of *intrigue*, are the worst acting dramas in the world; the intellect of an audience can never safely be fatigued by complexity. The necessity for verbose explanation, however, on the part of Trueman, at the close of the play, is in this regard a serious defect. A *dénouement* should in all cases be taken up with *action* — with nothing else. Whatever cannot be explained by such action should be communicated at the opening of the story.

In the plot, however estimable for simplicity, there is of course not a particle of originality, of invention. Had it, indeed, been designed as a burlesque upon the arrant conventionality of stage incidents in general, it might have been received as a palpable hit. There is not an event, a character, a jest, which is not a well-understood thing, a matter of course, a stage-property time out of mind. The general tone is adopted from "The School for Scandal," to which, indeed, the

whole composition bears just such an affinity as the shell of a locust to the locust that tenants it — as the spectrum of a Congreve rocket to the Congreve rocket itself. In the *management* of her imitation, nevertheless, Mrs. Mowatt has, I think, evinced a sense of theatrical effect or point which may lead her, at no very distant day, to compose an exceedingly *taking*, although it can never much aid her in composing a very meritorious drama. "Fashion," in a word, owes what it had of success to its being the work of a lovely woman who had already excited interest, and to the very commonplaceness or spirit of conventionality which rendered it readily comprehensible and appreciable by the public proper. It was much indebted, too, to the carpets, the ottomans, the chandeliers and the conservatories, which gained so decided a popularity for that despicable mass of inanity, the "London Assurance" of Boucicault.

Since "Fashion," Mrs. Mowatt has published one or two brief novels in pamphlet form, but they have no particular merit, although they afford glimpses (I cannot help thinking) of a genius as yet unrevealed, except in her capacity of actress.

In this capacity, if she be but true to herself, she will assuredly win a very enviable distinction. She has done well, wonderfully well, both in tragedy and comedy; but if she knew her own strength she would confine herself nearly altogether to the depicting (in letters not less than on the stage) the more gentle sentiments and the most profound passions. Her sympathy with the latter is evidently intense. In the utterance of the truly generous, of the really noble, of the unaffectedly passionate, we see her bosom heave, her cheek grow pale, her limbs tremble, her lip quiver,

and nature's own tear rush impetuously to the eye. It is this freshness of the heart which will provide for her the greenest laurels. It is this enthusiasm, this well of deep feeling, which should be made to prove for her an inexhaustible source of fame. As an actress, it is to her a mine of wealth worth all the dawdling *instruction* in the world. Mrs. Mowatt, on her first appearance as Pauline, was quite as able to give lessons in stage *routine* to any actor or actress in America as was any actor or actress to give lessons to her. *Now*, at least, she should throw all "support" to the winds, trust proudly to her own sense of art, her own rich and natural elocution, her beauty, which is unusual, her grace, which is queenly, and be assured that these qualities, as she *now* possesses them, are all sufficient to render her a great actress, when considered simply as the means by which the end of natural acting is to be attained, as the mere instruments by which she may effectively and unimpededly lay bare to the audience the movements of her own passionate heart.

Indeed, the great charm of her manner is its naturalness. She looks, speaks and moves, with a well-controlled impulsiveness, as different as can be conceived from the customary rant and cant, the hack conventionality of the stage. Her voice is rich and voluminous, and although by no means powerful, is so well managed as to seem so. Her utterance is singularly distinct, its sole blemish being an occasional Anglicism of accent, adopted probably from her instructor, Mr. Crisp. Her reading could scarcely be improved. Her action is distinguished by an ease and self-possession which would do credit to a veteran. Her step is the perfection of grace. Often have I watched her for hours with the closest scrutiny, yet never for an

instant did I observe her in an attitude of the least awkwardness or even constraint, while many of her seemingly impulsive gestures spoke in loud terms of the woman of genius, of the poet imbued with the profoundest sentiment of the beautiful in motion.

Her figure is slight, even fragile. Her face is a remarkably fine one, and of that precise character best adapted to the stage. The forehead is, perhaps, the least prepossessing feature, although it is by no means an unintellectual one. Hair light auburn, in rich profusion, and always arranged with exquisite taste. The eyes are gray, brilliant and expressive, without being full. The nose is well-formed, with the Roman curve, and indicative of energy. This quality is also shown in the somewhat excessive prominence of the chin. The mouth is large, with brilliant and even teeth and flexible lips, capable of the most instantaneous and effective variations of expression. A more radiantly beautiful smile it is quite impossible to conceive.

George B. Cheever.

The Reverend George B. Cheever created at one time something of an excitement by the publication of a little *brochure* entitled "Deacon Giles' Distillery." He is much better known, however, as the editor of "The Commonplace Book of American Poetry," a work which has at least the merit of not belying its title, and *is* exceedingly commonplace. I am ashamed to say that for several years this compilation afforded to Europeans the only material from which it was pos-

sible to form an estimate of the poetical ability of Americans. The selections appear to me exceedingly injudicious, and have all a marked leaning to the didactic. Dr. Cheever is not without a certain sort of negative ability as critic, but works of this character should be undertaken by poets or not at all. The verses which I have seen attributed to *him* are undeniably *médiocres*.

His principal publications, in addition to those mentioned above, are "God's Hand in America," "Wanderings of a Pilgrim under the Shadow of Mont Blanc," "Wanderings of a Pilgrim under the Shadow of Jungfrau," and, lately, a "Defence of Capital Punishment." This "Defence" is at many points well reasoned, and as a clear *résumé* of all that has been already said on its own side of the question, may be considered as commendable. Its premises, however, (as well as those of all reasoners *pro* or *con* on this vexed topic,) are admitted only very partially by the world at large — a fact of which the author affects to be ignorant. Neither does he make the slightest attempt at bringing forward one novel argument. Any man of ordinary invention might have adduced and maintained a dozen.

The two series of "Wanderings" are, perhaps, the best works of their writer. They are what is called "eloquent;" a little too much in that way, perhaps, but nevertheless entertaining.

Dr. Cheever is rather small in stature, and his countenance is vivacious; in other respects there is nothing very observable about his personal appearance. He has been recently married.

Charles Anthon.

Doctor Charles Anthon is the well-known Jay-professor of the Greek and Latin languages in Columbia College, New York, and Rector of the Grammar School. If not absolutely the best, he is at least generally considered the best classicist in America. In England and in Europe at large, his scholastic acquirements are more sincerely respected than those of any of our countrymen. His additions to Lempière are there justly regarded as evincing a nice perception of method and accurate as well as extensive erudition, but his "Classical Dictionary" has superseded the work of the Frenchman altogether. Most of Professor Anthon's publications have been adopted as text-books at Oxford and Cambridge — an honour to be properly understood only by those acquainted with the many high requisites for attaining it. As a commentator (if not exactly as a critic) he may rank with any of his day, and has evinced powers very unusual in men who devote their lives to classical lore. His accuracy is very remarkable; in this particular he is always to be relied upon. The trait manifests itself even in his MS., which is a model of neatness and symmetry, exceeding in these respects anything of the kind with which I am acquainted. It is somewhat *too* neat, perhaps, and *too* regular, as well as diminutive, to be called beautiful; it might be mistaken at any time, however, for very elaborate copper-plate engraving.

But his chirography, although fully in keeping so far as precision is concerned with his mental character, is, in its entire freedom from flourish or superfluity, as much *out* of keeping with his verbal style. In his

notes to the Classics he is singularly Ciceronian — if, indeed, not positively Johnsonese.

An attempt was made not long ago to prepossess the public against his "Classical Dictionary," the most important of his works, by getting up a hue and cry of plagiarism — in the case of all similar books the most preposterous accusation in the world, although, from its very preposterousness, one not easily rebutted. Obviously, the design in any such compilation is, in the first place, to make a *useful school-book* or book of reference, and the scholar who should be weak enough to neglect this indispensable point for the mere purpose of winning credit with a few bookish men for originality, would deserve to be dubbed, by the public at least, a dunce. There are very few points of classical scholarship which are not the common property of "the learned" throughout the world, and in composing any book of reference recourse is unscrupulously and even necessarily had in all cases to similar books which have preceded. In availing themselves of these latter, however, it is the practice of quacks to paraphrase page after page, rearranging the order of paragraphs, making a slight alteration in point of fact here and there, but preserving the spirit of the whole, its information, erudition, etc., etc., while everything is so completely *re-written* as to leave no room for a direct charge of plagiarism; and this is considered and lauded as originality. Now, he who, in availing himself of the labours of his predecessors (and it is clear that all scholars *must* avail themselves of such labours) — he who shall copy *verbatim* the passages to be desired without attempt at palming off their spirit as original with himself, is certainly no plagiarist, even if he fail to make *direct* acknowledgment of indebtedness

—is unquestionably *less* of the plagiarist than the disingenuous and contemptible quack who wriggles himself, as above explained, into a reputation for originality, a reputation quite out of place in a case of this kind—the public, of course, never caring a straw whether he be original or not. These attacks upon the New York professor are to be attributed to a *clique* of pedants in and about Boston, gentlemen envious of his success, and whose own compilations are noticeable only for the singular patience and ingenuity with which their dovetailing chicanery is concealed from the *public* eye.

Doctor Anthon is, perhaps, forty-eight years of age; about five feet eight inches in height; rather stout; fair complexion; hair light and inclined to curl; forehead remarkably broad and high; eye gray, clear and penetrating; mouth well-formed, with excellent teeth—the lips having great flexibility, and consequent power of expression; the smile particularly pleasing. His address in general is bold, frank, cordial, full of *bonhomie*. His whole air is *distingué* in the best understanding of the term—that is to say, he would impress any one at first sight with the idea of his being no ordinary man. He has qualities, indeed, which would have insured him eminent success in almost any pursuit; and there are times in which his friends are half disposed to regret his exclusive devotion to classical literature. He was one of the originators of the late "New York Review," his associates in the conduct and proprietorship being Dr. F. L. Hawks and Professor R. C. Henry. By far the most valuable papers, however, were those of Doctor A.

Ralph Hoyt.

The Reverend Ralph Hoyt is known chiefly — at least to the world of letters — by "The Chaunt of Life and other Poems, with Sketches and Essays." The publication of this work, however, was never *completed*, only a portion of the poems having appeared, and none of the essays or sketches. It is hoped that we shall yet have these latter.

Of the poems issued, one, entitled "Old," had so many peculiar excellences that I copied the whole of it, although quite long, in "The Broadway Journal." It will remind every reader of Durand's fine picture, "An Old Man's Recollections," although between poem and painting there is no more than a very admissible similarity.

I quote a stanza from "Old" (the opening one) by way of bringing the piece to the remembrance of any who may have forgotten it.

> "By the wayside, on a mossy stone,
> Sat a hoary pilgrim sadly musing;
> Oft I marked him sitting there alone,
> All the landscape like a page perusing;
> Poor unknown,
> By the wayside on a mossy stone."

The quaintness aimed at here is, so far as a single stanza is concerned, to be defended as a legitimate effect, conferring high pleasure on a numerous and cultivated class of minds. Mr. Hoyt, however, in his continuous and uniform repetition of the first line in the last of each stanza of twenty-five, has by much exceeded the proper limits of the quaint and impinged upon the ludicrous. The poem, nevertheless, abounds

in lofty merit, and has, in especial, some passages of rich imagination and exquisite pathos. For example —

"Seemed it pitiful he should sit there,
No one sympathising, no one heeding,
None to love him for his thin gray hair.

"One sweet spirit broke the silent spell —
Ah, to me her name was always Heaven!
She besought him all his grief to tell —
(I was then thirteen and she eleven)
Isabel!
One sweet spirit broke the silent spell.

"'Angel,' said he, sadly, 'I am old;
Earthly hope no longer hath a morrow:
Why I sit here thou shalt soon be told' —
(Then his eye betrayed a pearl of sorrow —
Down it rolled —)
'Angel,' said he, sadly, '*I am old!*'"

It must be confessed that some portions of "Old" (which is by far the best of the collection) remind us forcibly of the "Old Man" of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

"Prōemus" is the concluding poem of the volume, and itself concludes with an exceedingly vigorous stanza, putting me not a little in mind of Campbell in his best days.

"O'er all the silent sky
A dark and scowling frown —
But darker scowled each eye
When all resolved to die —
When (night of dread renown!)
A thousand stars went down."

Mr. Hoyt is about forty years of age, of the medium height, pale complexion, dark hair and eyes. His countenance expresses sensibility and benevolence. He converses slowly and with perfect deliberation. He is married.

Gulian C. Verplanck.

Mr. Verplanck has acquired reputation — at least his literary reputation — less from what he has done than from what he has given indication of ability to do. His best, if not his principal works, have been addresses, orations and contributions to the reviews. His scholarship is more than respectable, and his taste and acumen are not to be disputed.

His legal acquirements, it is admitted, are very considerable. When in Congress he was noted as the most industrious man in that assembly, and acted as a walking register or volume of reference, ever at the service of that class of legislators who are too lofty-minded to burden their memories with mere business particulars or matters of fact. Of late years the energy of his character appears to have abated, and many of his friends go so far as to accuse him of indolence.

His family is quite influential — one of the few old Dutch ones retaining their social position.

Mr. Verplanck is short in stature, not more than five feet five inches in height, and compactly or stoutly built. The head is square, massive, and covered with thick, bushy and grizzly hair; the cheeks are ruddy; lips red and full, indicating a relish for good cheer; nose short and straight; eyebrows much arched; eyes dark blue, with what seems, to a casual glance, a sleepy expression — but they gather light and fire as we examine them.

He must be sixty, but a vigorous constitution gives promise of a ripe and healthful old age. He is active; walks firmly, with a short, quick step. His manner is affable, or (more accurately) sociable. He converses

well, although with no great fluency, and has his hobbies of talk; is especially fond of old English literature. Altogether, his person, intellect, tastes and general peculiarities, bear a very striking resemblance to those of the late Nicholas Biddle.

Freeman Hunt.

Mr. Hunt is the editor and proprietor of the well-known "Merchants' Magazine," one of the most useful of our monthly journals, and decidedly the best "property" of any work of its class. In its establishment he evinced many remarkable traits of character. He was entirely without means, and even much in debt and otherwise embarrassed, when, by one of those intuitive perceptions which belong only to genius, but which are usually attributed to "good luck," the "happy" idea entered his head of getting up a magazine devoted to the interests of the influential class of merchants. The chief happiness of this idea, however, (which no doubt had been entertained and discarded by a hundred projectors before Mr. H.,) consisted in the method by which he proposed to carry it into operation. Neglecting the hackneyed modes of advertising largely, circulating flashy prospectuses and sending out numerous "agents," who, in general, merely serve the purpose of boring people into a very temporary support of the work in whose behalf they are employed, he took the whole matter resolutely into his own hands; called personally, in the first place, upon his immediate mercantile friends; explained to them, frankly and succinctly, his object;

put the value and necessity of the contemplated publication in the best light — as he well knew how to do — and in this manner obtained to head his subscription list a good many of the most eminent business men in New York. Armed with their names and with recommendatory letters from many of them, he now pushed on to the other chief cities of the Union, and thus, in less time than is taken by ordinary men to make a preparatory flourish of trumpets, succeeded in building up for himself a permanent fortune and for the public a journal of immense interest and value. In the whole proceeding he evinced a tact, a knowledge of mankind and a self-dependence which are the staple of even greater achievements than the establishment of a five dollar magazine. In the subsequent conduct of the work he gave evidence of equal ability. Having without aid put the magazine upon a satisfactory footing as regards its circulation, he also without aid undertook its editorial and business conduct — from the first germ of the conception to the present moment having kept the whole undertaking within his own hands. His subscribers and regular contributors are now among the most intelligent and influential in America; the journal is regarded as absolute authority in mercantile matters, circulates extensively not only in this country but in Europe, and even in regions more remote, affording its worthy and enterprising projector a large income, which no one knows better than himself how to put to good use.

The strong points, the marked peculiarities of Mr. Hunt, could not have failed in arresting the attention of all observers of character; and Mr. Willis in especial has made him the subject of repeated comment. I copy what follows from the "New York Mirror:"

Hunt has been glorified in the "Hong-Kong Gazette," is regularly complimented by the English mercantile authorities, has every bank in the world for an eager subscriber, every consul, every ship-owner and navigator; is filed away as authority in every library, and thought of in half the countries of the world as early as No. 3 in their enumeration of distinguished Americans, yet who seeks to do him honour in the city he does honour to? The "Merchants' Magazine," though a prodigy of perseverance and industry, is not an accidental development of Hunt's energies. He has always been singularly sagacious and original in devising new works and good ones. He was the founder of the first "Ladies' Magazine,"[1] of the first children's periodical; he started the "American Magazine of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge," compiled the best known collection of American anecdotes and is an indefatigable writer — the author, among other things, of "Letters About the Hudson."

Hunt was a playfellow of ours in round-jacket days, and we have always looked at him with a reminiscent interest. His luminous, eager eyes, as he goes along the street, keenly bent on his errand, would impress any observer with an idea of his genius and determination, and we think it quite time his earnest head was in the engraver's hand and his daily passing by a mark for the *digito monstrari*. Few more worthy or more valuable citizens are among us.

Much of Mr. Hunt's character is included in what I have already said and quoted. He is "earnest," "eager," combining in a very singular manner general coolness and occasional excitability. He is a true friend, and the enemy of no man. His heart is full of the warmest sympathies and charities. No one in New York is more universally popular.

[1] At this point Mr. Willis is, perhaps, in error.

He is about five feet eight inches in height, well proportioned; complexion dark-florid; forehead capacious; chin massive and projecting, indicative (according to Lavater and general experience) of that energy which is, in fact, the chief point of his character; hair light brown, very fine, of a weblike texture, worn long and floating about the face; eyes of wonderful brilliancy and intensity of expression; the whole countenance beaming with sensibility and intelligence. He is married, and about thirty-eight years of age.

Piero Maroncelli.

During his twelve years' imprisonment, Maroncelli composed a number of poetical works, some of which were committed to paper, others lost for the want of it. In this country he has published a volume entitled "Additions to the Memoirs of Silvio Pellico," containing numerous anecdotes of the captivity not recorded in Pellico's work, and an "Essay on the Classic and Romantic Schools," the author proposing to divide them anew and designate them by novel distinctions. There is at least some scholarship and some originality in this essay. It is also brief. Maroncelli regards it as the best of his compositions. It is strongly tinctured with transcendentalism. The volume contains, likewise, some poems, of which the "Psalm of Life" and the "Psalm of the Dawn" have never been translated into English. "Winds of the Wakened Spring," one of the pieces included, has been happily rendered by Mr. Halleck, and is the most favorable

specimen that could have been selected. These "Additions" accompanied a Boston version of "My Prisons, by Silvio Pellico."

Maroncelli is now about fifty years old, and bears on his person the marks of long suffering; he has lost a leg; his hair and beard became gray many years ago; just now he is suffering from severe illness, and from this it can scarcely be expected that he will recover.

In figure he is short and slight. His forehead is rather low, but broad. His eyes are light blue and weak. The nose and mouth are large. His features in general have all the Italian mobility; their expression is animated and full of intelligence. He speaks hurriedly and gesticulates to excess. He is irritable, frank, generous, chivalrous, warmly attached to his friends, and expecting from them equal devotion. His love of country is unbounded, and he is quite enthusiastic in his endeavours to circulate in America the literature of Italy.

Laughton Osborn.

Personally, Mr. Osborn is little known as an author, either to the public or in literary society, but he has made a great many "sensations" anonymously or with a *nom de plume*. I am not sure that he has published anything with his own name.

One of his earliest works — if not his earliest — was "The Adventures of Jeremy Levis, by Himself," in one volume, a kind of medley of fact, fiction, satire, criticism and novel philosophy. It is a dashing,

reckless *brochure*, brimful of talent and audacity. Of course it was covertly admired by the few and loudly condemned by all of the many who can fairly be said to have seen it at all. It had no great circulation. There was something wrong, I fancy, in the mode of its issue.

"Jeremy Levis" was followed by "The Dream of Alla-Ad-Deen, from the romance of 'Anastasia,' by Charles Erskine White, D.D." This is a thin pamphlet of thirty-two pages, each page containing about a hundred and forty words — the whole equal to four pages of this magazine. Alla-Ad-Deen is the son of Aladdin, of "wonderful lamp" memory, and the story is in the "Vision of Mirza" or "Rasselas" way. The design is to reconcile us to death and evil, on the somewhat unphilosophical ground that comparatively we are of little importance in the scale of creation. The author himself supposes this scale to be infinite, and thus his argument proves too much; for if evil should be regarded by man as of no consequence because, "comparatively," *he* is of none, it must be regarded as of no consequence by the angels for a similar reason — and so on in a never-ending ascent. In other words, the only thing proved is the rather bull-ish proposition that evil is no evil at all. I do not find that the "Dream" elicited any attention. It would have been more appropriately published in one of our magazines.

Next in order came, I believe, "The Confessions of a Poet, by Himself." This was in two volumes, of the ordinary novel form, but printed very openly. It made much noise in the literary world, and no little curiosity was excited in regard to its author, who was generally supposed to be John Neal. There were some

grounds for this supposition, the tone and matter of the narrative bearing much resemblance to those of "Errata" and "Seventy-Six," especially in the points of boldness and vigour. The "Confessions," however, far surpassed any production of Mr. Neal's in a certain air of cultivation (if not exactly of scholarship) which pervaded it, as well as in the management of its construction — a particular in which the author of "The Battle of Niagara" invariably fails; there is no precision, no finish about anything he does — always an excessive *force* but little of refined art. Mr. N. seems to be deficient in a sense of *completeness*. He begins well, vigorously, startlingly, and proceeds by fits, quite at random, now prosing, now exciting vivid interest, but his conclusions are sure to be hurried and indistinct, so that the reader perceives a falling off, and closes the book with dissatisfaction. He has done nothing which, as a whole, is even respectable, and "The Confessions" are quite remarkable for their artistic unity and perfection. But in higher regards they are to be commended. I do not think, indeed, that a better book of its kind has been written in America. To be sure, it is not precisely the work to place in the hands of a lady, but its scenes of passion are intensely wrought, its incidents are striking and original, its sentiments audacious and suggestive at least, if not at all times tenable. In a word, it is that rare thing, a fiction of *power* without rudeness. Its spirit, in general, resembles that of "Miserrimus" and "Martin Faber."

Partly on account of what most persons would term their licentiousness, partly, also, on account of the prevalent idea that Mr. Neal (who was never very popular with the press) had written them, "The

Confessions," by the newspapers, were most unscrupulously misrepresented and abused. The "Commercial Advertiser" of New York was, it appears, foremost in condemnation, and Mr. Osborn thought proper to avenge his wrongs by the publication of a bulky satirical poem, levelled at the critics in general, but more especially at Colonel Stone, the editor of the "Commercial." This satire (which was published in exquisite style as regards print and paper,) was entitled "The Vision of Rubeta." Owing to the high price necessarily set upon the books, not a great many copies were sold, but the few that got into circulation made quite a hubbub, and with reason, for the satire was not only bitter but personal in the last degree. It was, moreover, very censurably indecent — *filthy* is, perhaps, the more appropriate word. The press, without exception, or nearly so, condemned it in loud terms, without taking the trouble to investigate its pretensions as a literary work. But as "The Confessions of a Poet" was *one* of the best novels of its kind ever written in this country, so "The Vision of Rubeta" was decidedly *the best* satire. For its vulgarity and gross personality there is no defence, but its mordacity cannot be gainsaid. In calling it, however, the best American satire, I do not intend any excessive commendation — for it is, in fact, the *only* satire composed by an American. Trumbull's clumsy work is nothing at all, and then we have Halleck's "Croakers," which is very feeble — but what is there besides? "The Vision" is our best satire, and still a sadly deficient one. It was bold enough and bitter enough, and well constructed and decently versified, but it failed in *sarcasm* because its malignity was permitted to render itself evident. The author is never very severe because he

is never sufficiently cool. We laugh not so much at the objects of his satire as we do at himself for getting into so great a passion. But, perhaps, under no circumstances is wit the *forte* of Mr. Osborn. He has few equals at downright invective.

The "Vision" was succeeded by "Arthur Carryl and other Poems," including an additional canto of the satire, and several happy although not in all cases accurate or comprehensive imitations in English of the Greek and Roman metres. "Arthur Carryl" is a fragment, in the manner of "Don Juan." I do not think it especially meritorious. It has, however, a truth-telling and discriminative preface, and its notes are well worthy perusal." Some opinions embraced in these latter on the topic of versification I have examined in an article called "Marginalia" published lately in "The Democratic Review."

I am not aware that since "Arthur Carryl" Mr. Osborn has written anything more than a "Treatise on Oil Painting," issued not long ago by Messrs. Wiley and Putnam. This work is highly spoken of by those well qualified to judge, but is, I believe, principally a compilation or compendium.

In personal character, Mr. O. is one of the most remarkable men I ever yet had the pleasure of meeting. He is undoubtedly one of "Nature's own noblemen," full of generosity, courage, honour — chivalrous in every respect, but, unhappily, carrying his ideas of chivalry, or rather of independence, to the point of Quixotism, if not of absolute insanity. He has no doubt been misapprehended, and therefore wronged by the world; but he should not fail to remember that the source of the wrong lay in his own idiosyncrasy — one altogether unintelligible and unappreciable by the mass of mankind.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

From engraving by Teel of portrait by Elliott

He is a member of one of the oldest and most influential, formerly one of the wealthiest families in New York. His acquirements and accomplishments are many and usual. As poet, painter and musician, he has succeeded nearly equally well, and absolutely succeeded as each. His scholarship is extensive. In the French and Italian languages he is quite at home, and in everything he is thorough and accurate. His critical abilities are to be highly respected, although he is apt to swear somewhat too roundly by Johnson and Pope. Imagination is not Mr. Osborn's *forte*.

He is about thirty-two or three — certainly not more than thirty-five years of age. In person he is well made, probably five feet ten or eleven, muscular and active. Hair, eyes and complexion, rather light; fine teeth; the whole expression of the countenance manly, frank, and prepossessing in the highest degree.

III.

[Text: *Godey's Lady's Book*, July, 1846.]

Fitz-Greene Halleck.

The name of Halleck is at least as well established in the poetical world as that of any American. Our principal poets are, perhaps, most frequently named in this order — Bryant, Halleck, Dana, Sprague, Longfellow, Willis, and so on — Halleck coming second in the series, but holding, in fact, a rank in the public opinion quite equal to that of Bryant. The accuracy of the arrangement as above made may, indeed, be

questioned. For my own part, I should have it thus — Longfellow, Bryant, Halleck, Willis, Sprague, Dana; and, estimating rather the poetic capacity than the poems actually accomplished, there are three or four comparatively unknown writers whom I would place in the series between Bryant and Halleck, while there are about a dozen whom I should assign a position between Willis and Sprague. Two dozen at least might find room between Sprague and Dana — this latter, I fear, owing a very large portion of his reputation to his *quondam* editorial connection with "The North American Review." One or two poets now in my mind's eye I should have no hesitation in posting above even Mr. Longfellow — still not intending this as very extravagant praise.

It is noticeable, however, that, in the arrangement which I attribute to the popular understanding, the order observed is nearly, if not exactly, that of the ages — the poetic ages — of the individual poets. Those rank first who were first known. The priority has established the strength of impression. Nor is this result to be accounted for by mere reference to the old saw — that first impressions are the strongest. Gratitude, surprise, and a species of hyper-patriotic triumph have been blended, and finally confounded with admiration or appreciation in regard to the *pioneers* of American literature, among whom there is not one whose productions have not been grossly overrated by his countrymen. Hitherto we have been in no mood to view with calmness and discuss with discrimination the real claims of the few who were *first* in convincing the mother country that her sons were not all brainless, as at one period she half affected and wholly wished to believe. Is there any one so

blind as not to see that Mr. Cooper, for example, owes much, and Mr. Paulding nearly all, of his reputation as a novelist to his early occupation of the field? Is there any one so dull as not to know that fictions which neither of these gentlemen *could* have written are written daily by native authors, without attracting much more of commendation than can be included in a newspaper paragraph? And, again, is there any one so prejudiced as not to acknowledge that all this happens because there is no longer either reason or wit in the query, "Who reads an American book?"

I mean to say, of course, that Mr. Halleck, in the *apparent* public estimate, maintains a somewhat better position than that to which, on absolute grounds, he is entitled. There is something, too, in the *bonhomie* of certain of his compositions — something altogether distinct from poetic merit — which has aided to establish him; and much, also, must be admitted on the score of his personal popularity, which is deservedly great. With all these allowances, however, there will still be found a large amount of poetical fame to which he is *fairly* entitled.

He has written very little, although he began at an early age — when quite a boy, indeed. His "juvenile" works, however, have been kept very judiciously from the public eye. Attention was first called to him by his satires, signed "Croaker" and "Croaker & Co.," published in "The New York Evening Post," in 1819. Of these the pieces with the signature "*Croaker & Co.*," were the joint work of Halleck and his friend Drake. The political and personal features of these *jeux d'esprit* gave them a consequence and a notoriety to which they are entitled on no other account. They are not without a species

of drollery, but are loosely and no doubt carelessly written.

Neither was "Fanny," which closely followed the "Croakers," constructed with any great deliberation. "It was printed," say the ordinary memoirs, "within three weeks from its commencement;" but the truth is, that a couple of days would have been an ample allowance of time for any such composition. If we except a certain gentlemanly ease and *insouciance*, with some fancy of illustration, there is really very little about this poem to be admired. There has been no positive avowal of its authorship, although there can be no doubt of its having been written by Halleck. He, I presume, does not esteem it very highly. It is a mere extravaganza, in close imitation of "Don Juan" — a vehicle for squibs at cotemporary persons and things.

Our poet, indeed, seems to have been much impressed by "Don Juan," and attempts to engraft its farcicalities even upon the grace and delicacy of "Alnwick Castle;" as, for example, in —

> "Men in the coal and cattle line,
> From Teviot's bard and hero land,
> From royal Berwick's beach of sand,
> From Wooler, Morpeth, Hexham, *and*
> Newcastle upon Tyne."

These things may lay claim to oddity, but no more. They are totally out of keeping with the tone of the sweet poem into which they are thus clumsily introduced, and serve no other purpose than to deprive it of all unity of effect. If a poet *must* be farcical, let him be just that; he can be nothing better at the same moment. To be drolly sentimental, or even senti-

mentally droll, is intolerable to men and gods and columns.

"Alnwick Castle" is distinguished, in general, by that air of quiet grace, both in thought and expression, which is the prevailing feature of the muse of Halleck. Its second stanza is a good specimen of this manner. The commencement of the fourth belongs to a very high order of poetry.

> "Wild roses by the Abbey towers
> Are gay in their young bud and bloom —
> *They were born of a race of funeral flowers,*
> That garlanded, in long-gone hours,
> A Templar's knightly tomb."

This is gloriously imaginative, and the effect is singularly increased by the sudden transition from iambuses to anapæsts. The passage is, I think, the noblest to be found in Halleck, and I would be at a loss to discover its parallel in all American poetry.

"Marco Bozzaris" has much lyrical, without any great amount of *ideal* beauty. Force is its prevailing feature — force resulting rather from well-ordered metre, vigorous rhythm, and a judicious disposal of the circumstances of the poem, than from any of the truer lyric material. I should do my conscience great wrong were I to speak of "Marco Bozzaris" as it is the fashion to speak of it, at least in print. Even as a lyric or ode it is surpassed by many American and a multitude of foreign compositions of a similar character.

"Burns" has numerous passages exemplifying its author's felicity of *expression;* as, for instance —

> "Such graves as his were pilgrim shrines —
> Shrines to no code or creed confined —
> *The Delphian vales, the Palestines,*
> *The Meccas of the mind.*"

And, again—

> "There have been loftier themes than his,
> *And longer scrolls and louder lyres,*
> *And lays lit up with Poesy's*
> *Purer and holier fires.*"

But to the *sentiment* involved in this last quatrain I feel disposed to yield an assent more thorough than might be expected. Burns, indeed, was the puppet of circumstance. As a poet, no person on the face of the earth has been more extravagantly, more absurdly overrated.

"The Poet's Daughter" is one of the most characteristic works of Halleck, abounding in his most distinctive traits, grace, expression, repose, *insouciance*. The vulgarity of

> "I'm busy in the cotton trade
> And sugar line,"

has, I rejoice to see, been omitted in the late editions. The eleventh stanza is certainly not English as it stands, and, besides, is quite unintelligible. What is the meaning of this—

> "But her who asks, though first among
> The good, the beautiful, the young,
> The birthright of a spell more strong
> Than these have brought her."

The "Lines on the Death of Joseph Rodman Drake" is, as a whole, one of the best poems of its author. Its simplicity and delicacy of sentiment will recommend it to all readers. It is, however, carelessly written, and the first quatrain,

> "Green be the turf above thee,
> Friend of my better days—
> None knew thee but to love thee,
> Nor named thee but to praise,"

although beautiful, bears too close a resemblance to the still more beautiful lines of Wordsworth —

> "She dwelt among the untrodden ways
> Beside the springs of Dove,
> A maid whom there were none to praise,
> And very few to love."

In versification Mr. Halleck is much as usual, although in this regard Mr. Bryant has paid him numerous compliments. "Marco Bozzaris" has certainly some vigor of rhythm, but its author, in short, writes carelessly, loosely, and, as a matter of course, seldom effectively, so far as the outworks of literature are concerned.

Of late days he has nearly given up the muses, and we recognize his existence as a poet chiefly by occasional translations from the Spanish or German.

Personally, he is a man to be admired, respected, but more especially beloved. His address has all the captivating *bonhomie* which is the leading feature of his poetry, and, indeed, of his whole moral nature. With his friends he is all ardor, enthusiasm and cordiality, but to the world at large he is reserved, shunning society, into which he is seduced only with difficulty and upon rare occasions. The love of solitude seems to have become with him a passion.

He is a good modern linguist, and an excellent *belles lettres* scholar; in general, has read a good deal, although very discursively. He is what the world calls *ultra* in most of his opinions, more particularly about literature and politics, and is fond of broaching and supporting paradoxes. He converses fluently with animation and zeal; is choice and accurate in his language, exceedingly quick at repartee and apt at anecdote. His manners are courteous, with dignity

and a little tincture of Gallicism. His age is about fifty. In height he is probably five feet seven. He *has been* stout, but now may be called well-proportioned. His forehead is a noble one, broad, massive, and intellectual, a little bald about the temples; eyes dark and brilliant, but not large; nose Grecian; chin prominent; mouth finely chiselled and full of expression, although the lips are thin;—his smile is peculiarly sweet.

In "Graham's Magazine" for September, 1843, there appeared an engraving of Mr. Halleck from a painting by Inman. The likeness conveys a good general idea of the man, but is far too stout and youthful-looking for his appearance at present.

His usual pursuits have been commercial, but he is now the principal superintendent of the business of Mr. John Jacob Astor. He is unmarried.

Ann S. Stephens.

Mrs. Stephens has made no collection of her works, but has written much for the magazines, and well. Her compositions have been brief tales with occasional poems. She made her first "sensation" in obtaining a premium of four hundred dollars, offered for "the best prose story" by some one of our journals, her "Mary Derwent" proving the successful article. The *amount* of the prize, however—a much larger one than it has been the custom to offer—had more to do with the *éclat* of the success than had the positive merit of the tale, although this is very consider-

able. She has subsequently written several better things — "Malina Gray," for example, "Alice Copley," and "The Two Dukes." These are on serious subjects. In comic ones she has comparatively failed. She is fond of the bold, striking, trenchant — in a word, of the melo-dramatic; has a quick appreciation of the picturesque, and is not unskillful in delineations of character. She seizes adroitly on salient incidents and presents them with vividness to the eye, but in their combinations or adaptations she is by no means so thoroughly at home — that is to say, her plots are not so good as are their individual items. Her style is what the critics usually term "powerful," but lacks real power through its verboseness and floridity. It is, in fact, generally turgid — even bombastic — involved, needlessly parenthetical, and superabundant in epithets, although these latter are frequently well chosen. Her sentences are, also, for the most part too long; we forget their commencements ere we get at their terminations. Her faults, nevertheless, both in matter and manner, belong to the effervescence of high talent, if not exactly of genius.

Of Mrs. Stephens' poetry I have seen so very little that I feel myself scarcely in condition to speak of it.

She began her literary life, I believe, by editing "The Portland Magazine," and has since been announced as editress of "The Ladies' Companion," a monthly journal published some years ago in New York, and also, at a later period, of "Graham's Magazine," and subsequently, again, of "Peterson's National Magazine." These announcements were announcements and no more; the lady had nothing to do with the editorial control of either of the three last-named works.

The portrait of Mrs. Stephens which appeared in "Graham's Magazine" for November, 1844, cannot fairly be considered a likeness at all. She is tall and slightly inclined to *embonpoint* — an English figure. Her forehead is somewhat low, but broad; the features generally massive, but full of life and intellectuality. The eyes are blue and brilliant; the hair blonde and very luxuriant.

Evert A. Duyckinck.

Mr. Duyckinck is one of the most influential of the New York *littérateurs*, and has done a great deal for the interests of American letters. Not the least important service rendered by him was the projection and editorship of Wiley and Putnam's "Library of Choice Reading," a series which brought to public notice many valuable foreign works which had been suffering under neglect in this country, and at the same time afforded unwonted encouragement to native authors by publishing their books, in good style and in good company, without trouble or risk to the authors themselves, and in the very teeth of the disadvantages arising from the want of an international copyright law. At one period it seemed that this happy scheme was to be overwhelmed by the competition of rival publishers — taken, in fact, quite out of the hands of those who, by "right of discovery," were entitled at least to its first fruits. A great variety of "Libraries" in imitation were set on foot, but whatever may have been the temporary success of any of these latter, the

original one had already too well established itself in the public favor to be overthrown, and thus has not been prevented from proving of great benefit to our literature at large.

Mr. Duyckinck has slyly acquired much fame and numerous admirers under the *nom de plume* of "Felix Merry." The various essays thus signed have attracted attention everywhere from the judicious. The style is remarkable for its very unusual blending of purity and ease with a seemingly inconsistent originality, force and independence.

"Felix Merry," in connection with Mr. Cornelius Mathews, was one of the editors and originators of "Arcturus," decidedly the very best magazine in many respects ever published in the United States. A large number of its most interesting papers were the work of Mr. D. The magazine was, upon the whole, a little *too good* to enjoy extensive popularity — although I am here using an equivocal phrase, for a *better* journal might have been far more acceptable to the public. I must be understood, then, as employing the epithet "good" in the sense of the literary quietists. The general taste of "Arcturus" was, I think, *excessively tasteful;* but this character applies rather more to its external or mechanical appearance than to its essential qualities. Unhappily, magazines and other similar publications, are in the beginning judged chiefly by externals. People saw "Arcturus" *looking* very much like other works which had failed through notorious dullness, although admitted as *arbitri elegantiarum* in all points of what is termed taste or decorum; and they, the people, had no patience to examine any farther. Cæsar's wife was required not only to *be* virtuous but to seem so, and in letters it is demanded

not only that we be not stupid but that we do not array ourselves in the habiliments of stupidity.

It cannot be said of "Arcturus" exactly that it wanted *force*. It was deficient in power of impression, and this deficiency is to be attributed mainly to the exceeding brevity of its articles — a brevity that degenerated into mere paragraphism, precluding dissertation or argument, and thus all permanent effect. The magazine, in fact, had some of the worst or most inconvenient features without any of the compensating advantages of a weekly literary newspaper. The mannerism to which I refer seemed to have its source in undue admiration and consequent imitation of "The Spectator."

In addition to his more obvious literary engagements, Mr. Duyckinck writes a great deal, editorially and otherwise, for "The Democratic Review," "The Morning News," and other periodicals.

In character he is remarkable, distinguished for the *bonhomie* of his manner, his simplicity, and single-mindedness, his active beneficence, his hatred of wrong done even to any enemy, and especially for an almost Quixotic fidelity to his friends. He seems in perpetual good humor with all things, and I have no doubt that in his secret heart he is an optimist.

In person he is equally simple as in character — the one is a *pendant* of the other. He is about five feet eight inches high, somewhat slender. The forehead, phrenologically, is a good one; eyes and hair light; the whole expression of the face that of serenity and benevolence, contributing to give an idea of youthfulness. He is probably thirty, but does not seem to be twenty-five. His dress, also, is in full keeping with his character, scrupulously neat but plain, and

conveying an instantaneous conviction of the gentleman. He is a descendant of one of the oldest and best Dutch families in the state. Married.

Mary Gove.

Mrs. Mary Gove, under the pseudonym of "Mary Orme," has written many excellent papers for the magazines. Her subjects are usually tinctured with the mysticism of the transcendentalists, but are truly imaginative. Her style is quite remarkable for its luminousness and precision — two qualities very rare with her sex. An article entitled "The Gift of Prophecy," published originally in "The Broadway Journal," is a fine specimen of her manner.

Mrs. Gove, however, has acquired less notoriety by her literary compositions than by her lectures on physiology to classes of females. These lectures are said to have been instructive and useful; they certainly elicited much attention. Mrs. G. has also given public discourses on Mesmerism, I believe, and other similar themes — matters which put to the severest test the credulity or, more properly, the faith of mankind. She is, I think, a Mesmerist, a Swedenborgian, a phrenologist, a homœopathist, and a disciple of Priessnitz — what more I am not prepared to say.

She is rather below the medium height, somewhat thin, with dark hair and keen, intelligent black eyes. She converses well and with enthusiasm. In many respects a very interesting woman.

James Aldrich.

Mr. Aldrich has written much for the magazines, etc., and at one time assisted Mr. Park Benjamin in the conduct of "The New World." He also originated, I believe, and edited a not very long-lived or successful weekly paper, called "The Literary Gazette," an imitation in its external appearance of the London journal of the same name. I am not aware that he has made any collection of his writings. His poems abound in the true poetic spirit, but they are frequently chargeable with plagiarism, or something much like it. True, I have seen but three of Mr. Aldrich's compositions in verse — the three (or perhaps there are four of them,) included by Doctor Griswold in his "Poets and Poetry of America." Of these three, (or four,) however, there are two which I cannot help regarding as palpable plagiarisms. Of one of them, in especial, "*A* Death-Bed," it is impossible to say a plausible word in defence. Both in matter and manner it is nearly identical with a little piece entitled "*The* Death-Bed," by Thomas Hood.

The charge of plagiarism, nevertheless, is a purely literary one; and a plagiarism even distinctly proved by no means necessarily involves any moral delinquency. This proposition applies very especially to what appear to be *poetical* thefts. The poetic sentiment presupposes a keen appreciation of the beautiful with a longing for its assimilation into the poetic identity. What the poet intensely admires becomes, thus, in very fact, although only partially, a portion of his own soul. Within this soul it has a secondary origination; and the poet, thus possessed by another's thought,

cannot be said to take of it possession. But in either view he thoroughly feels it as *his own;* and the tendency to this feeling is counteracted only by the sensible presence of the true, palpable origin of the thought in the volume whence he has derived it — an origin which, in the long lapse of years, it is impossible *not* to forget, should the thought itself, as it often is, be forgotten. But the frailest association will regenerate it: it springs up with all the vigor of a new birth; its absolute originality is not with the poet a matter even of suspicion; and when he has written it and printed it, and on its account is charged with plagiarism, there will be no one more entirely astounded than himself. Now, from what I have said, it appears that the liability to accidents of this character is in the direct ratio of the poetic sentiment, of the susceptibility to the poetic impression; and, in fact, all literary history demonstrates that, for the most frequent and palpable plagiarisms we must search the works of the most eminent poets.

Since penning the above I have found five quatrains by Mr. Aldrich, with the heading "Molly Gray." These verses are in the fullest exemplification of what I have just said of their author, evincing at once, in the most remarkable manner, both his merit as an imaginative poet and his unconquerable proneness to imitation. I quote the two concluding quatrains.

"Pretty, fairy Molly Gray!
What may thy fit emblems be?
Stream or star or bird or flower —
They are all too poor for thee.

"No type to match thy beauty
My wandering fancy brings —
Not fairer than its chrysalis
Thy soul with its golden wings!"

Here the "Pretty, fairy Molly Gray!" will put every reader in mind of Tennyson's "Airy, fairy Lillian!" by which Mr. Aldrich's whole poem has been clearly suggested; but the thought in the *finale* is, as far as I know anything about it, original, and is not more happy than happily expressed.

Mr. Aldrich is about thirty-six years of age. In regard to his person there is nothing to be especially noted.

Thomas Dunn English.[1]

I have seen one or two brief poems of considerable merit with the signature of Thomas Dunn English appended. For example:

AZTHENE.

"A sound melodious shook the breeze
When thy beloved name was heard:
Such was the music in the word
Its dainty rhythm the pulses stirred.
But passed forever joys like these.
There is no joy, no light, no day;
But black despair and night alway,
And thickening gloom:
And this, Azthene, is my doom.

"Was it for this, for weary years,
I strove among the sons of men,
And by the magic of my pen —
Just sorcery — walked the lion's den
Of slander void of tears and fears —
And all for thee? For thee! — alas,
As is the image on a glass
So baseless seems,
Azthene, all my earthly dreams."

[1] See Vol. XVII. for English's reply.

I must confess, however, that I do not appreciate the "dainty rhythm" of such a word as "Azthene," and, perhaps, there is a little taint of egotism in the passage about "the magic" of Mr. English's pen. Let us be charitable, however, and set all this down under the head of "pure imagination" or invention — one of the first of poetical requisites. The *inexcusable* sin of Mr. E. is imitation — if this be not too mild a term. Barry Cornwall and others of the *bizarre* school are his especial favorites. He has taken, too, most unwarrantable liberties, in the way of downright plagiarism, from a Philadelphian poet whose high merits have not been properly appreciated — *Mr. Henry B. Hirst.*

I place Mr. English, on my list of New York *literati*, not on account of his poetry, (which I presume he is not weak enough to estimate very highly,) but on the score of his having edited for several months, "with the aid of numerous collaborators," a monthly magazine called "The Aristidean." This work, although professedly a "monthly," was issued at irregular intervals, and was unfortunate, I fear, in not attaining at any period a very extensive circulation.

I learn that Mr. E. is not without talent; but the fate of "The Aristidean" should indicate to him the necessity of applying himself to study. No spectacle can be more pitiable than that of a man without the commonest school education busying himself in attempts to instruct mankind on topics of polite literature. The absurdity in such cases does not lie merely in the ignorance displayed by the would-be instructor, but in the transparency of the shifts by which he endeavors to keep this ignorance concealed. The editor of "The Aristidean," for example, was not

laughed at so much on account of writing "lay" for "lie," etc., etc., and coupling nouns in the plural with verbs in the singular — as where he writes, above,

> " —— so baseless *seems*,
> Asthene, all my earthly *dreams* —— "

he was not, I say, laughed at *so* much for his excusable deficiencies in English grammar (although an editor should certainly be able to write *his own name*) as that, in the hope of disguising such deficiency, he was perpetually lamenting the "typographical blunders" that "in the most unaccountable manner" *would* creep into his work. Nobody was so stupid as to suppose for a moment that there existed in New York a single proof-reader — or even a single printer's devil — who would have permitted *such* errors to escape. By the excuses offered, therefore, the errors were only the more obviously nailed to the counter as Mr. English's own.

I make these remarks in no spirit of unkindness. Mr. E. is yet young — certainly not more than thirty-five — and might, with his talents, readily improve himself at points where he is most defective. No one of any generosity would think the worse of him for getting private instruction.

I do not personally know Mr. English. He is, I believe, from Philadelphia, where he was formerly a doctor of medicine, and subsequently took up the profession of law; more latterly he joined the Tyler party and devoted his attention to politics. About his personal appearance there is nothing very observable. I cannot say whether he is married or not.

Henry Cary.

Doctor Griswold introduces Mr. Cary to the appendix of "The Poet and Poetry," as Mr. Henry Carey, and gives him credit for an Anacreontic song of much merit entitled, or commencing, "Old Wine to Drink." This was *not* written by Mr. C. He has composed little verse, if any, but, under the *nom de plume* of "John Waters," has acquired some note by a series of prose essays in "The New York American," and "The Knickerbocker." These essays have merit, unquestionably, but some person, in an article furnished "The Broadway Journal," before my assumption of its editorship, has gone to the extreme of toadyism in their praise. This critic (possibly Mr. Briggs) thinks that John Waters "is in some sort a Sam Rogers" — "resembles Lamb in fastidiousness of taste" — "has a finer artistic taste than the author of the 'Sketch Book'" — that his "sentences are the most perfect in the language — too perfect to be peculiar" — that "it would be a vain task to hunt through them all for a superfluous conjunction," and that "we need them (the works of John Waters!) as models of style in these days of rhodomontades and *Macaulayisms!*"

The truth seems to be that Mr. Cary is a vivacious, fanciful, entertaining essayist — a fifth or sixth rate one — with a style that, as times go — in view of such stylists as Mr. Briggs, for example — may be termed respectable, and no more. What the critic of the B. J. wishes us to understand by a style that is "too perfect," "the most perfect," etc., it is scarcely worth while to inquire, since it is generally supposed that "perfect" admits of no degrees of comparison;

but if Mr. Briggs (or whoever it is) finds it "a vain task to hunt" through all Mr. John Waters' works "for a superfluous conjunction," there are few school-boys who would not prove more successful hunters than Mr. Briggs.

"It was well filled," says the essayist, on the very page containing these encomiums, "*and* yet the number of performers," etc. "We paid our visit to the incomparable ruins of the castle, *and* then proceeded to retrace our steps, and, examining our wheels at every post-house, reached," etc. "After consultation with a mechanic at Heidelberg, *and* finding that," etc. The last sentence should read, "Finding, after consultation," etc. — the "and" would thus be avoided. Those in the two sentences first quoted are obviously pleonastic. Mr. Cary, in fact, abounds *very especially* in superfluities — (as here, for example, "He seated himself at a piano *that was* near the front of the stage") — and, to speak the truth, is continually guilty of all kinds of grammatical improprieties. I repeat that, in this respect, he is decent, and no more.

Mr. Cary is what Doctor Griswold calls a "gentleman of elegant leisure." He is wealthy and much addicted to letters and *virtù*. For a long time he was President of the Phœnix Bank of New York, and the principal part of his life has been devoted to business. There is nothing remarkable about his personal appearance.

Christopher Pearse Cranch.

The Reverend C. P. Cranch is one of the least intolerable of the school of Boston transcendentalists — and, in fact, I believe that he has at last "come out from among them," abandoned their doctrines (whatever they are) and given up their company in disgust. He was at one time one of the most noted, and undoubtedly one of the least absurd contributors to "The Dial," but has reformed his habits of thought and speech, domiciliated himself in New York, and set up the easel of an artist in one of the Gothic chambers of the University.

About two years ago a volume of "Poems by Christopher Pearse Cranch" was published by Carey & Hart. It was most unmercifully treated by the critics, and much injustice, in my opinion, was done to the poet. He seems to me to possess unusual vivacity of fancy and dexterity of expression, while his versification is remarkable for its accuracy, vigor, and even for its originality of effect. I might say, perhaps, rather more than all this, and maintain that he has imagination if he would only condescend to employ it, which he will not, or *would* not until lately — the word-compounders and quibble concoctors of Frogpondium having inoculated him with preference for Imagination's half sister, the Cinderella, Fancy. Mr. Cranch has seldom contented himself with harmonious combination of thought. There must always be, to afford him perfect satisfaction, a certain amount of the odd, of the whimsical, of the affected, of the *bizarre*. He is as full of absurd conceits as Cowley or Donne, with this difference, that the conceits of these

latter are Euphuisms beyond redemption — flat, irremediable, self-contented nonsensicalities, and in so much are good of their kind; but the conceits of Mr. Cranch are, for the most part, conceits intentionally manufactured, for conceit's sake, out of the material for properly imaginative, harmonious, proportionate, or poetical ideas. We see every moment that he has been at uncommon *pains* to make a fool of himself.

But perhaps I am wrong in supposing that I am at all in condition to decide on the merits of Mr. C.'s poetry, which is professedly addressed to the few. "Him we will seek," says the poet —

> "Him we will seek, and none but him,
> Whose inward sense hath not grown dim;
> Whose soul is steeped in Nature's tinct,
> And to the Universal linked;
> Who loves the beauteous Infinite
> With deep and ever new delight,
> And carrieth where 'er he goes
> The inborn sweetness of the rose,
> The perfume as of Paradise —
> The talisman above all price —
> The optic glass that wins from far
> The meaning of the utmost star —
> The key that opes the golden doors
> Where earth and heaven have piled their stores —
> The magic ring, the enchanter's wand —
> The title-deed to Wonder-Land —
> The wisdom that o'erlooketh sense,
> The clairvoyance of Innocence."

This is all very well, fanciful, pretty and neatly turned — all with the exception of the two last lines, and it is a pity they were not left out. It is laughable to see that the transcendental poets, if beguiled for a minute or two into respectable English and common

sense, are always sure to remember their cue just as they get to the end of their song, which, by way of *salve*, they then round off with a bit of doggerel about "wisdom that o'erlook*eth* sense" and "the clairvoyance of Innocence." It is especially observable that, in adopting the cant of thought, the cant of phraseology is adopted at the same instant. Can Mr. Cranch, or can anybody else, inform me why it is that, in the really sensible opening passages of what I have here quoted, he employs the modern, and only in the final couplet of goosetherumfoodle makes use of the obsolete terminations of verbs in the third person singular, present tense?

One of the best of Mr. Cranch's compositions is undoubtedly his poem on *Niagara*. It has some natural thoughts, and grand ones, suiting the subject; but then they are more than half-divested of their nature by the attempt at adorning them with *oddity* of expression. *Quaintness* is an admissible and important adjunct to ideality — an adjunct whose value has been long misapprehended — but in picturing the sublime it is altogether out of place. What idea of power, of grandeur, for example, can any human being connect even with Niagara, when Niagara is described in language so trippingly fantastical, so palpably adapted to a purpose, as that which follows?

> "I stood upon a speck of ground;
> Before me fell a stormy ocean.
> I was like a captive bound;
> And around
> A universe of sound
> Troubled the heavens with ever-quivering motion.
>
> "Down, down forever — down, down forever —
> Something falling, falling, falling;

Up, up forever — up, up forever,
Resting never,
Boiling up forever,
Steam-clouds shot up with thunder-bursts appalling."

It is difficult to conceive anything more ludicrously out of keeping than the thoughts of these stanzas and the *petit-maître*, fidgety, hop-skip-and-jump air of the words and the Liliputian parts of the versification.

A somewhat similar metre is adopted by Mr. C. in his "Lines on Hearing Triumphant Music," but as the subject is essentially different, so the effect is by no means so displeasing. I copy one of the stanzas as the noblest individual passage which I can find among all the poems of its author.

"That glorious strain!
Oh, from my brain
I see the shadow flitting like scared ghosts.
A light — a light
Shines in to-night
Round the good angels trooping to their posts,
And the black cloud is rent in twain
Before the ascending strain."

Mr. Cranch is well educated, and quite accomplished. Like Mr. Osborn, he is musician, painter and poet, being in each capacity very respectably successful.

He is about thirty-three or four years of age; in height, perhaps five feet eleven; athletic; front face not unhandsome — the forehead evincing intellect, and the smile pleasant; but the profile is marred by the turning up of the nose, and, altogether is hard and disagreeable. His eyes and hair are dark brown — the latter worn short, slightly inclined to curl. Thick whiskers meeting under the chin, and much out of keeping with the shirtcollar *à la Byron*. Dresses with marked plainness. He is married.

MARGARET FULLER.

From engraving by Hall.

IV.

[Text: *Godey's Lady's Book*, August, 1846.]

Sarah Margaret Fuller.

Miss Fuller was at one time editor, or one of the editors of "The Dial," to which she contributed many of the most forcible and certainly some of the most peculiar papers. She is known, too, by "Summer on the Lakes," a remarkable assemblage of sketches, issued in 1844, by Little & Brown, of Boston. More lately she has published "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," a work which has occasioned much discussion, having had the good fortune to be warmly abused and chivalrously defended. At present, she is assistant editor of "The New York Tribune," or rather a salaried contributor to that journal, for which she has furnished a great variety of matter, chiefly critical notices of new books, etc., etc., her articles being designated by an asterisk. Two of the best of them were a review of Professor Longfellow's late magnificent edition of his own works, (with a portrait,) and an appeal to the public in behalf of her friend Harro Harring. The review did her infinite credit; it was frank, candid, independent — in even ludicrous contrast to the usual mere glorifications of the day, giving honor *only* where honor was due, yet evincing the most thorough capacity to appreciate and the most sincere intention to place in the fairest light the real and idiosyncratic merits of the poet.

In my opinion it is one of the very few reviews of Longfellow's poems, ever published in America, of

which the critics have not had abundant reason to be ashamed. Mr. Longfellow is entitled to a certain and very distinguished rank among the poets of his country, but that country is disgraced by the evident toadyism which would award to his social position and influence, to his fine paper and large type, to his morocco binding and gilt edges, to his flattering portrait of himself, and to the illustrations of his poems by Huntingdon, that amount of indiscriminate approbation which neither could nor would have been given to the poems themselves.

The defence of Harro Harring, or rather the Philippic against those who were doing him wrong, was one of the most eloquent and well-*put* articles I have ever yet seen in a newspaper.

"Woman in the Nineteenth Century" is a book which few women in the country could have written, and no woman in the country would have published, with the exception of Miss Fuller. In the way of independence, of unmitigated radicalism, it is one of the "Curiosities of American Literature," and Doctor Griswold should include it in his book. I need scarcely say that the essay is nervous, forcible, thoughtful, suggestive, brilliant, and to a certain extent scholar-like — for all that Miss Fuller produces is entitled to these epithets — but I must say that the conclusions reached are only in part my own. Not that they are too bold, by any means — too novel, too startling, or too dangerous in their consequences, but that in their attainment too many premises have been distorted and too many analogical inferences left altogether out of sight. I mean to say that the intention of the Deity as regards sexual differences — an intention which can be distinctly comprehended only by throwing the exterior

(more sensitive) portions of the mental retina *casually* over the wide field of universal *analogy* — I mean to say that this *intention* has not been sufficiently considered. Miss Fuller has erred, too, through her own excessive objectiveness. She judges *woman* by the heart and intellect of Miss Fuller, but there are not more than one or two dozen Miss Fullers on the whole face of the earth. Holding these opinions in regard to "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," I still feel myself called upon to disavow the silly, condemnatory criticism of the work which appeared in one of the earlier numbers of "The Broadway Journal." That article was *not* written by myself, and *was* written by my associate Mr. Briggs.

The most favorable estimate of Miss Fuller's genius (for high genius she unquestionably possesses) is to be obtained, perhaps, from her contributions to "The Dial," and from her "Summer on the Lakes." Many of the *descriptions* in this volume are unrivalled for *graphicality*, (why is there not such a word ?) for the force with which they convey the true by the novel or unexpected, by the introduction of touches which other artists would be sure to omit as irrelevant to the subject. This faculty, too, springs from her subjectiveness, which leads her to paint a scene less by its features than by its effects.

Here, for example, is a portion of her account of Niagara: —

"Daily these proportions widened and towered more and more upon my sight, and I got at last a proper foreground for these sublime distances. Before coming away, I think I really saw the full wonder of the scene. After awhile it *so drew me into itself as to inspire an undefined dread, such as I never knew before, such as may be felt*

when death is about to usher us into a new existence. The perpetual trampling of the waters seized my senses. *I felt that no other sound, however near, could be heard, and would start and look behind me for a foe.* I realized the identity of that mood of nature in which these waters were poured down with such absorbing force, with that in which the Indian was shaped on the same soil. For continually upon my mind came, unsought and unwelcome, *images, such as had never haunted it before, of naked savages stealing behind me with uplifted tomahawks.* Again and again this illusion recurred, and even *after I had thought it over, and tried to shake it off, I could not help starting and looking behind me.* What I liked best was to sit on Table Rock close to the great fall; *there all power of observing details, all separate consciousness was quite lost.*"

The truthfulness of the passages italicized will be felt by all; the feelings described are, perhaps, experienced by every (imaginative) person who visits the fall; but most persons, through predominant subjectiveness, would scarcely be conscious of the feelings, or, at best, would never think of employing them in an attempt to convey to others an impression of the scene. Hence so many desperate failures to convey it on the part of ordinary tourists. Mr. William W. Lord, to be sure, in his poem "Niagara," is sufficiently objective; he describes not the fall, but very properly the effect of the fall upon *him*. He says that it made him think of his *own* greatness, of his *own* superiority, and so forth, and so forth; and it is only when we come to think that the thought of Mr. Lord's greatness is quite idiosyncratic, confined exclusively to Mr. Lord, that we are in condition to understand how, in despite of his objectiveness, he has failed to convey an idea of anything beyond one Mr. William W. Lord.

From the essay entitled "Philip Van Artevelde," I copy a paragraph which will serve at once to exemplify Miss Fuller's more earnest (declamatory) style, and to show the tenor of her prospective speculations: —

"At Chicago I read again 'Philip Van Artevelde,' and certain passages in it will always be in my mind associated with the deep sound of the lake, as heard in the night. I used to read a short time at night, and then open the blind to look out. The moon would be full upon the lake, and the calm breath, pure light, and the deep voice, harmonized well with the thought of the Flemish hero. When will this country have such a man? It is what she needs — no thin Idealist, no coarse Realist, but a man whose eye reads the heavens while his feet step firmly on the ground, and his hands are strong and dexterous in the use of human instruments. A man, religious, virtuous, and — sagacious; a man of universal sympathies, but self-possessed; a man who knows the region of emotion, though he is not its slave; a man to whom this world is no mere spectacle or fleeting shadow, but a great, solemn game, to be played with good heed, for its stakes are of eternal value, yet who, if his own play be true, heeds not what he loses by the falsehood of others. A man who lives from the past, yet knows that its honey can but moderately avail him; whose comprehensive eye scans the present, neither infatuated by its golden lures nor chilled by its many ventures; who possesses prescience, as the wise man must, but not so far as to be driven mad to-day by the gift which discerns to-morrow. When there is such a man for America, the thought which urges her on will be expressed."

From what I have quoted a *general* conception of the prose style of the authoress may be gathered. Her manner, however, is infinitely varied. It is always

forcible — but I am not sure that it is always anything else, unless I say picturesque. It rather indicates than evinces scholarship. Perhaps only the scholastic, or, more properly, those accustomed to look narrowly at the structure of phrases, would be willing to acquit her of ignorance of grammar — would be willing to attribute her slovenliness to disregard of the shell in anxiety for the kernel; or to waywardness, or to affectation, or to blind reverence for Carlyle — would be able to detect, in her strange and continual inaccuracies, a capacity for the accurate.

"I cannot sympathize with such an apprehension: the spectacle is *capable to* swallow *up* all such objects."

"It is fearful, too, to know, as you look, that whatever has been swallowed by the cataract, is *like* to rise suddenly to light."

"I took our *mutual* friends to see her."

"It was always obvious that they had nothing in common *between them*."

"The Indian cannot be looked at truly *except* by a poetic eye."

"McKenney's Tour to the Lakes gives some facts not to be met *with* elsewhere."

"There is that mixture of culture and rudeness in the aspect of things *as* gives a feeling of freedom," etc., etc., etc.

These are merely a few, a very few instances, taken at random from among a multitude of *wilful* murders committed by Miss Fuller on the American of President Polk. She uses, too, the word "ignore," a vulgarity adopted only of late days (and to no good purpose, since there is no necessity for it) from the barbarisms of the law, and makes no scruple of giving the Yankee interpretation to the verbs "witness" and

"realize," to say nothing of "use," as in the sentence, "I used to read a short time at night." It will not do to say, in defence of such words, that in such senses they may be found in certain dictionaries — in that of Bolles', for instance; — *some* kind of "authority" may be found for *any* kind of vulgarity under the sun.

In spite of these things, however, and of her frequent unjustifiable Carlyleisms, (such as that of writing sentences which are no sentences, since, to be parsed, reference must be had to sentences preceding,) the style of Miss Fuller is one of the very best with which I am acquainted. In general effect, I know no style which surpasses it. It is singularly piquant, vivid, terse, bold, luminous — leaving details out of sight, it is everything that a style need be.

I believe that Miss Fuller has written much poetry, although she has published little. That little is tainted with the affectation of the *transcendentalists*, (I used this term, of course, in the sense which the public of late days seem resolved to give it,) but is brimful of the poetic *sentiment*. Here, for example, is some thing in Coleridge's manner, of which the author of "Genevieve" might have had no reason to be ashamed: —

> "A maiden sat beneath a tree;
> Tear-bedewed her pale cheeks be,
> And she sighed heavily.
>
> "From forth the wood into the *light*
> A hunter strides with carol *light*,
> And a glance so bold and bright.
>
> "He careless stopped and eyed the maid:
> 'Why weepest thou?' he gently said;
> 'I love thee well, be not afraid.'

"He takes her hand and leads her on —
She should have waited there alone,
For he was not her chosen one.

"He *leans* her head upon his breast —
She knew 't was not her home of rest,
But, ah, she had been sore distrest.

"The sacred stars look sadly down;
The parting moon appeared to frown,
To see thus dimmed the diamond crown.

"Then from the thicket starts a deer —
The huntsman, seizing *on* his spear
Cries, 'Maiden, wait thou for me here.'

"She sees him vanish into night —
She starts from sleep in deep affright,
For it was not her own true knight.

"Though but in dream Gunhilda failed —
Though but a fancied ill assailed —
Though she but fancied fault bewailed —

"Yet thought of day makes dream of night;
She is not worthy of the knight;
The inmost altar burns not bright.

"If loneliness thou canst not bear —
Cannot the dragon's venom dare —
Of the pure meed thou shouldst despair.

"Now sadder that lone maiden sighs;
Far bitterer tears profane her eyes;
Crushed in the dust her heart's flower lies."

To show the evident carelessness with which this poem was constructed, I have italicized an identical rhyme (of about the same force in versification as an identical proposition in logic) and two grammatical improprieties. *To lean* is a neuter verb, and "seizing *on*" is not properly to be called a pleonasm, merely

because it is — nothing at all. The concluding line is difficult of pronunciation through excess of consonants. I should have preferred, indeed, the ante-penultimate tristich as the *finale* of the poem.

The supposition that the book of an author is a thing apart from the author's self, is, I think, ill-founded. The soul is a cipher, in the sense of a cryptograph; and the shorter a cryptograph is, the more difficulty there is in its comprehension — at a certain point of brevity it would bid defiance to an army of Champollions. And thus he who has written very little, may in that little either conceal his spirit or convey quite an erroneous idea of it — of his acquirements, talents, temper, manner, tenor and depth (or shallowness) of thought — in a word, of his character, of himself. But this is impossible with him who has written much. Of such a person we get, from his books, not merely a just, but the most just representation. Bulwer, the individual, personal man, in a green velvet waistcoat and amber gloves, is not by any means the veritable Sir Edward Lytton, who is discoverable only in "Ernest Maltravers," where his soul is deliberately and nakedly set forth. And who would ever know Dickens by looking at him or talking with him, or doing anything with him except reading his "Curiosity Shop?" What poet, in especial, but must feel at least the better portion of himself more fairly represented in even his commonest sonnet, (earnestly written) than in his most elaborate or most intimate personalities?

I put all this as a general proposition, to which Miss Fuller affords a marked exception — to this extent, that her personal character and her printed book are merely one and the same thing. We get access to her soul *as* directly from the one as from the other — no

more readily from this than from that — easily from either. Her acts are bookish, and her books are less thoughts than acts. Her literary and her conversational manner are identical. Here is a passage from her "Summer on the Lakes": —

"The rapids enchanted me far beyond what I expected; they are so swift that they cease to *seem* so — you can think only of their *beauty*. The fountain beyond the Moss islands I discovered for myself, and thought it for some time an *accidental* beauty which it would not do to *leave*, lest I might never see it again. After I found it *permanent*, I returned many times to watch the play of its crest. In the little waterfall beyond, Nature seems, as she often does, to have made a *study* for some larger design. She delights in this — a sketch within a sketch — a dream within a *dream*. Wherever we see it, the lines of the great buttress in the fragment of stone, the hues of the waterfall, copied in the flowers that *star* its bordering mosses, we are *delighted*; for all the lineaments become *fluent*, and we mould the scene in congenial thought with its *genius*."

Now all this is precisely as Miss Fuller would *speak* it. She is perpetually saying just such things in just such words. To get the *conversational* woman in the mind's eye, all that is needed is to imagine her reciting the paragraph just quoted; but first let us have the *personal* woman. She is of the medium height; nothing remarkable about the figure; a profusion of lustrous light hair; eyes a bluish gray, full of fire; capacious forehead; the mouth when in repose indicates profound sensibility, capacity for affection, for love — when moved by a slight smile, it becomes even beautiful in the intensity of this expression; but the upper lip, as if impelled by the action of involuntary muscles,

habitually uplifts itself, conveying the impression of a sneer. Imagine, now, a person of this description looking you at one moment earnestly in the face, at the next seeming to look only within her own spirit or at the wall; moving nervously every now and then in her chair; speaking in a high key, but musically, deliberately, (not hurriedly or loudly,) with a delicious distinctness of enunciation — speaking, I say, the paragraph in question, and emphasizing the words which I have italicized, not by impulsion of the breath, (as is usual,) but by drawing them out as long as possible, nearly closing her eyes the while — imagine all this, and we have both the woman and the authoress before us.

James Lawson.[1]

Mr. Lawson has himself made little effort in the field of literary labor, but is distinguished for his zeal and liberality in the good cause. He is by birth a Scotchman, but few men of letters have more ardently at heart the welfare of American letters.

His works, so far as published in volume form, are few. I know only of "Giordano, a Tragedy," and two volumes entitled "Tales and Sketches by a Cosmopolite." The former was performed some years ago, (at the Park, I believe,) and with no great success. The latter were more popular. One of them, "The Dapper Gentleman's Story," is a very clever imitation of the manner of Irving, and has "gone the rounds of the press."

[1] See Appendix for Griswold text.

Mr. Lawson is of social habits and warm sympathies. He is enthusiastic, especially in matters of art or taste; converses fluently, tells a capital story, and is generally respected and beloved.

Caroline M. Kirkland.

Mrs. Kirkland's "New Home," published under the *nom de plume* of "Mary Clavers," wrought an undoubted sensation. The cause lay not so much in picturesque description, in racy humor, or in animated individual portraiture, as in *truth* and novelty. The west at the time was a field comparatively untrodden by the sketcher or the novelist. In certain works, to be sure, we had obtained brief glimpses of character strange to us sojourners in the civilized east, but to Mrs. Kirkland alone we were indebted for our acquaintance with the *home* and home-life of the backwoodsman. With a fidelity and vigor that prove her pictures to be taken from the very life, she has represented "scenes" that could have occurred only *as* and *where* she has described them. She has placed before us the veritable settlers of the forest, with all their peculiarities, national and individual; their free and fearless spirit; their homely utilitarian views; their shrewd out-looking for self-interest; their thrifty care and inventions multiform; their coarseness of manner, united with real delicacy and substantial kindness when their sympathies are called into action — in a word, with all the characteristics of the Yankee, in a region where the salient points of character are unsmoothed by contact with society. So life-like were her representations that they

have been appropriated as individual portraits by many who have been disposed to plead, trumpet-tongued, against what they supposed to be "the deep damnation of their taking-off."

"Forest Life" succeeded "A New Home," and was read with equal interest. It gives us, perhaps, more of the philosophy of Western life, but has the same freshness, freedom, piquancy. Of course, a truthful picture of pioneer habits could never be given in any grave history or essay so well as in the form of narration, where each character is permitted to develop itself; narration, therefore, was very properly adopted by Mrs. Kirkland in both the books just mentioned, and even more entirely in her later volume, "Western Clearings." This is the title of a collection of tales, illustrative, in general, of Western manners, customs, ideas. "The Land Fever" is a story of the wild days when the madness of speculation in land was at its height. It is a richly characteristic sketch, as is also "The Ball at Thram's Huddle." Only those who have had the fortune to visit or live in the "back settlements" can enjoy such pictures to the full. "Chances and Changes" and Love *vs.* Aristocracy" are more regularly constructed *tales*, with the "universal passion" as the moving power, but colored with the glowing hues of the west. "The Bee Tree" exhibits a striking but too numerous class among the settlers, and explains, also, the depth of the bitterness that grows out of an unprosperous condition in that "Paradise of the Poor." "Ambuscades" and "Half-Lengths from Life" I remember as two piquant sketches to which an annual, a year or two ago, was indebted for a most unusual sale among the conscious and pen-dreading denizens of the west.

"Half-Lengths" turns on the trying subject of *caste*. "The Schoolmaster's Progress" is full of truth and humor. The western pedagogue, the stiff, solitary nondescript figure in the drama of a new settlement, occupying a middle position between "our folks" and "company," and "boarding round," is irresistibly amusing, and cannot fail to be recognised as the representative of a class. The occupation, indeed, always seems to mould those engaged in it — they all soon, like Master Horner, learn to "know well what belongs to the pedagogical character, and that facial solemnity stands high on the list of indispensable qualifications." The spelling-school, also, is a "new country" feature which we owe Mrs. Kirkland many thanks for recording. The incidents of "An Embroidered Fact" are singular and picturesque, but not particularly illustrative of the "Clearings." The same may be said of "Bitter Fruits from Chance-Sown Seeds;" but this abounds in capital touches of character: all the horrors of the tale are brought about through suspicion of *pride*, an accusation as destructive at the west as that of witchcraft in olden times, or the cry of mad dog in modern.

In the way of absolute *books*, Mrs. Kirkland, I believe, has achieved nothing beyond the three volumes specified, (with another lately issued by Wiley and Putnam,) but she is a very constant contributor to the magazines. Unquestionably, she is one of our best writers, has a province of her own, and in that province has few equals. Her most noticeable trait is a certain *freshness* of style, seemingly drawn, as her subjects in general, from the west. In the second place is to be observed a species of *wit*, approximating humor, and so interspersed with pure *fun*, that "wit," after all,

is nothing like a definition of it. To give an example — "Old Thoughts on the New Year" commences with a quotation from Tasso's "Aminta"—

> "Il mondo invecchia
> Ed invecchiando intristisce;"

and the following is given as a "free translation"—

> "The world is growing older
> And wiser day by day;
> Everybody knows beforehand
> What you're going to say.
> We used to laugh and frolic —
> Now we must behave:
> Poor old Fun is dead and buried —
> Pride dug his grave."

This, if I am not mistaken, is the only specimen of *poetry* as yet given by Mrs. Kirkland to the world. She has afforded no means of judging in respect to her inventive powers, although fancy, and even imagination, are apparent in everything she does. Her perceptive faculties enable her to *describe* with great verisimilitude. Her mere style is admirable, lucid, terse, full of variety, faultlessly pure, and yet bold — so bold as to appear heedless of the ordinary *decora* of composition. In even her most reckless sentences, however, she betrays the woman of refinement, of accomplishment, of unusually thorough education. There are a great many points in which her general manner resembles that of Willis, whom she evidently admires. Indeed, it would not be difficult to pick out from her works an occasional Willisism, not less palpable than happy. For example —

"*Peaches were like little green velvet buttons when* George was first mistaken for Doctor Beaseley, and *before they were ripe* he, etc."

And again —

"Mr. Hammond is fortunately settled in our neighborhood, for the present at least; and he has the neatest little cottage in the world, standing, too, under a very tall oak, which bends kindly over it, looking like the Princess Glumdalclitch inclining her ear to the box which contained her pet Gulliver."

Mrs. Kirkland's personal manner is an echo of her literary one. She is frank, cordial, yet sufficiently dignified — even bold, yet especially ladylike; converses with remarkable accuracy as well as fluency; is brilliantly witty, and now and then not a little sarcastic, but a general amiability prevails.

She is rather above the medium height; eyes and hair dark; features somewhat small, with no marked characteristics, but the whole countenance beams with benevolence and intellect.

Prosper M. Wetmore.

General Wetmore occupied some years ago quite a conspicuous position among the *littérateurs* of New York City. His name was seen very frequently in "The Mirror," and in other similar journals, in connection with brief poems and occasional prose compositions. His only publication in volume form, I believe, is "The Battle of Lexington and Other Poems," a collection of considerable merit, and one which met a very cordial reception from the press.

Much of this cordiality, however, is attributable to the personal popularity of the man, to his facility in

making acquaintances and his tact in converting them into unwavering friends.

General Wetmore has an exhaustless fund of *vitality*. His energy, activity and indefatigability are proverbial, not less than his peculiar sociability. These qualities give him unusual influence among his fellow-citizens, and have constituted him (as precisely the same traits have constituted his friend General Morris) one of a standing committee for the regulation of a certain class of city affairs — such, for instance, as the getting up a complimentary benefit, or a public demonstration of respect for some deceased worthy, or a ball and dinner to Mr. Irving or Mr. Dickens.

Mr. Wetmore is not only a general, but Naval Officer of the Port of New York, Member of the Board of Trade, one of the Council of the Art Union, one of the Corresponding Committee of the Historical Society, and of more other committees than I can just now remember. His manners are *recherchés*, courteous — a little in the old school way. He is sensitive, punctilious; speaks well, roundly, fluently, plausibly, and is skilled in pouring oil upon the waters of stormy debate.

He is, perhaps, fifty years of age, but has a youthful look; is about five feet eight in height, slender, neat, with an air of military compactness; looks especially well on horseback.

Emma C. Embury.

Mrs. Embury is one of the most noted, and certainly one of the most meritorious of our female *littérateurs*. She has been many years before the public — her earliest compositions, I believe, having been contributed to the "New York Mirror" under the *nom de plume* "Ianthe." They attracted very general attention at the time of their appearance and materially aided the paper. They wer. subsequently, with some other pieces, published in volume form, with the title "Guido and Other Poems." The book has been long out of print. Of late days its author has written but little poetry — that little, however, has at least indicated a poetic capacity of no common order.

Yet as a poetess she is comparatively unknown, her reputation in this regard having been quite overshadowed by that which she has acquired as a writer of tales. In this latter capacity she has, upon the whole, no equal among her sex in America — certainly no superior. She is not so vigorous as Mrs. Stephens, nor so vivacious as Miss Chubbuck, nor so caustic as Miss Leslie, nor so dignified as Miss Sedgwick, nor so graceful, fanciful and *spirituelle* as Mrs. Osgood, but is *deficient* in none of the qualities for which these ladies are noted, and in certain particulars surpasses them all. Her subjects are *fresh*, if not always vividly original, and she manages them with more skill than is usually exhibited by our magazinists. She has also much imagination and sensibility, while her style is pure, earnest, and devoid of verbiage and exaggeration. I make a point of *reading* all tales to which I see the name of Mrs. Embury appended. The story by

which she has attained most reputation is "Constance Latimer, the Blind Girl."

Mrs. E. is a daughter of Doctor Manly, an eminent physician of New York City. At an early age she married a gentleman of some wealth and of education, as well as of tastes akin to her own. She is noted for her domestic virtues no less than for literary talents and acquirements.

She is about the medium height; complexion, eyes, and hair light; arched eyebrows; Grecian nose; the mouth a fine one and indicative of firmness; the whole countenance pleasing, intellectual and expressive. The portrait in "Graham's Magazine" for January, 1843, has no resemblance to her whatever.

Epes Sargent.

Mr. Sargent is well known to the public as the author of "Velasco, a Tragedy," "The Light of the Light-House, with Other Poems," one or two short *novelettes*,[1] and numerous contributions to the periodicals. He was also the editor of "Sargent's Magazine," a monthly work, which had the misfortune of falling between two stools, never having been able to make up its mind whether to be popular with the three or dignified with the five dollar journals. It was a "happy *medium*" between the two classes, and met the fate of all happy *media* in dying, as well through

[1] Poe used the word *nouvelettes*, but there is no such word in ordinary French. — Ed.

lack of foes as of friends. *In medio tutissimus ibis* is the worst advice in the world for the editor of a magazine. Its observance proved the downfall of Mr. Lowell and his really meritorious "Pioneer."

"Velasco" has received some words of commendation from the author of "Ion," and I am ashamed to say, owes most of its home appreciation to this circumstance. Mr. Talfourd's play has, itself, little truly dramatic, with much picturesque and more poetical value; its author, nevertheless, is better entitled to respect as a dramatist than as a critic of dramas. "Velasco," compared with American tragedies generally, is a good tragedy — indeed, an excellent one, but, positively considered, its merits are very inconsiderable. It has many of the traits of Mrs. Mowatt's "Fashion," to which, in its mode of construction, its scenic effects, and several other points, it bears as close a resemblance as, in the nature of things, it could very well bear. It is by no means improbable, however, that Mrs. Mowatt received some assistance from Mr. Sargent in the composition of her comedy, or at least was guided by his advice in many particulars of technicality.

"Shells and Sea Weeds," a series of brief poems, recording the incidents of a voyage to Cuba, is, I think, the best work in verse of its author, and evinces a fine fancy, with keen appreciation of the beautiful in natural scenery. Mr. Sargent is fond of sea pieces, and paints them with skill, flooding them with that warmth and geniality which are their character and their due. "A Life on the Ocean Wave" has attained great popularity, but is by no means so good as the less lyrical compositions, "A Calm," "The Gale," "Tropical Weather," and "A Night Storm at Sea."

"The Light of the Light-House" is a spirited

poem, with many musical and fanciful passages, well expressed. For example —

> "But, oh, Aurora's crimson light,
> That makes the watch-fire dim,
> Is not a more transporting sight
> Than Ellen is to him.
> He pineth not for fields and brooks,
> Wild flowers and singing birds,
> For summer smileth in her looks
> And singeth in her words."

There is something of the Dibdin spirit throughout the poem, and, indeed, throughout all the sea poems of Mr. Sargent — a little *too much* of it, perhaps.

His prose is not quite so meritorious as his poetry. He writes "easily," and is apt at burlesque and sarcasm — both rather broad than original. Mr. Sargent has an excellent memory for good *bits*, and no little dexterity in their application. To those who meddle little with books, some of his satirical papers must appear brilliant. In a word, he is one of the most prominent members of a very extensive American family — the men of industry, talent and tact.

In stature he is short — not more than five feet five — but well proportioned. His face is a fine one; the features regular and expressive. His demeanor is very gentlemanly. Unmarried, and about thirty years of age.

V.

[Text: *Godey's Lady's Book*, September, 1846.]

Frances S. Osgood.[1]

Mrs. Frances Sargent Osgood, for the last two or three years, has been rapidly attaining distinction — and this, evidently, with no effort at attaining it. She seems, in fact, to have no object in view beyond that of giving voice to the feelings or to the fancies of the moment. "Necessity," says the proverb, "is the mother of Invention;" and the invention of Mrs. O., at least, springs plainly from necessity — from the necessity of invention. *Not* to write poetry — not to think it, dream it, act it, and be it, is entirely out of her power.

It may be questioned whether, with more method, more industry, more definite purpose, more ambition, Mrs. Osgood would have made a more decided impression on the public mind. She might, upon the whole, have written better poems, but the chances are that she would have failed in conveying so vivid and so just an idea of her powers as poet. The warm *abandonnement* of her style — that charm which now so captivates — is but a portion and a consequence of her unworldly nature, of her disregard of mere fame; but it affords us glimpses (which we could not otherwise have obtained) of a capacity for accomplishing what she has not accomplished and in all probability never will. But in the world of poetry there is already more than enough of this uncongenial ambition and pretence.

[1] See Appendix for Griswold text.

Mrs. Osgood has taken no care whatever of her literary fame. A great number of her finest compositions, both in verse and prose, have been written anonymously, and are now lying *perdus* about the country in out-of-the-way nooks and corners. Many a goodly reputation has been reared upon a far more unstable basis than her unclaimed and uncollected "fugitive pieces."

Her first volume, I believe, was published six or seven years ago, by Edward Churton, of London, during the poet's residence in that city. I have now lying before me a second edition of it, dated 1842 — a most beautifully printed book, dedicated to the Reverend Hobart Caunter. It contains a number of what the Bostonians call "juvenile" poems, written when Mrs. O. (then Miss Locke) could not have been more than thirteen, and evincing a very unusual precocity. The leading piece is "Elfrida, a Dramatic Poem," but in many respects well entitled to the appellation "drama." I allude chiefly to the passionate expression of particular portions, to delineation of character, and to occasional scenic effect; in construction, (that is to say, plot,) in general conduct and plausibility, the play fails — comparatively, of course, for the hand of genius is evinced throughout.

The story is the well-known one of Edgar, Elfrida and Earl Athelwood. The king, hearing of Elfrida's extraordinary beauty, commissions his favorite, Athelwood, to visit her and ascertain if report speaks truly of her charms. The earl, becoming himself enamored, represents the lady as anything but beautiful and agreeable, and the king is satisfied. Athelwood soon afterwards woos and weds Elfrida, giving her wealth as his reason to Edgar. The true state of the case, how-

ever, is betrayed by an enemy, and the monarch resolves to visit the earl at his castle and so judge for himself. Hearing of this resolve, Athelwood, in despair, confesses his duplicity to his wife, and entreats her to render null as far as possible the effect of her charms by dressing with unusual plainness. This the wife promises to do, but, fired with ambition and resentment at the wrong done her, arrays herself in her most magnificent and becoming costume. The king is captivated, and the result (a somewhat immoral one, although in keeping with the ordinary idea of poetical justice) is the destruction of Athelwood and the elevation of Elfrida to the throne.

These incidents are especially well adapted to dramatic purposes, and with more of that art which Mrs. Osgood does *not* possess, she might have woven them into a tragedy which the world would not have willingly let die. As it is, she has merely succeeded in showing what she might, should, and *could* have done, but unhappily did not. The character of Elfrida is the bright point of the play. Her beauty and consciousness of it, her indignation and uncompromising ambition, are depicted with power.

The English collection of which I speak was entitled "A Wreath of Wild Flowers from New England." It met with a *really* cordial reception in Great Britain — was favorably noticed by the "Literary Gazette," "Times," "Monthly Chronicle," "Atlas," and especially by the "Court Journal," the "Court and Ladies' Magazine," "La Belle Assemblée," and other similar works circulating very extensively among the aristocracy. Mr. Osgood's merits as an artist had already introduced his wife into distinguished society, (she was petted in especial by

Mrs. Norton and Rogers,) but her beautiful volume had at once an evidently favorable effect upon his fortunes. His pictures were all placed in a more advantageous light by her poetical and conversational grace.

As the "Wreath of Wild Flowers" has had comparatively little circulation in this country, I may be pardoned for making one or two other extracts. "*The Dying Rosebud's Lament*," although by no means one of the best poems included, will very well serve to show the earlier and more characteristic manner of the poetess.

"Ah me! — ah, woe is me!
That I should perish now,
With the dear sunlight just let in
Upon my balmy brow!

"*My leaves, instinct with glowing life,*
Were quivering to unclose;
My happy heart with love was rife —
I was almost a rose.

"Nerved by a hope, warm, rich, intense,
Already I had risen
Above my cage's curving fence —
My green and graceful prison.

"*My pouting lips, by Zephyr pressed,*
Were just prepared to part
And whisper to the wooing wind
The rapture of my heart.

"*In new-born fancies reveling,*
My mossy cell half riven,
Each thrilling leaflet seemed a wing
To bear me into Heaven.

"How oft, while yet an infant flower,
My crimson cheek I've laid
Against the green bars of my bower,
Impatient of the shade!

"*And pressing up and peeping through*
Its small but precious vistas,
Sighed for the lovely light and dew
That blessed my elder sisters.

"I saw the sweet breeze rippling o'er
Their leaves that loved the play,
Though the light thief stole all their store
Of dew-drop gems away.

"I thought how happy I should be
Such diamond wreaths to wear,
And frolic with a rose's glee
With sunbeam, bird and air.

"Ah me! — ah, woe is me, that I,
Ere yet my leaves unclose,
With all my wealth of sweets, *must die*
Before I am a rose!"

Every true poet must here appreciate the exceeding delicacy of expression, the richness of fancy, the nice appositeness of the overt and insinuated meaning. The passages I have italicized have seldom, in their peculiar and very *graceful* way, been equalled — never surpassed.

I cannot speak of the poems of Mrs. Osgood without a strong propensity to ring the changes upon the indefinite word "grace" and its derivatives. It seems, indeed, the one key-phrase unlocking the cryptograph of her power — of the effect she produces. And yet the effect is scarcely more a secret than the key. *Grace*, perhaps, may be most satisfactorily defined as a term applied, in despair, to that class of the impressions of beauty which admit neither of analysis nor of comprehension. It is this irresoluble charm — in *grace* — that Mrs. Osgood excels any poetess of her country — or, indeed, of any country under the sun. Nor is she more graceful herself than appreciative of

the graceful under whatever guise it is presented to her consideration. The sentiment, the perception, and the keenest enjoyment of grace, render themselves manifest in innumerable instances, as well throughout her prose as her poetry. A fine example is to be found in "A Letter to an Absent Friend, on seeing Celeste for the first time in the Wept-of-Wishton-Wish," included in the "*Wild Flowers from New England.*" Celeste has been often described — the effect of her dancing, I mean — but assuredly never has she been brought so fully to the eye of the mind as in the verses which follow —

"She comes — the spirit of the dance!
And but for those large, eloquent eyes,
Where passion speaks in every glance,
She'd seem a wanderer from the skies.

"So light that, gazing breathless there,
Lest the celestial dream should go,
You'd think the music in the air
Waved the fair vision to and fro!

"*Or that the melody's sweet flow*
Within the radiant creature played,
And those soft wreathing arms of snow
And white sylph feet the music made.

"Now gliding slow with dreamy grace,
Her eyes beneath their lashes lost,
Now motionless, with lifted face,
And small hands on her bosom crossed.

"And now with flashing eyes she springs —
Her whole bright figure raised in air,
As if her soul had spread its wings
And poised her one wild instant there!

"She spoke not — but, so richly fraught
With language are her glance and smile,
That when the curtain fell, *I thought*
She had been talking all the while."

Messrs. Clark & Austin, of New York, have lately issued another, but still a very imperfect, collection of "Poems, by Frances S. Osgood." In general, it embraces by no means the best of her works, although some of her best ("The Spirit of Poetry," for example), are included. "The Daughter of Herodias," one of her longest compositions, a very noble poem — quite as good as anything written by Mrs. Hemans — is omitted. The volume contains a number of the least meritorious pieces in the "Wreath of Wild Flowers from New England," and also more than enough of a class of allegorical or emblematical verses — a kind of writing which, through an odd perversity, the fair authoress at one time much affected, but which no poet can admit to be poetry at all. These *jeux d'esprit* (for what else shall we call them ?) afforded her, however, a fine opportunity for the display of ingenuity, and an *epigrammatism* in which she especially excels.

Of this latter quality, in its better phase, that is to say, existing apart from the allegory, I must be permitted to give two exquisite specimens : —

"LENORE.

"Oh, fragile and fair as the delicate chalices
Wrought with so rare and so subtle a skill,
Bright relics that tell of the pomp of those palaces
Venice, the sea-goddess, glories in still !

"Whose exquisite texture, transparent and tender,
A pure blush alone from the ruby *wine* takes,
Yet, ah, if some false hand, profaning its splendor,
Dares but to taint it with poison, it breaks.

"So when Love poured through thy pure heart his lightning,
On thy pale cheek the soft rose-hues awoke —
So when wild Passion, that timid heart frightening,
Poisoned the treasure, it trembled and broke !"

"TO SARAH.

"Oh, they never can know that heart of thine,
Who dare accuse *thee* of flirtation;
They might as well say that the stars, which shine
In the light of their joy o'er creation,
Are flirting with every wild wave in which lies
One beam of the glory that kindles the skies.

"Smile on, then, undimmed in your beauty and grace!
Too well e'er to doubt, love, we know you;
And shed from your heaven the light of your face,
Where the waves chase each other below you —
For none can e'er deem it *your* shame or *your* sin,
That each wave holds your star-image smiling within."

"Lenore," independently of its mere epigrammatism, well exemplifies the poet's usual turn of thought, her exactitude and facility at illustration. The versification (except in the first quatrain, which puts me in mind of Moore), is defective. The first two lines of the third are even rough. The rhythm is dactylic, but the dactyls are all false, e. g.:

"So when Love | poured through thy | pure heart his | lightning,
On thy pale | cheek the soft | rose-hues a | woke."

Here the necessarily long syllables, *love*, *through*, *heart*, *pale*, *soft*, and *hues* should be short, and the rhythm halts because they are not so. "To Sarah" is the better poem in every respect; — the compliment in the two last lines is exquisitely pointed. Both these pieces appeared originally in "The Broadway Journal" (which has been honored by many of Mrs. Osgood's very finest compositions), the last, "To Sarah," is not included in the volume lately published by Messrs. Clark & Austin.

What is really new in this volume shows a marked change in the themes, in the manner, in the whole

character of the poetess. We see less of vivacity, less of fancy; more of tenderness, earnestness, even passion, and of the true imagination as distinguished from its subordinate fancy: the one prevalent and predominating trait, *grace*, alone distinctly remains. In illustration of these points I feel tempted to copy some seven or eight of the later poems, but the deep interest of my subject has already led me too far, and I am by no means writing a review. I must refer, however, to two brief songs as best exemplifying what I have said. They were quoted, about five months ago, in a notice of the works of the poetess — a notice by myself — published in this magazine, — the one commences, "She loves him yet," the other, "Yes, lower to the level." These pieces serve also to show the marked improvement of the writer in versification. The first-named is not only rhythmically perfect, but evinces much originality in its structure; the last, although in rhythm not so novel, is more forcible, better balanced, and more thoroughly sustained — in these respects I have seldom seen anything so good. In terse energy of expression this poem is unsurpassed.

My extracts are already extended to a greater length than I had designed or than comports with the plan of these papers, yet I cannot forbear making another. Its music, simplicity and genuine earnestness, will find their way to the hearts of all who read it.

"A MOTHER'S PRAYER IN ILLNESS.

"Yes, take them first, my Father; let my doves
Fold their white wings in Heaven, safe on Thy breast,
Ere I am called away! I dare not leave
Their young hearts here — their innocent, thoughtless hearts!
Ah, how the shadowy train of future ills
Comes sweeping down life's vista as I gaze!

My May, my careless, ardent-tempered May,
My frank and frolic child, in whose blue eyes
Wild joy and passionate woe alternate rise;
Whose cheek the morning in her soul illumes;
Whose little loving heart a word, a glance,
Can sway to grief or glee; who leaves her play,
And puts up her sweet mouth and dimpled arms
Each moment for a kiss, and softly asks,
With her clear, flute-like voice, 'Do you love me?'
Ah, let me stay — ah, let me still be by,
To answer her and meet her warm caress!
For, I away, how oft in this rough world
That earnest question will be asked in vain!
How oft that eager, passionate, petted heart,
Will shrink abashed and chilled, to learn at length
The hateful withering lesson of distrust!
Ah, let her nestle still upon this breast,
In which each shade that dims her darling face
Is felt and answered, as the lake reflects
The clouds that cross yon smiling heaven. And thou,
My modest Ellen — tender, thoughtful, true,
Thy soul attuned to all sweet harmonies —
My pure, proud, noble Ellen, with thy gifts
Of genius, grace and loveliness, half hidden
'Neath the soft veil of innate modesty,
How will the world's wild discord reach thy heart
To startle and appall? Thy generous scorn
Of all things base and mean; thy quick keen taste,
Dainty and delicate; thy instinctive fear
Of those unworthy of a soul so pure;
Thy rare, unchildlike dignity of mien —
All, they will all bring pain to thee, my child.
And, oh! if even their grace and goodness meet
Cold looks and careless greetings, how will all
The latent *evil* yet undisciplined
In their young, timid souls, forgiveness find —
Forgiveness and forbearance, and soft chidings,
Which I, their mother, learned of Love to give?
Ah, let me stay — albeit my heart is weary,
Weary and worn, tired of its own sad beat
That finds no echo in this busy world
Which cannot pause to answer — tired alike
Of joy and sorrow, of the day and night.

Ah, take them first, my Father, and then me!
And for their sakes — for *their* sweet sakes, my Father,
Let me find rest beside them, at thy feet!"

Mrs. Osgood does far more in prose than in poetry, but then her prose is merely poetry in disguise. Of pure prose, of prose proper, she has, perhaps, never written a line in her life. Her usual magazine articles are a class by themselves. She begins with a desperate effort at being sedate — that is to say, sufficiently prosaic and matter-of-fact for the purpose of a legend or an essay; but in a few sentences we behold uprising the leaven of the unrighteousness of the muse; then, after some flourishes and futile attempts at repression, a scrap of verse renders itself manifest; then another and another; then comes a poem outright, and then another and another and another, with little odd batches of prose in between, until at length the mask is thrown fairly off and far away, and the whole article — *sings*.

I shall say nothing farther, then, of Mrs. Osgood's prose.

Her character is daguerreotyped in her works — reading the one we know the other. She is ardent, sensitive, impulsive; the very soul of truth and honor; a worshipper of the beautiful, with a heart so radically artless as to seem abundant in art — universally respected, admired and beloved. In person she is about the medium height, slender even to fragility, graceful whether in action or repose; complexion usually pale; hair very black and glossy; eyes of a clear, luminous gray, large, and with a singular capacity of expression. In no respect can she be termed beautiful, (as the world understands the epithet,) but the question, "Is it really possible that she is not *so*?" is very

frequently asked, and *most* frequently by those who most intimately know her. Her husband is still occupied with his profession. They have two children — the Ellen and May of the poem.

Lydia M. Child.

Mrs. Child has acquired a just celebrity by many compositions of high merit, the most noticeable of which are "Hobomok," "Philothea," and a "History of the Condition of Women." "Philothea," in especial, is written with great vigor, and, as a classical romance, is not far inferior to the "Anacharsis" of Barthélémi; — its style is a model for purity, chastity and ease. Some of her magazine papers are distinguished for graceful and brilliant *imagination* — a quality rarely noticed in our countrywomen. She continues to write a great deal for the monthlies and other journals, and invariably writes well. Poetry she has not often attempted, but I make no doubt that in this she would excel. It seems, indeed, the legitimate province of her fervid and fanciful nature. I quote one of her shorter compositions, as well to instance (from the subject) her intense appreciation of genius in others as to exemplify the force of her poetic expression: —

"MARIUS AMID THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

"Pillars are fallen at thy feet,
Fanes quiver in the air,
A prostrate city is thy seat,
And thou alone art there.

"No change comes o'er thy noble brow,
Though ruin is around thee;
Thine eyebeam burns as proudly now
As when the laurel crowned thee.

"It cannot bend thy lofty soul
Though friends and fame depart —
The car of Fate may o'er thee roll
Nor crush thy Roman heart.

"And genius hath electric power
Which earth can never tame;
Bright suns may scorch and dark clouds lower,
Its flash is still the same.

"The dreams we loved in early life
May melt like mist away;
High thoughts may seem, 'mid passion's strife,
Like Carthage in decay;

"And proud hopes in the human heart
May be to ruin hurled,
Like mouldering monuments of art
Heaped on a sleeping world;

"Yet there is something will not die,
Where life hath once been fair;
Some towering thoughts still rear on high,
Some Roman lingers there."

Mrs. Child, casually observed, has nothing particularly striking in her personal appearance. One would pass her in the street a dozen times without notice. She is low in stature and slightly framed. Her complexion is florid; eyes and hair are dark; features in general diminutive. The expression of her countenance, when animated, is highly intellectual. Her dress is usually plain, not even neat — anything but fashionable. Her bearing needs excitement to impress it with life and dignity. She is of that order of beings who are themselves only on "great occasions." Her

husband is still living. She has no children. I need scarcely add that she has always been distinguished for her energetic and active philanthropy.

Elizabeth Bogart.

Miss Bogart has been for many years before the public as a writer of poems and tales (principally the former) for the periodicals, having made her *début* as a contributor to the original "New York Mirror." Doctor Griswold, in a foot-note appended to one of her poems quoted in his "Poets and Poetry," speaks of the "volume" from which he quotes; but Miss Bogart has not yet collected her writings in volume form. Her fugitive pieces have usually been signed "Estelle." They are noticeable for nerve, dignity, and finish. Perhaps the four stanzas entitled "He came too Late," and introduced into Dr. Griswold's compilation, are the most favorable specimen of her manner. Had he not quoted them I should have copied them here.

Miss Bogart is a member of one of the oldest families in the state. An interesting sketch of her progenitors is to be found in Thompson's "History of Long Island." She is about the medium height, straight and slender; black hair and eyes; countenance full of vivacity and intelligence. She converses with fluency and spirit, enunciates distinctly, and exhibits interest in whatever is addressed to her — a rare quality in good talkers; has a keen appreciation of genius and of natural scenery; is cheerful and fond of society.

Catherine M. Sedgwick.

Miss Sedgwick is not only one of our most celebrated and most meritorious writers, but attained reputation at a period when *American* reputation in letters was regarded as a phenomenon; and thus, like Irving, Cooper, Paulding, Bryant, Halleck, and one or two others, she is indebted, certainly, for *some* portion of the esteem in which she was and is held, to that patriotic pride and gratitude to which I have already alluded, and for which we must make reasonable allowance in estimating the absolute merit of our literary pioneers.

Her earliest published work of any length was "A New England Tale," designed in the first place as a religious tract, but expanding itself into a volume of considerable size. Its success — partially owing, perhaps, to the influence of the parties for whom or at whose instigation it was written — encouraged the author to attempt a novel of somewhat greater elaborateness as well as length, and "Redwood" was soon announced, establishing her at once as the first female prose writer of her country. It was reprinted in England, and translated, I believe, into French and Italian. "Hope Leslie" next appeared — also a novel — and was more favorably received even than its predecessors. Afterwards came "Clarence," not quite so successful, and then "The Linwoods," which took rank in the public esteem with "Hope Leslie." These are all of her longer prose fictions, but she has written numerous shorter ones of great merit — such as "The Rich Poor Man and the Poor Rich Man," "Live and Let Live," (both in volume form,) with

various articles for the magazines and annuals, to which she is still an industrious contributor. About ten years since she published a compilation of several of her fugitive prose pieces, under the title "Tales and Sketches," and a short time ago a series of "Letters from Abroad" — not the least popular or least meritorious of her compositions.

Miss Sedgwick has now and then been nicknamed "the Miss Edgeworth of America;" but she has done nothing to bring down upon her the vengeance of so equivocal a title. That she has thoroughly studied and profoundly admired Miss Edgeworth may, indeed, be gleaned from her works — but what woman has not? Of imitation there is not the slightest perceptible taint. In both authors we observe the same tone of thoughtful morality, but here all resemblance ceases. In the Englishwoman there is far more of a certain Scotch prudence, in the American more of warmth, tenderness, sympathy for the weaknesses of her sex. Miss Edgeworth is the more acute, the more inventive and the more rigid. Miss Sedgwick is the more womanly.

All her stories are full of interest. The "New England Tale" and "Hope Leslie" are especially so, but upon the whole I am best pleased with "The Linwoods." Its prevailing features are ease, purity of style, pathos, and verisimilitude. To plot it has little pretension. The scene is in America, and, as the sub-title indicates, "Sixty years since." This, by-the-by, is taken from "Waverley." The adventures of the family of a Mr. Linwood, a resident of New York, form the principal theme. The character of this gentleman is happily drawn, although there is an antagonism between the initial and concluding touches

— the end has forgotten the beginning, like the government of Trinculo. Mr. L. has two children, Herbert and Isabella. Being himself a Tory, the boyish impulses of his son in favor of the revolutionists are watched with anxiety and vexation; and on the breaking out of the war, Herbert, positively refusing to drink the king's health, is expelled from home by his father — an event on which hinges the main interest of the narrative. Isabella is the heroine proper, full of generous impulses, beautiful, intellectual, *spirituelle* — indeed, a most fascinating creature. But the family of a Widow Lee throws quite a charm over all the book — a matronly, pious and devoted mother, yielding up her son to the cause of her country — the son gallant, chivalrous, yet thoughtful; a daughter, gentle, loving, melancholy, and susceptible of light impressions. This daughter, Bessie Lee, is one of the most effective personations to be found in our fictitious literature, and may lay claims to the distinction of originality — no slight distinction where *character* is concerned. It is the old story, to be sure, of a meek and trusting heart broken by treachery and abandonment, but in the narration of Miss Sedgwick it breaks upon us with all the freshness of novel emotion. Deserted by her lover, an accomplished and aristocratical coxcomb, the spirits of the gentle girl sink gradually from trust to simple hope, from hope to anxiety, from anxiety to doubt, from doubt to melancholy, and from melancholy to madness. The gradation is depicted in a masterly manner. She escapes from her home in New England and endeavors to make her way alone to New York, with the object of restoring to him who had abandoned her, some tokens he had given her of his love —an act which her disor-

dered fancy assures her will effect in her own person a disenthralment from passion. Her piety, her madness and her beauty, stand her in stead of the lion of Una, and she reaches the city in safety. In that portion of the narrative which embodies this journey are some passages which no mind unimbued with the purest spirit of poetry could have conceived, and they have often made me wonder why Miss Sedgwick has never written a poem.

I have already alluded to her usual excellence of style; but she has a very peculiar fault — that of discrepancy between the words and character of the speaker — the fault, indeed, more properly belongs to the depicting of character itself.

For example, at page 38, vol. 1, of "The Linwoods:"—

"No more of my contempt for the Yankees, Hal, an' thou lovest me," replied Jasper. "You remember Æsop's advice to Crœsus at the Persian court?"

"No, I am sure I do not. You have the most provoking way of resting the lever by which you bring out your own knowledge, on your friend's ignorance."

Now all this is pointed, (although the last sentence would have been improved by letting the words "on your friend's ignorance" come immediately after "resting,") but it is by no means the language of schoolboys — and such are the speakers.

Again, at page 226, vol. 1, of the same novel: —

"Now, out on you, you lazy, slavish loons!" cried Rose. "Cannot you see these men are raised up to fight for freedom far more than themselves? If the chain be broken at one end, the links will fall apart sooner or later. When you see the sun on the mountain top, you may be sure it will shine into the deepest valleys before long."

Who would suppose this graceful eloquence to proceed from the mouth of a negro woman? Yet such is Rose.

Again, at page 24, vol. 1, same novel:—

"True, I never saw her; but I tell you, young lad, that there is such a thing as seeing the shadow of things far distant and past, and never seeing the realities, though they it be that cast the shadows."

Here the speaker is an old woman who, a few sentences before, has been boasting of her proficiency in "*tellin' fortins.*"

I might object, too, very decidedly to the vulgarity of such a phrase as "I put in my oar," (meaning, "I joined in the conversation,") when proceeding from the mouth of so well-bred a person as Miss Isabella Linwood. These are, certainly, most remarkable inadvertences.

As the author of many *books* — of several absolutely bound volumes in the ordinary "novel" form of auld lang syne, Miss Sedgwick has a certain adventitious hold upon the attention of the public, a species of tenure that has nothing to do with literature proper — a very decided advantage, in short, over her more modern rivals whom fashion and the growing influence *of the want* of an international copyright law have condemned to the external insignificance of the yellow-backed pamphleteering.

We must permit, however, neither this advantage nor the more obvious one of her having been one of our *pioneers*, to bias the critical judgment as it makes estimate of her abilities in comparison with those of her *present* cotemporaries. She has neither the vigor of Mrs. Stephens nor the vivacious grace of Miss

Chubbuck, nor the pure style of Mrs. Embury, nor the classic imagination of Mrs. Child, nor the naturalness of Mrs. Annan, nor the thoughtful and suggestive originality of Miss Fuller; but in many of the qualities mentioned she excels, and in no one of them is she particularly deficient. She is an author of marked talent, but by no means of such decided genius as would entitle her to that precedence among our female writers which, under the circumstances to which I have alluded, *seems* to be yielded her by the voice of the public.

Strictly speaking, Miss Sedgwick is *not* one of the *literati* of New York city, but she passes here about half or rather more than half her time. Her home is Stockbridge, Massachusetts. Her family is one of the first in America. Her father, Theodore Sedgwick the elder, was an eminent jurist and descended from one of Cromwell's major-generals. Many of her relatives have distinguished themselves in various ways.

She is about the medium height, perhaps a little below it. Her forehead is an unusually fine one; nose of a slightly Roman curve; eyes dark and piercing; mouth well formed and remarkably pleasant in its expression. The portrait in "Graham's Magazine" is by no means a likeness, and, although the hair is represented as curled, (Miss Sedgwick at present wears a cap — at least most usually,) gives her the air of being much older than she is.

Her manners are those of a high-bred woman, but her ordinary *manner* vacillates, in a singular way, between cordiality and a reserve amounting to *hauteur*.

Lewis Gaylord Clark.

Mr. Clark is known principally as the twin brother of the late *Willis* Gaylord Clark, the poet, of Philadelphia, with whom he has often been confounded from similarity both of person and of name. He is known, also, within a more limited circle, as one of the editors of "The Knickerbocker Magazine," and it is in this latter capacity that I must be considered as placing him among literary people. He writes little himself, the editorial scraps which usually appear in fine type at the end of "The Knickerbocker" being the joint composition of a great variety of gentlemen (most of them possessing shrewdness and talent), connected with diverse journals about the city of New York. It is only in some such manner, as might be supposed, that so amusing and so heterogeneous a medley of chit-chat could be put together. Were a little more pains taken in elevating the *tone* of this "Editors' Table," (which its best friends are forced to admit is at present a little Boweryish,) I should have no hesitation in commending it in general as a very creditable and very entertaining specimen of what may be termed easy writing and hard reading.

It is not, of course, to be understood from anything I have here said, that Mr. Clark does not occasionally contribute editorial matter to the magazine. His compositions, however, are far from numerous, and are always to be distinguished by their style, which is more "easily to be imagined than described." It has its merit, beyond doubt, but I shall not undertake to say that either "vigor," "force" or "impressiveness" is the precise term by which that merit should be desig-

nated. Mr. Clark once did me the honor to review my poems, and —— I forgive him.

"The Knickerbocker" has been long established, and seems to have in it some important elements of success. Its title, for a merely local one, is unquestionably good. Its contributors have usually been men of eminence. Washington Irving was at one period regularly engaged. Paulding, Bryant, Neal, and several others of nearly equal note have also at various times furnished articles, although none of these gentlemen, I believe, continue their communications. In general, the contributed matter has been praiseworthy; the printing, paper, and so forth, have been excellent, and there certainly has been no lack of exertion in the way of what is termed "putting the work before the eye of the public;" still some incomprehensible *incubus* has seemed always to sit heavily upon it, and it has never succeeded in attaining *position* among intelligent or educated readers. On account of the manner in which it is necessarily edited, the work is deficient in that absolutely indispensable element, *individuality*. As the editor has no precise character, the magazine, as a matter of course, can have none. When I say "no precise character," I mean that Mr. C., as a literary man, has about him no determinateness, no distinctiveness, no saliency of point; — an apple, in fact, or a pumpkin, has more angles. He is as smooth as oil or a sermon from Doctor Hawks; he is noticeable for nothing in the world except for the markedness by which he is noticeable for nothing.

What is the precise circulation of "The Knickerbocker" at present I am unable to say; it has been variously stated at from eight to eighteen hundred subscribers. The former estimate is no doubt too low, and

the latter, I presume, is far too high. There are, perhaps, some fifteen hundred copies printed.

At the period of his brother's decease, Mr. Lewis G. Clark bore to him a striking resemblance, but within the last year or two there has been much alteration in the person of the editor of "The Knickerbocker." He is now, perhaps, forty-two or three, but still good-looking. His forehead is, phrenologically, bad — round and what is termed "bulley." The mouth, however, is much better, although the smile is too constant and lacks expression; the teeth are white and regular. His hair and whiskers are dark, the latter meeting voluminously beneath the chin. In height Mr. C. is about five feet ten or eleven, and in the street might be regarded as quite a "personable man;" in society I have never had the pleasure of meeting him. He is married, I believe.

Anne C. Lynch.

Miss Anne Charlotte Lynch has written little; — her compositions are even too few to be collected in volume form. Her prose has been, for the most part, anonymous — critical papers in "The New York Mirror" and elsewhere, with unacknowledged contributions to the annuals, especially "The Gift," and "The Diadem," both of Philadelphia. Her "Diary of a Recluse," published in the former work, is, perhaps, the best specimen of her prose manner and ability. I remember, also, a fair *critique* on Fanny Kemble's poems; — this appeared in "The Democratic Review."

In poetry, however, she has done better, and given evidence of at least unusual talent. Some of her compositions in this way are of merit, and one or two of excellence. In the former class I place her "Bones in the Desert," published in "The Opal" for 1846, her "Farewell to Ole Bull," first printed in "The Tribune," and one or two of her sonnets — not forgetting some graceful and touching lines on the death of Mrs. Willis. In the latter class I place two noble poems, "The Ideal" and "The Ideal Found." These should be considered as one, for each is by itself imperfect. In modulation and vigor of rhythm, in dignity and elevation of sentiment, in metaphorical appositeness and accuracy, and in energy of expression, I really do not know where to point out anything American much superior to them. Their ideality is not so manifest as their passion, but I think it an unusual indication of taste in Miss Lynch, or (more strictly) of an intuitive sense of poetry's true nature, that this passion is just sufficiently subdued to lie within the compass of the poetic art, within the limits of the beautiful. A step farther and it might have passed them. *Mere* passion, however exciting, prosaically excites; it is in its very essence homely, and delights in homeliness: but the *triumph over* passion, as so finely depicted in the two poems mentioned, is one of the purest and most idealizing manifestations of moral beauty.

In character Miss Lynch is enthusiastic, chivalric, self-sacrificing, "equal to any fate," capable of even martyrdom in whatever should seem to her a holy cause — a most exemplary daughter. She has her hobbies, however, (of which a very indefinite idea of "duty" is one,) and is, of course, readily imposed

upon by any artful person who perceives and takes advantage of this most amiable failing.

In person she is rather above the usual height, somewhat slender, with dark hair and eyes — the whole countenance at times full of intelligent expression. Her demeanor is dignified, graceful, and noticeable for repose. She goes much into literary society.

VI.

[Text: *Godey's Lady's Book*, October, 1846.]

Charles Fenno Hoffman.

Mr. Charles Fenno Hoffman has been long known to the public as an author. He commenced his literary career (as is usually the case in America) by writing for the newspapers — for "The New York American" especially, in the editorial conduct of which he became in some manner associated, at a very early age, with Mr. Charles King. His first *book*, I believe, was a collection (entitled "A Winter in the West") of letters published in "The American" during a tour made by their author through the "far West." This work appeared in 1834, went through several editions, was reprinted in London, was very popular, and deserved its popularity. It conveys the *natural* enthusiasm of a true *idealist*, in the proper phrenological sense, of one sensitively alive to beauty in every development. Its scenic descriptions are vivid, because fresh, genuine, unforced. There is nothing of the

cant of the tourist for the sake not of nature but of *tourism*. The author writes *what* he feels, and, clearly, *because* he feels it. The style, as well as that of all Mr. Hoffman's books, is easy, free from superfluities, and, although abundant in *broad* phrases, still singularly refined, gentlemanly. This ability to speak bodily without blackguardism, to use the tools of the rabble when necessary without soiling or roughening the hands with their employment, is a rare and unerring test of the natural in contradistinction from the artificial aristocrat.

Mr. H.'s next work was "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie," very similar to the preceding, but more diversified with anecdote and interspersed with poetry. "Greyslaer" followed, a romance based on the well known murder of Sharp, the Solicitor-General of Kentucky, by Beauchampe. W. Gilmore Simms, (who has far more power, more passion, more movement, more skill than Mr. Hoffman,) has treated the subject more effectively in his novel "Beauchampe;" but the fact is that both gentlemen have positively failed, as might have been expected. That both books are interesting is no merit either of Mr. H. or of Mr. S. The real events were more impressive than are the fictitious ones. The *facts* of this remarkable tragedy, as arranged by actual circumstance, would put to shame the skill of the most consummate artist. Nothing was left to the novelist but the amplification of *character*, and at this point neither the author of "Greyslaer" nor of "Beauchampe" is especially *au fait*. The incidents might be better woven into a tragedy.

In the way of poetry Mr. Hoffman has also written a good deal. "The Vigil of Faith and other Poems"

is the title of a volume published several years ago. The subject of the leading poem is happy — whether originally conceived by Mr. H. or based on an actual superstition, I cannot say. Two Indian chiefs are rivals in love. The accepted lover is about to be made happy, when his betrothed is murdered by the discarded suitor. The revenge taken is the careful *preservation* of the life of the assassin, under the idea that the meeting the maiden in another world is the point most desired by both the survivors. The incidents interwoven are picturesque, and there are many quotable passages; the descriptive portions are particularly good; but the author has erred, first, in narrating the story in the first person, and secondly, in putting into the mouth of the narrator language and sentiments above the nature of an Indian. I say that the narration should not have been in the first person, because, although an Indian may and does fully experience a thousand delicate shades of sentiment, (the whole idea of the story is essentially sentimental,) still he has, clearly, no capacity for their various *expression*. Mr. Hoffman's hero is made to discourse very much after the manner of Rousseau. Nevertheless, "The Vigil of Faith" is, upon the whole, one of our most meritorious poems. The shorter pieces in the collection have been more popular; one or two of the *songs* particularly so — "Sparkling and Bright," for example, which is admirably adapted to song purposes, and is full of lyric feelings. It cannot be denied, however, that, in general, the whole tone, air and spirit of Mr. Hoffman's fugitive compositions are echoes of Moore. At times the very words and figures of the "British Anacreon" are unconsciously adopted. Neither can there be any doubt that this obvious similarity, if not positive imita-

tion, is the source of the commendation bestowed upon our poet by "The Dublin University Magazine," which declares him "the best song writer in America," and does him also the honor to intimate its opinion that "he is a better fellow than the whole Yankee crew" of us taken together — after which there is very little to be said.

Whatever may be the merits of Mr. Hoffman as a poet, it may be easily seen that these merits have been put in the worst possible light by the indiscriminate and lavish approbation bestowed on them by Dr. Griswold in his "Poets and Poetry of America." The compiler can find *no* blemish in Mr. H., agrees with everything and copies everything said in his praise — worse than all, gives him more space in the book than any two, or perhaps three, of our poets combined. All this is as much an insult to Mr. Hoffman as to the public, and has done the former irreparable injury — how or why, it is of course unnecessary to say. "Heaven save us from our friends!"

Mr. Hoffman was the original editor of "The Knickerbocker Magazine," and gave it while under his control a tone and character, the weight of which may be best estimated by the consideration that the work thence received an impetus which has sufficed to bear it on alive, although tottering, month after month, through even that dense region of unmitigated and unmitigable fog — that dreary realm of outer darkness, of utter and inconceivable dunderheadism, over which has so long ruled King Log the Second, in the august person of one Lewis Gaylord Clark. Mr. Hoffman subsequently owned and edited "The American Monthly Magazine," one of the best journals we have ever had. He also for one year conducted "The New York Mirror,"

and has always been a very constant contributor to the periodicals of the day.

He is the brother of Ogden Hoffman. Their father, whose family came to New York from Holland before the time of Peter Stuyvesant, was often brought into connection or rivalry with such men as Pinckney, Hamilton and Burr.

The character of no man is more universally esteemed and admired than that of the subject of this memoir. He has a host of friends, and it is quite impossible that he should have an enemy in the world. He is chivalric to a fault, enthusiastic, frank without discourtesy, an ardent admirer of the beautiful, a gentleman of *the best* school — a gentleman by birth, by education and by instinct. His manners are graceful and winning in the extreme — quiet, affable and dignified, yet cordial and *dégagées*. He converses much, earnestly, accurately and well. In person he is remarkably handsome. He is about five feet ten in height, somewhat stoutly made. His countenance is a noble one — a full index of the character. The features are somewhat massive but regular. The eyes are blue, or light gray, and full of fire; the mouth finely-formed, although the lips have a slight expression of voluptuousness; the forehead, to my surprise, although high, gives no indication, in the region of the temples, of that ideality (or love of the beautiful) which is the distinguishing trait of his moral nature. The hair curls, and is of a dark brown, interspersed with gray. He wears full whiskers. Is about forty years of age. Unmarried.

Mary E. Hewitt.[1]

Mrs. Hewitt has become known entirely through her contributions to our periodical literature. I am not aware that she has written any prose, but her poems have been numerous and often excellent. A collection of them was published not long ago in an exquisitely tasteful form, by Ticknor & Co., of Boston. The leading piece, entitled "Songs of Our Land," was by no means the most meritorious, although the largest in the volume. In general, these compositions evince the author's poetic fervor, classicism of taste and keen appreciation of the beautiful, in the moral as well as in the physical world. No one of them, perhaps, can be judiciously commended as a whole, but no one of them is without merit, and there are several which would do credit to any poet in the land — still even these latter are rather particularly than generally commendable. They lack unity, totality, ultimate effect, but abound in forcible passages. For example : —

> "Shall I portray thee in thy glorious seeming,
> Thou that the Pharos of my darkness art ? "
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Like the blue lotos on its own clear river
> Lie thy soft eyes, beloved, upon my soul."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Here 'mid your wild and dark defile,
> O'erawed and wonder-whelmed I stand,
> And ask, 'Is this the fearful vale
> That opens on the shadowy land ?' "
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "And there the slave — a slave no more —
> Hung reverent up the chain he wore."
>
> . . . . . .

[1] See Appendix for Griswold text.

"Oh, friends, we would be treasured still!
Though Time's cold hand should cast
His misty veil, in after years,
Over the idol Past,
Yet send to us some offering thought
O'er Memory's ocean wide —
Pure as the Hindoo's votive lamp
On Ganga's sacred tide."

The conclusion of "The Ocean Tide to the Rivulet" puts me in mind of the rich spirit of Horne's noble epic "Orion."

"Sadly the flowers their faded petals close
Where on thy banks they languidly repose,
Waiting in vain to hear thee onward press;
And pale Narcissus by thy margin side
Hath lingered for thy coming, drooped and died,
Pining for thee amid the loneliness.

"Hasten, beloved! — here, 'neath th' o'erhanging rock!
Hark! from the deep, my anxious hope to mock,
They call me backward to my parent main.
Brighter than Thetis thou, and, ah, more fleet!
I hear the rushing of thy fair white feet!
Joy, joy! — my breast receives its own again!"

The personifications here are well managed, and the idea of the ebb-tide, conveyed in the first line italicized, is one of the happiest imaginable; neither can anything be more fanciful or more appropriately expressed than the "rushing of the fair white feet."

Among the most classical in spirit and altogether the best of Mrs. Hewitt's poems, I consider her three admirable sonnets entitled "Cameos." The one called "Hercules and Omphale" is noticeable for the vigor of its rhythm. Another instance of fine versification occurs in "Forgotten Heroes."

"And the peasant mother at her door,
To the babe that climbed her knee,

Sang aloud the land's heroic songs —
Sang of Thermopylæ —

"Sang of Mycale — of Marathon —
Of proud Platæa's day,
Till the wakened hills, from peak to peak,
Echoed the glorious lay.

"Oh, god-like name! — Oh, god-like deed!
Song-born afar on every breeze,
Ye are sounds to thrill like a battle shout —
Leonidas! Miltiades!"

I italicize what I think the effective points. In the line,

"Sang of Thermopylæ,"

a trochee and two iambuses are employed, in very happy variation of the three preceding lines, which are formed each of an anapæst followed by three iambuses. The effect of this variation is to convey the idea of lyric or martial song. The first line of the next quatrain even more forcibly carries out this idea. Here the verse begins with an anapæst (although a faulty one, "sang" being necessarily long) and is continued in three iambuses. The variation in the last quatrain consists in an additional foot in the alternating lines, a fuller volume being thus given to the close. I must not be understood as citing these passages or giving their analysis in illustration of the rhythmical *skill* of Mrs. Hewitt, but of an occasional happiness to which she is led by a musical ear. Upon the whole, she has a keen sense of poetic excellences, and gives indication, if not direct evidence, of great ability. With more earnest endeavor she might accomplish much.

In character she is sincere, fervent, benevolent, with a heart full of the truest charity — sensitive to

praise and to blame; in temperament, melancholy (although this is not precisely the term); in manner, subdued, gentle, yet with grace and dignity; converses impressively, earnestly, yet quietly and in a low tone. In person she is tall and slender, with black hair and large gray eyes; complexion also dark; the general expression of the countenance singularly interesting and agreeable.

Richard Adams Locke.

About twelve years ago, I think, "The New York Sun," a daily paper, price one penny, was established in the city of New York by Mr. Moses Y. Beach, who engaged Mr. Richard Adams Locke as its editor. In a well-written prospectus, the object of the journal professed to be that of "supplying the public with the news of the day at so cheap a rate as to lie within the means of all." The consequences of the scheme, in their influence on the whole newspaper business of the country, and through this business on the interests of the country at large, are probably beyond all calculation.

Previous to "The Sun," there had been an unsuccessful attempt at publishing a penny paper in New York, and "The Sun" itself was originally projected and for a short time issued by Messrs. Day & Wisner; its *establishment*, however, is altogether due to Mr. Beach, who purchased it of its disheartened originators. The first decided *movement* of the journal, nevertheless, is to be attributed to Mr. Locke; and in so saying I by no means intend any depreciation of Mr. Beach,

since in the engagement of Mr. L. he had but given one of the earliest instances of that unusual sagacity for which I am inclined to yield him credit.

At all events, "The Sun" was revolving in a comparatively narrow orbit when, one fine day, there appeared in its editorial columns a prefatory article announcing very remarkable astronomical discoveries made at the Cape of Good Hope by Sir John Herschel. The information was said to have been received by "The Sun" from an early copy of "The Edinburgh Journal of Science," in which appeared a communication from Sir John himself. This preparatory announcement took very well, (there had been no hoaxes in those days,) and was followed by full details of the reputed discoveries, which were now found to have been made chiefly in respect to the moon, and by means of a telescope to which the one lately constructed by the Earl of Rosse is a plaything. As these discoveries were gradually spread before the public, the astonishment of that public grew out of all bounds; but those who questioned the veracity of "The Sun" — the authenticity of the communication to "The Edinburgh Journal of Science" — were really very few indeed; and this I am forced to look upon as a far more wonderful thing than any "man-bat" of them all.

About six months before this occurrence the Harpers had issued an American edition of Sir John Herschel's "Treatise on Astronomy," and I had been much interested in what is there said respecting the possibility of future lunar investigations. The theme excited my fancy, and I longed to give free rein to it in depicting my day-dreams about the scenery of the moon — in short, I longed to write a story embodying these

dreams. The obvious difficulty, of course, was that of accounting for the narrator's acquaintance with the satellite; and the equally obvious mode of surmounting the difficulty was the supposition of an extraordinary telescope. I saw at once that the chief interest of such a narrative must depend upon the reader's yielding his credence in some measure as to details of actual fact. At this stage of my deliberations I spoke of the design to one or two friends — to Mr. John P. Kennedy, the author of "Swallow Barn," among others — and the result of my conversations with them was that the optical difficulties of constructing such a telescope as I conceived were so rigid and so commonly understood, that it would be in vain to attempt giving due verisimilitude to any fiction having the telescope as a basis. Reluctantly, therefore, and only half convinced, (believing the public, in fact, more readily gullible than did my friends,) I gave up the idea of imparting very close verisimilitude to what I should write — that is to say, so close as really to deceive. I fell back upon a style half plausible, half bantering, and resolved to give what interest I could to an actual passage from the earth to the moon, describing the lunar scenery as if surveyed and personally examined by the narrator. In this view I wrote a story which I called "Hans Phaall," publishing it about six months afterwards in "The Southern Literary Messenger," of which I was then editor.

It was three weeks after the issue of "The Messenger" containing "Hans Phaall," that the first of the "Moon-hoax" editorials made its appearance in "The Sun," and no sooner had I seen the paper than I understood the jest, which not for a moment could I doubt had been suggested by my own *jeu d'esprit*.

Some of the New York journals ("The Transcript" among others) saw the matter in the same light, and published the "Moon story" side by side with "Hans Phaall," thinking that the author of the one had been detected in the author of the other. Although the details are, with some exception, very dissimilar, still I maintain that the general features of the two compositions are nearly identical. Both are *hoaxes*, (although one is in a *tone* of mere banter, the other of downright earnest;) both hoaxes are on one subject, astronomy; both on the same point of that subject, the moon; both professed to have derived exclusive information from a foreign country, and both attempt to give plausibility by minuteness of scientific detail. Add to all this that nothing of a similar nature had ever been attempted before these two hoaxes, the one of which followed immediately upon the heels of the other.

Having stated the case, however, in this form, I am bound to do Mr. Locke the justice to say that he denies having seen my article prior to the publication of his own; I am bound to add, also, that I believe him.

Immediately on the completion of the "Moon story," (it was three or four days in getting finished,) I wrote an examination of its claims to credit, showing distinctly its fictitious character, but was astonished at finding that I could obtain few listeners, so really eager were all to be deceived, so magical were the charms of a style that served as the vehicle of an exceedingly clumsy invention.

It may afford even now some amusement to see pointed out those particulars of the hoax which should have sufficed to establish its real character. Indeed,

however rich the imagination displayed in this fiction, it wanted much of the force which might have been given it by a more scrupulous attention to general analogy and to fact. That the public were misled, even for an instant, merely proves the gross ignorance which (ten or twelve years ago) was so prevalent on astronomical topics.

The moon's distance from the earth is, in round numbers, 240,000 miles. If we wish to ascertain how near, apparently, a lens would bring the satellite, (or any distant object,) we, of course, have but to divide the distance by the magnifying, or, more strictly, by the space-penetrating power of the glass. Mr. Locke gives his lens a power of 42,000 times. By this divide 240,000, (the moon's real distance,) and we have five miles and five-sevenths as the apparent distance. No animal could be seen so far, much less the minute points particularized in the story. Mr. L. speaks about Sir John Herschel's perceiving flowers, (the *papaver Rheas*, etc.) and even detecting the color and the shape of the eyes of small birds. Shortly before, too, the author himself observes that the lens would not render perceptible objects less than eighteen inches in diameter; but even this, as I have said, is giving the glass far too great a power.

On page 18, (of the pamphlet edition,) speaking of "a hairy veil" over the eyes of a species of bison, Mr. L. says: "It immediately occurred to the acute mind of Doctor Herschel that this was a providential contrivance to protect the eyes of the animal from the great extremes of light and darkness to which all the inhabitants of our side of the moon are periodically subjected." But this should not be thought a very "acute" observation of the "Doctor's." The in-

habitants of our side of the moon have, evidently, no darkness at all; in the absence of the sun they have a light from the earth equal to that of thirteen full moons, so that there can be nothing of the extremes mentioned.

The topography throughout, even when professing to accord with Blunt's Lunar Chart, is at variance with that and all other lunar charts, and even at variance with itself. The points of the compass, too, are in sad confusion; the writer seeming to be unaware that, on a lunar map, these are not in accordance with terrestrial points — the east being to the left, and so forth.

Deceived, perhaps, by the vague titles *Mare Nubium*, *Mare Tranquillitatis*, *Mare Fœcunditatis*, etc., given by astronomers of former times to the dark patches on the moon's surface, Mr. L. has long details respecting oceans and other large bodies of water in the moon; whereas there is no astronomical point more positively ascertained than that no such bodies exist there. In examining the boundary between light and darkness in a crescent or gibbous moon, where this boundary crosses any of the dark places, the line of division is found to be jagged; but were these dark places liquid they would evidently be even.

The description of the wings of the man-bat (on page 21) is but a literal copy of Peter Wilkins' account of the wings of his flying islanders. This simple fact should at least have induced suspicion.

On page 23 we read thus — "What a prodigious influence must our thirteen times larger globe have exercised upon this satellite when an embryo in the womb of time, the passive subject of chemical affinity!" Now, this is very fine; but it should be observed that no astronomer could have made such a remark, especially to any "Journal of Science," for the earth in the

sense intended (that of bulk) is not only thirteen but forty-nine times *larger* than the moon. A similar objection applies to the five or six concluding pages of the pamphlet, where, by way of introduction to some discoveries in Saturn, the philosophical correspondent is made to give a minute school-boy account of that planet — an account quite supererogatory, it might be presumed, in the case of "The Edinburgh Journal of Science."

But there is one point, in especial, which should have instantly betrayed the fiction. Let us imagine the power really possessed of seeing animals on the moon's surface — what in such case would first arrest the attention of an observer from the earth? Certainly neither the shape, size, nor any other peculiarity in these animals so soon as their remarkable *position* — they would seem to be walking heels up and head down, after the fashion of flies on a ceiling. The real observer (however prepared by previous knowledge) would have commented on this odd phenomenon before proceeding to other details; the fictitious observer has not even alluded to the subject, but in the case of the man-bats speaks of seeing their entire bodies, when it is demonstrable that he could have seen little more than the apparently flat hemisphere of the head.

I may as well observe, in conclusion, that the size and especially the powers of the man-bats (for example, their ability to fly in so rare an atmosphere — if, indeed, the moon has any) with most of the other fancies in regard to animal and vegetable existence, are at variance generally with all analogical reasoning on these themes, and that analogy here will often amount to the most positive demonstration. The temperature

of the moon, for instance, is rather above that of boiling water, and Mr. Locke, consequently, has committed a serious oversight in not representing his man-bats, his bisons, his game of all kinds — to say nothing of his vegetables — as each and all done to a turn.

It is, perhaps, scarcely necessary to add, that all the suggestions attributed to Brewster and Herschel in the beginning of the hoax, about the "transfusion of artificial light through the focal object of vision," etc., etc., belong to that species of figurative writing which comes most properly under the head of rigmarole. There is a real and very definite limit to optical discovery among the stars, a limit whose nature need only be stated to be understood. If, indeed, the casting of large lenses were all that is required, the ingenuity of man would ultimately prove equal to the task, and we might have them of any size demanded;[1] but, unhappily, in proportion to the increase of size in the lens, and consequently of space-penetrating power, is the diminution of light from the object by diffusion of the rays. And for this evil there is no remedy within human reach; for an object is seen by means of that light alone, whether direct or reflected, which proceeds from the object itself. Thus the only artificial light which could avail Mr. Locke would be such as he should be able to throw, not upon "the focal object of vision," but upon *the moon*. It has been easily calculated that when the light proceeding from

[1] Neither of the Herschels dreamed of the possibility of a speculum six feet in diameter, and now the marvel has been triumphantly accomplished by Lord Rosse. There is, in fact, no physical *impossibility* in our casting lenses of even fifty feet diameter or more. A sufficiency of means and *skill* is all that is demanded.

a heavenly body becomes so diffused as to be as weak as the natural light given out by the stars collectively in a clear, moonless night, then the heavenly body for any practical purpose is no longer visible.

The singular blunders to which I have referred being properly understood, we shall have all the better reason for wonder at the prodigious *success* of the hoax. Not one person in ten discredited it, and (strangest point of all!) the doubters were chiefly those who doubted without being able to say why — the ignorant, those uninformed in astronomy, people who *would not* believe because the thing was so novel, so entirely "out of the usual way." A grave professor of mathematics in a Virginian college told me seriously that he had *no doubt* of the truth of the whole affair! The great effect wrought upon the public mind is referable, first, to *the novelty of the idea;* secondly, to the fancy-exciting and reason-repressing character of the alleged discoveries; thirdly, to the consummate tact with which the deception was brought forth; fourthly, to the exquisite *vraisemblance* of the narration. The hoax was circulated to an immense extent, was translated into various languages — was even made the subject of (quizzical) discussion in astronomical societies; drew down upon itself the grave denunciation of Dick, and was, upon the whole, decidedly the greatest *bit* in the way of *sensation* — of merely popular sensation — ever made by any similar fiction either in America or in Europe.

Having read the Moon story to an end and found it anticipative of all the main points of my "Hans Phaall," I suffered the latter to remain unfinished. The chief design in carrying my hero to the moon was to afford him an opportunity of describing the

lunar scenery, but I found that he could add very little to the minute and authentic account of Sir John Herschel. The first part of "Hans Phaall," occupying about eighteen pages of "The Messenger," embraced merely a journal of the passage between the two orbs and a few words of general observation on the most obvious features of the satellite; the second part will most probably never appear. I did not think it advisable even to bring my voyager back to his parent earth. He remains where I left him, and is still, I believe, "the man in the moon."

From the epoch of the hoax "The Sun" shone with unmitigated splendor. The start thus given the paper insured it a triumph; it has now a daily circulation of not far from fifty thousand copies, and is, therefore, probably the most really influential journal of its kind in the world. Its success firmly established "the penny system" throughout the country, and (*through* "The Sun") consequently, we are indebted to the genius of Mr. Locke for one of the most important steps ever yet taken in the pathway of human progress.

On dissolving, about a year afterwards, his connection with Mr. Beach, Mr. Locke established a political daily paper, "The New Era," conducting it with distinguished ability. In this journal he made, very unwisely, an attempt at a second hoax, giving the *finale* of the adventures of Mungo Park in Africa — the writer pretending to have come into possession by some accident of the lost MSS. of the traveler. No one, however, seemed to be deceived, (Mr. Locke's columns were a suspected district,) and the adventures were never brought to an end. They were richly imaginative.

The next point made by their author was the get-

ting up a book on magnetism as the *primum mobile* of the universe, in connection with Doctor Sherwood, the practitioner of magnetic remedies. The more immediate purpose of the treatise was the setting forth a new magnetic method of obtaining the longitude. The matter was brought before Congress and received with favorable attention. What definite action was had I know not. A review of the work appeared in "The Army and Navy Chronicle," and made sad havoc of the whole project. It was enabled to do this, however, by attacking in detail the accuracy of some calculations of no very radical importance. These and others Mr. Locke is now engaged in carefully revising; and my own opinion is that his theory (which he has reached more by dint of imagination than of anything else) will finally be established, although, perhaps, never thoroughly by *him*.

His prose style is noticeable for its concision, luminousness, completeness — each quality in its proper place. He has that *method* so generally characteristic of genius proper. Everything he writes is a model in its peculiar way, serving just the purposes intended and nothing to spare. He has written some poetry, which, through certain radical misapprehensions, is not very good.

Like most men of *true* imagination, Mr. Locke is a seemingly paradoxical compound of coolness and excitability.

He is about five feet seven inches in height, symmetrically formed; there is an air of distinction about his whole person — the *air noble* of genius. His face is strongly pitted by the small-pox, and, perhaps from the same cause, there is a marked obliquity in the eyes; a certain calm, clear *luminousness*, however,

about these latter, amply compensates for the defect, and the forehead is truly beautiful in its intellectuality. I am acquainted with no person possessing so fine a forehead as Mr. Locke. He is married, and about forty-five years of age, although no one would suppose him to be more than thirty-eight. He is a lineal descendant from the immortal author of the "Essay on the Human Understanding."

NOTE: Poe spells "Hans Pfaall" in three different ways: "Hans Phaall," "Hans Pfaall," and "Hans Phaal." — ED.

AUTOGRAPHY.

I.

[Text: *Southern Literary Messenger*, February, 1836.]

Our friend and particular acquaintance, Joseph Miller, Esq., (who, by the way, signs his name, we think, Joseph A. Miller, or Joseph B. Miller, or at least Joseph C. Miller) paid us a visit a few days ago. His behavior was excessively odd. Walking into our *sanctum* without saying a word, he seated himself with a dogged air in our own exclusive arm-chair, and surveyed us, for some minutes, in silence, and in a very suspicious manner, over the rim of his spectacles. There was evidently something in the wind. "What *can* the man want?" thought we, without saying so.

"I will tell you," said Joseph Miller, Esq. — that is to say, Joseph D. Miller, Joseph E. Miller, or possibly Joseph F. Miller, Esq. "I will tell you," said he. Now, it is a positive fact that we had not so much as attempted to open any of our mouths.

"I will tell you," said he, reading our thoughts.

"Ah, thank you!" we replied, slightly smiling, and feeling excessively uncomfortable — "thank you! — we should like to know."

"I believe," resumed he — resumed Joseph G. Miller — "I believe you are not altogether unacquainted with our family."

"Why, *not* altogether, certainly — pray, sir, proceed."

"It is one of the oldest families in — in — "

"In Great Britain," we interposed, seeing him at a loss.

"In the United States," said Mr. Miller — that is, Joseph H. Miller, Esq.

"In the United States! — why, sir, you are joking surely: we thought the Miller family were particularly British — The Jest-Book you know — "

"You are in error," interrupted he — interrupted Joseph I. Miller — "we are British, but not particularly British. You should know that the Miller family are indigenous every where, and have little connection with either time or place. This is a riddle which you may be able to read hereafter. At present let it pass, and listen to me. You know I have many peculiar notions and opinions — many particularly bright fancies which, by the way, the rabble have thought proper to call whims, oddities, and eccentricities. But, sir, they are not. You have heard of my passion for autographs?"

"We have."

"Well, sir, to be brief. Have you, or have you not, seen a certain rascally piece of business in the London 'Athenæum?'"

"Very possible," we replied.

"And, pray, sir, what do you think of it?"

"Think of what?"

"No, sir, not of *what*," said he — said Joseph K. Miller, Esq., getting very angry, "not of *what* at all; but of that absurd, nefarious, and superfluous piece of autographical rascality therein — that is to say, in the London 'Athenæum' — deliberately, falsely, and maliciously fathered upon me, and laid to my charge — to the charge of me, I say, Joseph L. Miller."

Here Mr. M. arose, and, unbuttoning his coat in a great rage, took from his breast pocket a bundle of MSS. and laid them emphatically upon the table.

"Ah, ha!" said we, getting particularly nervous, "we begin to understand you. We comprehend. Sit down! You, Joseph M. — that is to say, Joseph N. Miller — have had — that is to say, ought to have had, eh? — and the London 'Athenæum' is — that is to say, it is not, &c. — and — and — and — oh, precisely!"

"My *dear* sir, said Mr. Miller, affectionately, "you are a fool — a confounded fool. Hold your tongue! *This* is the state of the case. I, Joseph O. Miller, being smitten, as all the world knows, with a passion for autographs, am supposed, in that detestable article to which I am alluding, and which appeared some time ago in the London 'Athenæum,' — am supposed, I say, to have indited sundry epistles, to several and sundry characters of literary notoriety about London, with the sinister design, hope, and intention, of thereby eliciting autograph replies — the said epistles, presumed to be indited by me, each and individually being neither more nor less than one and the same thing, and consisting —"

"Yes, sir," said we, "and consisting" —

"And consisting," resumed Mr. Joseph P. Miller, "of certain silly inquiries respecting the character of certain —"

"Of certain cooks, scullions, and chambermaids," said we, having now some faint recollection of the article alluded to.

"Precisely," said our visiter — "of certain cooks, scullions, chambermaids, and boot-blacks."

"And concerning whose character you are supposed to be excessively anxious."

"Yes, sir — *I* — excessively anxious! — only think of that! — I, Joseph Q. Miller, excessively anxious!"

"Horrible!" we ejaculated.

"Damnable!" said Mr. M.

"But what papers are *these?*" demanded we, taking courage, and eyeing the bundle of MSS. which our friend had thrown upon the table.

"Those papers," said Mr. Miller, after a pause, and with considerable dignity of manner, "those papers are, to tell you the truth, the result of some — of some ingenuity on the part of your humble servant. They are autographs — but they are *American* autographs, and as such may be of some little value in your eyes. Pray accept them — they are entirely at your service. I beg leave, however, to assure you that I have resorted to no petty arts for the consummation of a glorious purpose. No man can accuse *me*, sir, *me*, Joseph R. Miller, of meanness or of superficiality. My letters have invariably been — have been — that is to say, have been every thing they should be. Moreover, they have not been what they should not be. I have propounded no inquiries about scullions. I wrote not to the sublimated Mr. ——, (here we do not feel justified in indicating more fully the name mentioned by Mr. M.) touching a chambermaid, nor to Mr. ——, in relation to a character. On the contrary, I have adapted my means to my ends. I have — I have — in short, sir, I have accomplished many great and glorious things, all of which you shall behold in the sequel." We bowed, and our visiter continued.

"The autographs here included are, you will perceive, the autographs of our principal *literati*. They will prove interesting to the public. It would be as

well to insert the letters in your Messenger, with facsimiles of the signatures. Of my own letters eliciting these replies I have unfortunately preserved no copies." Here Mr. M. handed us the MSS.

"Mr. Joseph S. Miller" — we began, deeply penetrated by his kindness.

"Joseph *T*. Miller, if you please," interrupted he, with an emphasis on the T.

"Well, sir," said we — "so be it: Mr. Joseph V. Miller, then, since you will have it so, we are highly sensible of your noble, of your disinterested generosity. We are ——"

"Say no more," interrupted our friend, with a sigh — "say no more, I beseech you. The MSS. are entirely at your service. You have been very kind to me, and when I forget a kindness my name is no longer Joseph W. Miller."

"Then your name *is* — is positively Joseph W. Miller?" — we inquired with some hesitation.

"It is" — he replied, with a toss of the head, which we thought slightly supercilious — "It is — Joseph X. Miller. But why do you ask? Good day! In a style epistolary and non-epistolary I must bid you adieu — that is to say I must depart (and *not* remain) your obedient servant, Joseph Y. Miller."

"Extremely ambiguous!" we thought, as he whipped out of the room — "Mr. Miller! Mr. Miller!" — and we hallooed after him at the top of our voice. Mr. Miller returned at the call, but most unfortunately we had forgotten what we had been so anxious to say.

"Mr. Miller," said we, at length, "shall we not send you a number of the Magazine containing your correspondence?"

"Certainly!" — he replied — "drop it in the Post Office."

"But, sir," said we, highly embarrassed, — "to what — to what address shall we direct it?"

"Address!" ejaculated he — "you astonish me! Address *me*, sir, if you please — Joseph Z. Miller."

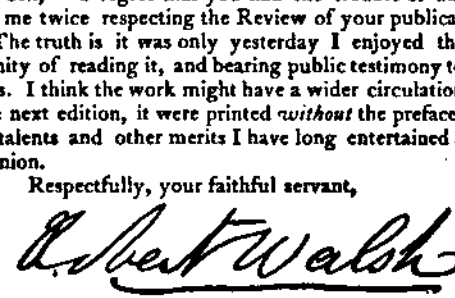
The package handed us by Mr. M. we inspected with a great deal of pleasure. The letters were neatly arranged and endorsed, and numbered from one to twenty-four. We print them *verbatim*, and with facsimiles of the signatures, in compliance with our friend's suggestion. The dates, throughout, were overscored, and we have been forced, accordingly, to leave them blank. The remarks appended to each letter are our own.

LETTER I.

PHILADELPHIA, ———.

DEAR SIR, — I regret that you had the trouble of addressing me twice respecting the Review of your publication. The truth is it was only yesterday I enjoyed the opportunity of reading it, and bearing public testimony to its merits. I think the work might have a wider circulation if, in the next edition, it were printed *without* the preface. Of your talents and other merits I have long entertained a high opinion.

Respectfully, your faithful servant,



JOSEPH A. MILLER, ESQ.

There is nothing very peculiar in the *physique* of this letter. The hand-writing is bold, large, sprawling,

and irregular. It is rather rotund than angular, and is by no means illegible. One would suppose it written in a violent hurry. The t's are crossed with a sweeping scratch of the pen, giving the whole letter an odd appearance if held upside-down, or in any position other than the proper one. The whole air of the letter is *dictatorial*. The paper is of good but not superior quality. The seal is of brown wax mingled with gold, and bears a Latin motto, of which only the words *trans* and *mortuus* are legible.

LETTER II.

HARTFORD, ———.

MY DEAR SIR,— Your letter of the — ult. with the accompanying parcel, reached me in safety, and I thank you for that polite attention, which is the more gratifying, as I have hitherto not had the pleasure of your acquaintance. The perusal of the pamphlet afforded me great delight, and I think it displays so much good sense, mingled with so much fine taste, as would render it an acceptable present to readers even more fastidious than myself. The purely Christian opinions with which the work abounds, will not fail of recommending it to all lovers of virtue, and of the truth.

I remain yours, with respect and esteem,

L. H. Sigourney.—

JOSEPH B. MILLER, ESQ.

Much pains seem to have been taken in the MS. of this epistle. *Black lines* have been used, apparently. Every t is crossed and every i dotted with precision.

The punctuation is faultless. Yet the *tout-ensemble* of the letter has nothing of formality or undue effeminacy. The characters are free, well-sized, and handsomely formed, preserving throughout a perfectly uniform and beautiful appearance, although generally unconnected with each other. Were one to form an estimate of the character of Mrs. Sigourney's compositions from the character of her hand-writing, the estimate would not be very far from the truth. Freedom, dignity, precision, and grace of thought, without abrupt or startling transitions, might be attributed to her with propriety. The paper is good, the seal small — of green and gold wax — and without impression.

LETTER III.

New York, ———.

Dear Sir,— I have delayed replying to your letter of the — ult. until I could find time to make the necessary inquiries about the circumstances to which you allude. I am sorry to inform you that these inquiries have been altogether fruitless, and that I am consequently unable, at present, to give you the desired information. If, hereafter, any thing shall come to light which may aid you in your researches, it will give me great pleasure to communicate with you upon the subject.

I am, Dear Sir, your friend and servant,

Joseph C. Miller, Esq.

There is much in the hand-writing here like that of Mrs. Sigourney, and yet, as a whole, it is very dif-

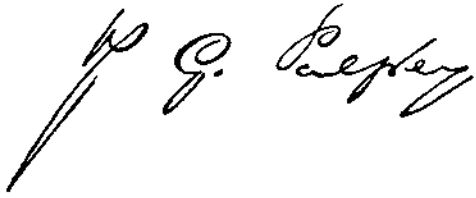
ferent. In both MSS. perfect uniformity and regularity exist, and in both, the character of the writing is *formed* — that is to say, *decided*. Both are beautiful, and, at a casual glance, both have a somewhat similar *effect*. But Mrs. Sigourney's MS. is one of the most legible, and Mr. Paulding's one of the most illegible in the world. His small a's, t's and c's are all alike, and the *style* of the characters generally is French. No correct notion of Mr. Paulding's literary peculiarities could be obtained from an inspection of his MS. It has probably been modified by strong adventitious circumstances. The paper is of a very fine glossy texture, and of a blue tint, with gilt edges.

LETTER IV.

BOSTON, ———.

It is due from me to advise you that the communication of the — ult. addressed by you to myself involves some error. It is evident that you have mistaken me for some other person of the same surname, as I am altogether ignorant of the circumstances to which you refer.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,



JOSEPH D. MILLER, ESQ.

The hand-writing here is of an odd appearance. The capitals and *long* letters extend far above or below the

line, and the rest have a running and diminutive formation, rendering it difficult to distinguish one from another. The words are unusually far apart, and but little matter is contained in much space. At first sight the MS. appears to be hurried — but a few moments' examination will prove that this is not the case. The capital I's might be mistaken for T's. The whole has a clean and uniform appearance. The paper is common, and the seal (of red wax) is oval in shape — probably a shield — the device illegible.

LETTER V.

St. Mark's Place, New York, ——.

Dear Sir, — Your obliging letter of the —— was received in due course of mail, and I am gratified by your good opinion. At the same time my numerous engagements will render it out of my power to send you any communication for your valuable Magazine, 'The Humdrum,' for some months to come at least. Wishing you all success, and with many thanks for your attention,

I remain, sir, your humble servant,

J. Fenimore Cooper

Joseph E. Miller, Esq.

Mr. Cooper's MS. is bad — very bad. There is no distinctive character about it, and it appears to be *unformed.* The writing will probably be different in other letters. Upon reference we find this to be the fact. In the letter to Mr. Miller, the MS. is of a

petite and finicky appearance, and looks as if scratched with a steel pen — the lines are crooked. The paper is fine, and of a bluish tint. A wafer is used.

LETTER VI.

New York, ———.

My Dear Sir, — I owe you a very humble apology for not answering sooner your flattering epistle of the — ult. The truth is, being from home when your lett reached my residence, my reply fell into the ever open grave of deferred duties.

As regards the information you desire I regret that it is out of my power to aid you. My studies and pursuits have been directed, of late years, in so very different a channel, that I am by no means *au fait* on the particular subject you mention. Believe me, with earnest wishes for your success,

Very respectfully yours,

Joseph F. Miller, Esq.

The penmanship of Miss Sedgwick is excellent. The characters are well-sized, distinct, elegantly, but not ostentatiously formed; and, with perfect freedom of manner, are still sufficiently feminine. The hair strokes of the pen differ little in thickness from the other parts of the MS. — which has thus a uniform appearance it might not otherwise have. Strong common sense, and a scorn of superfluous ornament, one might suppose, from Miss Sedgwick's hand-writing,

to be the characteristics of her literary style. The paper is very good, blue in tint, and ruled by machine. The seal of red wax, plain.

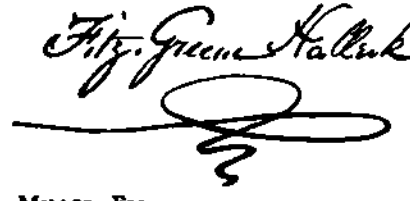
LETTER VII.

NEW YORK, ——.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favor of the ——. The report to which it alludes was entirely without foundation. I have never had, and have not *now*, any intention of editing a Magazine. The Bookseller's statement on this subject originated in a misunderstanding.

Your Poem on "Things in General," I have not had the pleasure of seeing. I have not, however, the least doubt of its — of its — that is to say, of its extreme delicacy of sentiment, and highly original style of thinking — to say nothing at present of that — of that extraordinary and felicitous manner of expression which so particularly characterizes all that — that I have seen of your writings. I shall endeavor, sir, to procure your Poem, and anticipate much pleasure in its perusal.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,



JOSEPH G. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Halleck's is a free, mercantile hand, and evinces a love for the graceful rather than for the picturesque. There is some *force*, too, in its expression. The *tout ensemble* is pleasing. Mr. H.'s letter

is probably written *currente calamo* — but without hurry. The paper is very good, and bluish — the seal of red wax.

LETTER VIII.

ALEXANDRIA, RED RIVER, ——, LOUISIANA.

DEAR SIR, — Your polite letter of the —— is before me, and the view which you present of the estimation in which you hold my poor labors is every way gratifying. It would afford me great pleasure to send you a few trifles for the Hum-drum, which I have no doubt will prove a very useful periodical if its design is well carried out — but the truth is my time is entirely occupied.

Yours,

Timothy Flint

JOSEPH H. MILLER, ESQ.

The writing in this letter has a *fidgetty* appearance, and would seem to indicate a mind without settled aims — restless and full of activity. Few of the characters are written twice in the same manner, and their *direction* varies continually. Sometimes the words lie perpendicularly on the page — then slope to the right — then, with a jerk, fly off in an opposite way. The thickness, also, of the MS. is changeable — sometimes the letters are very light and fine — sometimes excessively heavy. Upon a casual glance at Mr. F.'s epistle, one might mistake it for an imitation of a written letter by a child. The paper is bad — and wafered.

LETTER IX.

PHILADELPHIA, ——.

Miss Leslie's compliments to Mr. Miller. She has no knowledge of the person spoken of in Mr. Miller's note, and is quite certain there must be some mistake in the statement alluded to.

JOSEPH I. MILLER, ESQ.

Several persons of our acquaintance between whose mental character and that of Miss Leslie we have fancied a strong similitude, write a hand almost identical with this lady's — yet we are unable to point out much in the MS. itself according with the literary peculiarities of Miss L. Neatness and finish, without over-effeminacy, are, perhaps, the only features of resemblance. We might also, by straining a point, imagine (from the MS.) that Miss L. regards rather *the effect of her writings as a whole* than the polishing of their constituent parts. The penmanship is rotund, and the words are always finished with an inward twirl. The paper tolerable, and wafered.

LETTER X.

BOSTON, ——.

DEAR SIR, — I have your favor of the ——. For the present I must decline replying to the queries you have propounded. Be pleased to accept my thanks for the flattering manner in which you speak of my Lecture.

I am, Dear Sir, very faithfully, yours,

Edward Everett

JOSEPH K. MILLER, ESQ.

Here is a noble MS. It has an air of deliberate precision about it emblematic of the statesman; and a mingled solidity and grace speaking the scholar. Nothing can be more legible. The words are at proper intervals — the lines also are at proper intervals, and perfectly straight. There are no superfluous flourishes. The man who writes thus will never grossly err in judgment or otherwise. We may venture to say, however, that he will not attain the loftiest pinnacles of renown. The paper is excellent — stout yet soft — with gilt edges. The seal of red wax, with an oval device bearing the initials E. E., and surrounded with a scroll, on which are legible only the word *cum* and the letters c. o. r. d. a.

LETTER XI.

New York, ——.

My Dear Sir, — I must be pardoned for refusing your request touching your MS. "Treatise on Pigs." I was obliged, some years ago, to come to the resolution not to express opinions of works sent to me. A candid opinion of those whose merit seemed to me small, gave offence, and I found it the best way to avoid a judgment in any case. I hope this will be satisfactory.

I am, my Dear Sir, very respectfully yours,

Joseph L. Miller, Esq.

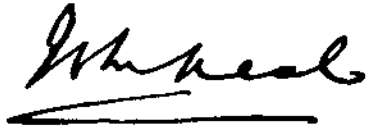
Mr. Irving's hand writing is common-place. There is nothing indicative of genius about it. Neither could any one suspect, from such penmanship, a *high finish*

in the author's compositions. This style of writing is more frequently met with than any other. It is a very usual clerk's hand — scratchy and *tapering* in appearance, showing (strange to say) — an eye deficient in a due sense of the *picturesque*. There may be something, however, in the circumstance that the epistle to Mr. Miller is evidently written in a desperate hurry. Paper very indifferent, and wafered.

LETTER XII.

BOSTON, ——.

SIR, — In reply to your note of the ——, in which you demand if I am "the author of a certain scurrilous attack upon Joseph M. Miller, in the Daily Polyglot of the — ult." I have to say that I am happy in knowing nothing about the attack, the Polyglot, or yourself.



JOSEPH M. MILLER.

Mr. Neal's MS. is exceedingly illegible, and very careless. It is necessary to read one half his epistle and guess at the balance. The capitals and long letters, like those of Mr. Palfrey, extend far above and below the line, while the small letters are generally nothing but dots and scratches. Many of the words are run together — so that what is actually a sentence is frequently mistaken for a single word. One might suppose Mr. Neal's mind (from his penmanship) to be bold, excessively active, energetic, and irregular. Paper very common, and wafered.

LETTER XIII.

BALTIMORE, ——.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your note of the — ult., and its contents puzzle me no little. I fear it will be impossible to give a definite reply to an epistle so enigmatically worded. Please write again.

Yours truly,

John P. Kennedy

JOSEPH N. MILLER, ESQ.

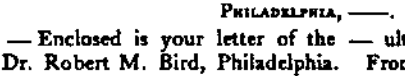
This is our *beau ideal* of penmanship. Its prevailing character is *picturesque*. This appearance is given by terminating every letter abruptly, without *tapering*, and by using no perfect angles, and none at all which are not spherical. Great uniformity is preserved in the whole air of the MS. — with great variety in the constituent parts. Every character has the clearness and blackness of a bold wood-cut, and appears to be *placed upon the paper* with singular precision. The long letters do not rise or fall in an undue degree above the line. From this specimen of his hand writing, we should suppose Mr. Kennedy to have the eye of a painter, more especially in regard to the picturesque — to have refined tastes generally — to be exquisitely alive to the proprieties of life — to possess energy, decision, and great talent — to have a penchant also for the *bizarre*. The paper is very fine, clear and white, with gilt edges — the seal neat and much in keeping with the MS. Just sufficient wax, and no more than sufficient, is used for the impression, which is nearly square, with a lion's head in full *alto relievo*, surrounded by the motto "*il parle par tout*."

LETTER XIV.

PHILADELPHIA, ——.

DEAR SIR, — Enclosed is your letter of the — ult. addressed to Dr. Robert M. Bird, Philadelphia. From the contents of the note it is evidently not intended for myself. There is, I believe, a Dr. Robert Bird, who resides somewhere in the Northern Liberties — also several Robert Birds in different parts of the city.

Very respectfully, your obedient, humble servant,



JOSEPH O. MILLER, ESQ.

Dr. Bird's chirography is by no means bad — still it cannot be called good. It is very legible and has force. There is some degree of nervousness about it. It bears a slight resemblance to the writing of Miss Leslie, especially in the curling of the final letters — but is more open, and occupies more space. The characters have the air of not being able to keep pace with the thought, and an uneasy want of finish seems to have been the consequence. A restless and vivid imagination might be deduced from this MS. It has no little of the *picturesque* also. The paper good — *wafered and sealed.*

LETTER XV.

OAK HILL, ——.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your polite letter of the ——, and will have no objection to aid you in your enterprise by such information as I can afford. There are many others, however, who would be much better able

to assist you in this matter than myself. When I get a little leisure you shall hear from me again.

I am, Dear Sir, with respect, your obedient,

JOSEPH P. MILLER, ESQ.

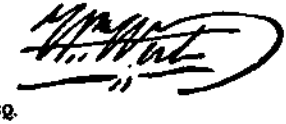
The hand writing of the Chief Justice is not unlike that of Neal — but much better and more legible. The habit of running two words into one (a habit which we noticed in Neal) is also observable in the Chief Justice. The characters are utterly devoid of ornament or unnecessary flourish, and there is a good deal of abruptness about them. They are heavy and black, with very little hair stroke. The lines are exceedingly crooked, running diagonally across the paper. A wide margin is on the left side of the page, with none at all on the right. The whole air of the MS. in its utter simplicity, is strikingly indicative of the man. The paper is a half sheet of coarse foolscap, wafered.

LETTER XVI.

BALTIMORE, ——.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your letter of the — ult. in which you do me the honor of requesting an autograph. In reply, I have to say, that if this scrawl will answer your purpose it is entirely at your service.

Yours respectfully,



JOSEPH Q. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Wirt's hand writing has a strong resemblance to that of his friend John P. Kennedy — it is by no means, however, as good, and has too much *tapering* about it to be thoroughly picturesque. The writing is black, strong, clear, and very neat. It is, upon the whole, little in accordance with the character of Mr. W.'s compositions. The lines are crooked. The paper bluish and English — wafered.

LETTER XVII.

WASHINGTON, ——.

DEAR SIR, — In answer to your kind inquiries concerning my health, I am happy to inform you that I was never better in my life. I cannot conceive in what manner the report to which you allude could have originated.

Believe me with the highest respect, your much obliged friend and servant,

JOSEPH R. MILLER, ESQ.

Judge Story's is a very excellent hand, and has the air of being written with great rapidity and ease. It is rotund, and might be characterized as a *rolling hand.* The direction of the letters occasionally varies from right to left, and from left to right. The same peculiarity was observable in Mr. Flint's. Judge Story's MS. is decidedly picturesque. The lines are at equal distances, but lie diagonally on the page. The paper

good, of a bluish tint, and folded to form a marginal line. The seal of red wax, and stamped with a common compting-house stamp.

LETTER XVIII.

New York, ——.

My Dear Sir, — I thank you for the hints you have been so kind as to give me in relation to my next edition of the "*Voyage*," but as that edition has already gone to press, it will be impossible to avail myself of your attention until the sixth impression.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

Joseph S. Miller, Esq.

We are not partial to Mr. Reynolds' style of chirography. It is a common mercantile hand, in which the words taper off from their beginning to their end. There is much freedom, but no strength about it. The paper good, and wafered.

LETTER XIX.

Portland, ——.

Dear Sir, — I have no knowledge of your owing me the small sum sent in your letter of the ——, and conse-

quently I re-enclose you the amount. You will no doubt be able to discover and rectify the mistake.

Very truly yours,

James Brooks

JOSEPH T. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Brooks writes a very good hand, strong, bold, and abrupt — highly indicative of the author's peculiar features of mind. These are nervous common sense, without tinsel or artificiality, and a straightforward directness of conception. The lines are even — and the words at proper intervals. The paper good — and wafered.

LETTER XX.

WASHINGTON, ——.

SIR, — I shall be better enabled to answer your letter about "certain mysterious occurrences," of which you desire an explanation, when you inform me explicitly (and I request you will do this) what *are* the mysterious occurrences to which you allude.

J. Q. Adams.

JOSEPH V. MILLER, ESQ.

The chirography of the Ex-President is legible — but has an odd appearance, on account of the *wavering* of the capitals and long letters. The writing is clear, somewhat heavy, and *picturesque* — without ornament. Black lines seem to have been used. A margin is preserved to the right and left. The proportion of the letters is well maintained throughout. The paper common, and wafered.

LETTER XXI.

PHILADELPHIA, ——.

DEAR SIR, — I have just received your letter of the ——, in which you complain of my neglect in not replying to your favors of the —— of the —— and of the —— ult. I do assure you, sir, that the letters have never come to hand. If you will be so good as to repeat their contents, it will give me great pleasure to answer them, each and all. The Post Office is in a very bad condition.

Yours respectfully,

JOSEPH W. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Carey does not write a legible hand — although in other respects a good one. It resembles that of Neal very nearly. Several of the words in the letter to Mr. Miller are run together. The i's are seldom dotted. The lines are at equal distances, and straight. The paper very good — wafered.

LETTER XXII.

BOSTON, ———.

DEAR SIR, — No such person as Philip Philpot has ever been in my employ as a coachman, or otherwise. The

name is an odd one, and not likely to be forgotten. The man must have reference to some other Dr. Channing. It would be as well to question him closely.

Respectfully yours,

W. E. Channing

JOSEPH X. MILLER, ESQ.

Dr. Channing's MS. is very excellent. The letters are bold, well-sized, and beautifully formed. They are, perhaps, too closely crowded upon one another. One might, with some little acumen, detect the high finish of Dr. C.'s style of composition in the character of his chirography. Boldness and accuracy are united with elegance in both. The paper very good, and wafered.

LETTER XXIII.

PHILADELPHIA, ———.

DEAR SIR, — I must be pardoned for declining to loan the books you mention. The fact is, I have lost many volumes in this way — and as you are personally unknown to me you will excuse my complying with your request.

Yours, &c.

Jos. Hopkinson

JOSEPH Y. MILLER, ESQ.

This is very good MS.— forcible, neat, legible, and devoid of superfluous ornament. Some of the words are run together. The writing slopes considerably. It is too uniform to be picturesque. The lines are at equal distances, and a broad margin is on the left of the page. The chirography is as good at the conclusion as at the commencement of the letter — a rare quality in MSS.— and evincing *indefatigability* of temperament.

LETTER XXIV.

WASHINGTON, ———.

SIR, — Yours of the —— came duly to hand. I cannot send you what you wish. The fact is, I have been so pestered with applications for my autograph, that I have made a resolution to grant one in no case whatsoever.

Yours, &c.

JOSEPH Z. MILLER, ESQ.

The writing of the orator is bold, dashing, and chivalrous — the few words addressed to Mr. Miller occupying a full page. The lines are at unequal distances, and run diagonally across the letter. Each sentence is terminated by a long dash — black and heavy. Such an epistle might write the Grand Mogul. The paper is what the English call silver paper — very beautiful and wafered.

II.

[Text: *Southern Literary Messenger*, August, 1836.]

Our friend, Joseph A. B. C. D. &c. Miller, has called upon us again, in a great passion. He says we quizzed him in our last article — which we deny positively. He maintains, moreover, that the greater part of our observations on mental qualities, as deduced from the character of a MS., are not to be sustained. The man is in error. However, to gratify him, we have suffered him, in the present instance, to play the critic himself. He has brought us another batch of autographs, and will let us have them upon no other terms. To say the truth, we are rather glad of his proposal than otherwise. We shall look over his shoulder, however, occasionally. Here follow the letters.

LETTER XXV.

DEAR SIR, — Will you oblige me by not writing me any more silly letters? I really have no time to attend to them.

Your most obedient servant,

JOSEPH A. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Sparks' MS. has an odd appearance. The characters are large, round, black, irregular and perpendicular. The lines are close together, and the

whole letter wears at first sight an air of confusion — of chaos. Still it is not very illegible upon close inspection, and would by no means puzzle a regular bred devil. We can form no guess in regard to any mental peculiarities from this MS. From its tout-ensemble, however, we might imagine it written by a man who was very busy among a great pile of books and papers huddled up in confusion around him. Paper blueish and fine — sealed, with the initials J. S.

LETTER XXVI.

My Dear Sir, — It gives me great pleasure to receive a letter from you. Let me see, I think I have seen you once or twice in ——— where was it? However, your remarks upon "Melanie and other Poems" prove you to be a man of sound discrimination, and I shall be happy to hear from you as often as possible.

Yours truly,

Willis

Joseph B. Miller, Esq.

Mr. Willis writes a very good hand. What was said about the MS. of Halleck, in the February number, will apply very nearly to this. It has the same grace, with more of the picturesque, however, and, consequently, more force. These qualities will be found in his writings— which are greatly underrated. Mem. Mr. Messenger should do him justice. [Mem. by Mr. Messenger. I have.] Cream colored paper —green and gold seal— with the initials N. P. W.

LETTER XXVII.

DEAR SIR, — I have to inform you that "the pretty little poem" to which you allude in your letter is not, as you suppose, of my composition. The author is unknown to me. The poem *is* very pretty.

Yours, &c.

H. F. Gould.

JOSEPH C. MILLER.

The writing of Miss Gould resembles that of Miss Leslie very nearly. It is rather more *petite* — but has the same neatness, picturesqueness and finish without over-effeminacy. The literary style of one who writes thus is sure to be forcibly epigrammatic — either in detached sentences — or in the *tout ensemble* of the composition. Paper very fine — wafered.

LETTER XXVIII.

DEAR SIR, — Herewith I have the honor of sending you what you desire. If the Essay shall be found to give you any new information, I shall not regret the trouble of having written it,

Respectfully,

W. Dew

JOSEPH D. MILLER, ESQ.

The MS. of Professor Dew is large, bold, very heavy, abrupt, and illegible. It is possible that he

never thinks of mending a pen. There can be no doubt that his chirography has been modified, like that of Paulding, by strong adventitious circumstances — for it appears to retain but few of his literary peculiarities. Among the few retained, are *boldness* and *weight*. The abruptness we do not find in his composition — which is indeed somewhat diffuse. Neither is the illegibility of the MS. to be paralleled by any confusion of thought or expression. He is remarkably lucid. We must look for the two last mentioned qualities of his MS. in the supposition that he has been in the habit of writing a great deal, in a desperate hurry, and with a stump of a pen. Paper good — but only a half sheet of it — wafered.

LETTER XXIX.

Dear Sir, — In reply to your query touching the "authenticity of a singular incident," related in one of my poems, I have to inform you that the incident in question is purely a fiction.

With respect, your obedient servant,

Joseph E. F. Miller, Esq.

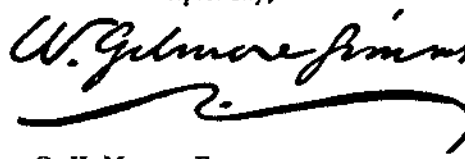
The hand-writing of Mr. Mellen is somewhat peculiar, and partakes largely of the character of the signature annexed. It would require no great stretch of fancy to imagine the writer (from what we see of his MS.) a man of excessive sensibility, amounting nearly to disease — of unbounded ambition, greatly interfered with by frequent moods of doubt and depression, and

by unsettled ideas of the beautiful. The formation of the G in his signature alone, might warrant us in supposing his composition to have great force, frequently impaired by an undue straining after effect. Paper excellent — red seal.

LETTER XXX.

DEAR SIR, — I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, but thank you for the great interest you seem to take in my welfare. I have no relations by the name of Miller, and think you must be in error about the family connection.

Respectfully,



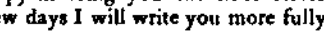
JOSEPH G. H. MILLER, ESQ.

The MS. of Mr. Simms resembles, very nearly, that of Mr. Kennedy. It has more slope, however, and less of the picturesque — although still much. We spoke of Mr. K.'s MS. (in our February number) as indicating "the eye of a painter." In our critique on the *Partisan* we spoke of Mr. Simms also as possessing "the eye of a painter," and we had not then seen his hand-writing. The two MSS. are strikingly similar. The paper here is very fine and wafered.

LETTER XXXI.

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favor of the — inst. and shall be very happy in doing you the little service you mention. In a few days I will write you more fully. Very respectfully,

Your most obedient servant,



JOSEPH I. K. MILLER, ESQ.

Lieutenant Slidell's MS. is peculiar — very neat, very even, and tolerably legible, but somewhat too diminutive. *Black lines* have been, apparently, used. Few tokens of literary manner or character are to be found in this writing. The *petiteness*, however, is most strikingly indicative of a mental habit, which we have more than once pointedly noticed in the works of this author — we mean that of close observation in detail — a habit which, when well regulated, as in the case of Lieut. Slidell, tends greatly to vigor of style. Paper excellent — wafered.

LETTER XXXII.

DEAR SIR, — I find upon reference to some MS. notes now lying by me, that the article to which you have allusion, appeared originally in the "*Journal des Sçavans.*"

Very respectfully,

JOSEPH L. M. MILLER, ESQ.

The writing of Professor Anthon is remarkably neat and beautiful — in the formation of particular letters as well as in the tout-ensemble. The perfect regularity of the MS. gives it, to a casual glance, the appearance of print. The lines are quite straight and at even distances — yet they are evidently written without any artificial aid. We may at once recognise in this chirography the scrupulous precision and finish — the love of elegance — together with the scorn of all superfluous embellishment, which so greatly distinguish the compilations of the writer. The paper is yellow, very fine, and sealed with green wax, bearing the impression of a head of Cæsar.

LETTER XXXIII.

Dear Sir, — I have looked with great care over several different editions of Plato, among which I may mention the Bipont edition, 1781 — 8, 12 vols. oct.; that of Ast, and that of Bekker, reprinted in London, 11 vols. oct. I cannot, however, discover the passage about which you ask me — "is it not very ridiculous?" You must have mistaken the author. Please write again.

Respectfully yours,

Francis Lieber

Joseph N. O. Miller, Esq.

The MS. of Professor Lieber has nearly all the characteristics which we noticed in that of Professor Dew — besides the peculiarity of a wide margin left at the top of the paper. The whole air of the writing seems to indicate vivacity and energy of thought — but alto-

gether, the letter puts us at fault — for we have never before known a man of minute erudition (and such is Professor Lieber,) who did not write a very different hand from this. We should have imagined a petite and careful chirography. Paper tolerable and wafered.

LETTER XXXIV.

DEAR SIR, — I beg leave to assure you that I have *never* received, for my Magazine, *any* copy of verses with so ludicrous a title as "The nine and twenty Magpies." Moreover, if I had, I should certainly have thrown it into the fire. I wish you would not worry me any farther about this matter. The verses, I dare say, are somewhere among your papers. You had better look them up — they may do for the Mirror.

MR. JOSEPH P. Q. MILLER.

Mrs. Hale writes a larger and bolder hand than her sex generally. It resembles, in a great degree, that of Professor Lieber — and is not easily decyphered. The whole MS. is indicative of a masculine understanding. Paper very good, and wafered.

LETTER XXXV.

DEAR SIR, — I am not to be quizzed. You suppose, eh? that I can't understand your fine letter all about

"things in general." You want my autograph, you dog — and you sha'nt have it.

Yours respectfully,

M M Noah

JOSEPH R. S. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Noah writes a very good running hand. The lines, however, are not straight, and the letters have too much tapering to please the eye of an artist. The long letters and capitals extend very little beyond the others — either up or down. The epistle has the appearance of being written very fast. Some of the characters have now and then a little twirl, like the tail of a pig — which gives the MS. an air of the quizzical, and devil-me-care. Paper pretty good — and wafered.

LETTER XXXVI.

MISTER — I say — It 's not worth while trying to come possum over the Major. Your letter 's no go. I 'm up to a thing or two — or else my name is n't

Jack Downing

MR. JOSEPH T. V. MILLER.

The Major writes a very excellent hand indeed. It has so striking a resemblance to that of Mr. Brooks, that we shall say nothing farther about it.

LETTER XXXVII.

DEAR SIR, — I am exceedingly and excessively sorry that it is out of my power to comply with your rational and reasonable request. The subject you mention is one with which I am utterly unacquainted — moreover, it is one about which I know very little.

Respectfully,

JOSEPH W. X. MILLER, ESQ.

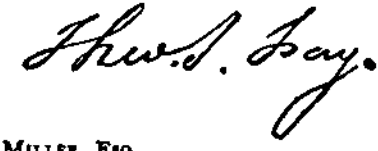
Mr. Stone's MS. has some very good points about it — among which is a certain degree of the picturesque. In general it is heavy and sprawling — the short letters running too much together. From the chirography no precise opinion can be had of Mr. Stone's literary style. [Mr. Messenger says no opinion can be had of it in any way.] Paper very good and wafered.

LETTER XXXVIII.

MY GOOD FELLOW, — I am not disposed to find fault with your having addressed me, although personally unknown. Your favor (of the —— ultimo) finds me upon the eve of directing my course towards the renowned shores of Italia. I shall land (primitively) on the territories of the ancient Brutii, of whom you may find an account in Lemprière. You will observe (therefore) that, being engrossed by the consequent, necessary, and im-

portant preparations for my departure, I can have no time to attend to your little concerns.

Believe me, my dear sir, very faithfully your



JOSEPH Y. Z. MILLER, ESQ.

Mr. Fay writes a passable hand. There is a good deal of spirit — and some force. His paper has a clean appearance, and he is scrupulously attentive to his margin. The MS. however, has an air of *swagger* about it. There are too many dashes — and the tails of the long letters are too long. [Mr. Messenger thinks I am right — that Mr. F. should n't try to cut a dash — and that *all* his tales are too long. The swagger he says is respectable, and indicates a superfluity of thought.]

A CHAPTER ON AUTOGRAPHY

BY

I.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, November, 1841.]

UNDER this head, some years ago, there appeared in the Southern Literary Messenger, an article which attracted very general attention, not less from the nature of its subject than from the peculiar manner in which it was handled. The editor introduces his readers to a certain Mr. Joseph Miller, who, it is hinted, is not merely a descendant of the illustrious Joe, of Jest-Book notoriety, but is that identical individual in proper person. Upon this point, however, an air of uncertainty is thrown by means of an equivoque, maintained throughout the paper, in respect to Mr. Miller's middle name. This equivoque is put into the mouth of Mr. M. himself. He gives his name, in the first instance, as Joseph A. Miller; but, in the course of conversation, shifts it to Joseph B., then to Joseph C., and so on through the whole alphabet, until he concludes by desiring a copy of the Magazine to be sent to his address as Joseph Z. Miller, Esquire.

The object of his visit to the editor is to place in his hands the autographs of certain distinguished American *literati*. To these persons he had written rigmarole letters on various topics, and in all cases had been successful in eliciting a reply. The replies only (which it is scarcely necessary to say are all fictitious) are given in the Magazine with a genuine autograph fac-simile appended, and are either burlesques of the supposed writer's usual style, or rendered otherwise absurd by reference to the nonsensical questions imagined to have been propounded by Mr. Miller. The autographs thus given are twenty-six in all — corresponding to the twenty-six variations in the initial letter of the hoaxer's middle name.

With the public this article took amazingly well, and many of our principal papers were at the expense of reprinting it with the wood-cut autographs. Even those whose names had been introduced, and whose style had been burlesqued, took the joke, generally speaking, in good part. Some of them were at a loss what to make of the matter. Dr. W. E. Channing, of Boston, was at some trouble, it is said, in calling to mind whether he had or had not actually written to some Mr. Joseph Miller the letter attributed to him in the article. This letter was nothing more than what follows: —

BOSTON, ———.

DEAR SIR, — No such person as Philip Philpot has ever been in my employ as a coachman, or otherwise. The name is an odd one, and not likely to be forgotten. The man must have reference to some other Doctor Channing. It would be as well to question him closely.

Respectfully yours,

To Joseph X. Miller, Esq. W. E. CHANNING.

The precise and brief sententiousness of the divine is here, it will be seen, very truly adopted, or "hit off."

In one instance only was the *jeu-d'esprit* taken in serious dudgeon. Colonel Stone and the Messenger had not been upon the best of terms. Some one of the Colonel's little brochures had been severely treated by that journal, which declared that the work would have been far more properly published among the quack advertisements in a spare corner of the Commercial. The colonel had retaliated by wholesale vituperation of the Messenger. This being the state of affairs, it was not to be wondered at that the following epistle was not quietly received on the part of him to whom it was attributed :—

NEW YORK, ———.

DEAR SIR, — I am exceedingly and excessively sorry that it is out of my power to comply with your rational and reasonable request. The subject you mention is one with which I am utterly unacquainted. Moreover, it is one about which I know very little.

Respectfully,

Joseph V. Miller, Esq. W. L. STONE.

These tautologies and anti-climaces were too much for the colonel, and we are ashamed to say that he committed himself by publishing in the Commercial an indignant denial of ever having indited such an epistle.

The principal feature of this autograph article, although perhaps the least interesting, was that of the editorial comment upon the supposed MSS., regarding them as indicative of character. In these comments the design was never more than semi-serious. At times, too, the writer was evidently led into error or injustice through the desire of being pungent — not unfrequently

sacrificing truth for the sake of a *bon-mot*. In this manner qualities were often attributed to individuals, which were not so much indicated by their handwriting, as suggested by the spleen of the commentator. But that a strong analogy *does* generally and naturally exist between every man's chirography and character, will be denied by none but the unreflecting. It is not our purpose, however, to enter into the *philosophy* of this subject, either in this portion of the present paper, or in the abstract. What we may have to say will be introduced elsewhere, and in connection with particular MSS. The practical application of the theory will thus go hand in hand with the theory itself.

Our design is threefold: — In the first place, seriously to illustrate our position that the mental features are indicated (with certain exceptions) by the handwriting; secondly, to indulge in a little literary gossip; and, thirdly, to furnish our readers with a more accurate and at the same time a more general collection of the autographs of our *literati* than is to be found elsewhere. Of the first portion of this design we have already spoken. The second speaks for itself. Of the third it is only necessary to say that we are confident of its interest for all lovers of literature. Next to the person of a distinguished man-of-letters, we desire to see his portrait — next to his portrait, his autograph. In the latter, especially, there is something which seems to bring him before us in his true idiosyncrasy — in his character of *scribe*. The feeling which prompts to the collection of autographs is a natural and rational one. But complete, or even extensive collections, are beyond the reach of those who themselves do not dabble in the waters of literature. The writer of this article has had opportunities, in this way, enjoyed

by few. The MSS. now lying before him are a motley mass indeed. Here are letters, or other compositions, from every individual in America who has the slightest pretension to literary celebrity. From these we propose to select the most eminent names — as to give *all* would be a work of supererogation. Unquestionably, among those whose claims we are forced to postpone, are several whose high *merit* might justly demand a different treatment; but the rule applicable in a case like this seems to be that of celebrity rather than that of true worth. It will be understood that, in the necessity of selection which circumstances impose upon us, we confine ourselves *to the most noted among the living literati of the country.* The article above alluded to, embraced, as we have already stated, only twenty-six names, and was not occupied *exclusively* either with living persons, or properly speaking, with literary ones. In fact the whole paper seemed to acknowledge no law beyond that of whim. Our present essay will be found to include *one hundred autographs.* We have thought it unnecessary to preserve any particular order in their arrangement.

Professor CHARLES ANTHON of Columbia College, New York, is well known as the most erudite of our classical scholars; and, although still a young man, there are few, if any, even in Europe, who surpass him in his peculiar path of knowledge. In England

his supremacy has been tacitly acknowledged by the immediate republication of his editions of Cæsar, Sallust, and Cicero, with other works, and their adoption as text-books at Oxford and Cambridge. His amplification of Lemprière did him high honor, but, of late, has been entirely superseded by a Classical Dictionary of his own — a work most remarkable for the extent and comprehensiveness of its details, as well as for its historical, chronological, mythological, and philological *accuracy*. It has at once completely overshadowed everything of its kind. It follows, as a matter of course, that Mr. Anthon has many little enemies among the inditers of merely big books. He has not been unassailed, yet has assuredly remained uninjured in the estimation of all those whose opinion he would be likely to value. We do not mean to say that he is altogether without faults, but a certain antique Johnsonism of style is perhaps one of his worst. He was mainly instrumental (with Professor Henry and Dr. Hawks) in setting on foot the New York Review, a journal of which he is the most efficient literary support, and whose most erudite papers have always been furnished by his pen.

The chirography of Professor Anthon is the most regularly beautiful of any in our collection. We see the most scrupulous precision, finish, and neatness about every portion of it — in the formation of individual letters, as well as in the *tout-ensemble*. The perfect symmetry of the MS. gives it, to a casual glance, the appearance of Italic print. The lines are quite straight, and at exactly equal distances, yet are written without black rules, or other artificial aid. There is not the slightest superfluity in the way of flourish or otherwise, with the exception of the twirl

in the C of the signature. Yet the whole is rather neat and graceful than forcible. Of four letters now lying before us, one is written on pink, one on a faint blue, one on green, and one on yellow paper — all of the finest quality. The seal is of green wax with an impression of the head of Cæsar.

It is in the chirography of such men as Professor Anthon that we look with certainty for indication of character. The life of a scholar is mostly undisturbed by those adventitious events which distort the natural disposition of the man of the world, preventing his real nature from manifesting itself in his MS. The lawyer, who, pressed for time, is often forced to embody a world of heterogeneous memoranda, on scraps of paper, with the stumps of all varieties of pen, will soon find the fair characters of his boyhood degenerate into hieroglyphics which would puzzle Doctor Wallis or Champollion; and from chirography so disturbed it is nearly impossible to decide anything. In a similar manner, men who pass through many striking vicissitudes of life, acquire in each change of circumstance a temporary inflection of the handwriting; the whole resulting, after many years, in an unformed or variable MS. scarcely to be recognised by themselves from one day to the other. In the case of literary men generally, we may expect some decisive token of the mental influence upon the MS., and in the instance of the classical devotee we may look with *especial* certainty for such token. We see, accordingly, in Professor Anthon's autography each and all of the known idiosyncrasies of his taste and intellect. We recognise at once the scrupulous precision and finish of his scholarship and of his style — the love of elegance which prompts him to surround himself, in his private study,

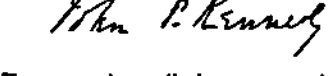
with gems of sculptural art and beautifully bound volumes, all arranged with elaborate attention to form, and in the very pedantry of neatness. We perceive, too, the disdain of superfluous embellishment which distinguishes his compilations, and which gives to their exterior appearance so marked an air of Quakerism. We must not forget to observe that the "want of force" is a want as perceptible in the whole character of the man, as in that of the MS.

The MS. of Mr. Irving has little about it indicative of his genius. Certainly, no one could suspect from it any nice *finish* in the writer's compositions; nor is this nice finish to be found. The letters now before us vary remarkably in appearance; and those of late date are not nearly so well written as the more antique. Mr. Irving has travelled much, has seen many vicissitudes, and has been so thoroughly satiated with fame as to grow slovenly in the performance of his literary tasks. This slovenliness has affected his hand-writing. But even from his earlier MSS. there is little to be gleaned, except the ideas of simplicity and precision. It must be admitted, however, that this fact, in itself, is characteristic of the literary manner, which, however excellent, has no prominent or very remarkable features.

For the last six or seven years, few men have occupied a more desirable position among us than Mr. BENJAMIN. As the editor of the American Monthly Magazine, of the New Yorker, and more lately of the Signal, and New World, he has exerted an influence scarcely second to that of any editor in the country. This influence Mr. B. owes to no single cause, but to his combined ability, activity, causticity, fearlessness, and independence. We use the latter term, however, with some mental reservation. The editor of the World is independent so far as the word implies unshaken resolution to follow the bent of one's own will, let the consequences be what they may. He is no respecter of persons, and his vituperation as often assails the powerful as the powerless — indeed the latter fall rarely under his censure. But we cannot call his independence, at all times, that of principle. We can never be sure that he will defend a cause merely because it is the cause of truth — or even because he regards it as such. He is too frequently biassed by personal feelings — feelings now of friendship, and again of vindictiveness. He is a warm friend, and a bitter, but not implacable enemy. His judgment in literary matters should not be questioned, but there is some difficulty in getting at his real opinion. As a prose writer, his style is lucid, terse, and pungent. He is often witty, often cuttingly sarcastic, but seldom humorous. He frequently injures the force of his fiercest attacks by an indulgence in merely vi-

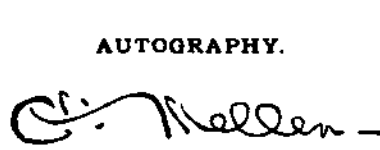
tuperative epithets. As a poet, he is entitled to far higher consideration than that in which he is ordinarily held. He is skilful and passionate, as well as imaginative. His sonnets have not been surpassed. In short, it is as a poet that his better genius is evinced —it is in poetry that his noble spirit breaks forth, showing what the man is, and what, but for unhappy circumstances, he would invariably appear.

Mr. Benjamin's MS. is not very dissimilar to Mr. Irving's, and, like his, it has no doubt been greatly modified by the excitements of life, and by the necessity of writing much and hastily; so that we can predicate but little respecting it. It speaks of his exquisite sensibility and passion. These betray themselves in the nervous variation of the MS. as the subject is diversified. When the theme is an ordinary one, the writing is legible and has force, but when it verges upon anything which may be supposed to excite, we see the characters falter as they proceed. In the MSS. of some of his best poems this peculiarity is very remarkable. The signature conveys the idea of his *usual* chirography.

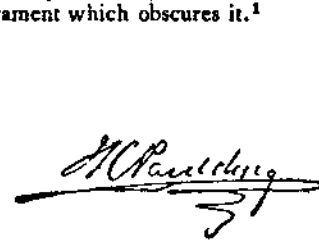


Mr. Kennedy is well known as the author of "Swallow Barn," "Horse-Shoe Robinson," and "Rob of the Bowl," three works whose features are strongly and decidedly marked. These features are boldness and force of thought, (disdaining ordinary embellishment, and depending for its effect upon

masses rather than upon details), with a predominant *sense of the picturesque* pervading and giving color to the whole. His "Swallow Barn," in especial (and it is by the first effort of an author that we form the truest idea of his mental bias), is but a rich succession of picturesque still-life pieces. Mr. Kennedy is well to do in the world, and has always taken the world easily. We may therefore expect to find in his chirography, if ever in any, a full indication of the chief feature of his literary style — especially as this chief feature is so remarkably prominent. A glance at his signature will convince any one that the indication *is* to be found. A painter called upon to designate the main peculiarity of this MS. would speak at once of the *picturesque*. This character is given it by the absence of hair-strokes, and by the abrupt termination of every letter without tapering; also in great measure by varying the size and slope of the letters. Great uniformity is preserved in the whole air of the MS., with great variety in the constituent parts. Every character has the clearness, boldness, and precision of a wood-cut. The long letters do not rise or fall in an undue degree above the others. Upon the whole, this is a hand which pleases us much, although its *bizarrerie* is rather too piquant for the general taste. Should its writer devote himself more exclusively to light letters, we predict his future eminence. The paper on which our epistles are written is very fine, clear, and *white*, with gilt edges. The seal is neat, and just sufficient wax has been used for the impression. All this betokens a love of the elegant without effeminacy.



The handwriting of GRENVILLE MELLEN is somewhat peculiar, and partakes largely of the character of his signature as seen above. The whole is highly indicative of the poet's flighty, hyper-fanciful character, with his unsettled and often erroneous ideas of the beautiful. His straining after effe is well paralleled in the formation of the prepost rous G in the signature, with the two dots by its side. Mr. Mellen has genius unquestionably, but there hing in his temperament which obscures it.[1]



No correct notion of Mr. PAULDING's literary peculiarities can be obtained from an inspection of his MS., which no doubt has been strongly modified by adventitious circumstances. His small *as*, *ts*, and *cs* are all alike, and the style of the characters generally is French, although the entire MS. has much the appearance of Greek text. The paper which he ordinarily uses is of a very fine glossy texture, and of a blue tint, with gilt edges. His signature is a good specimen of his general hand.

[1] Since this article was prepared for the press, we have been grieved to hear of the death of Mr. Mellen.

L. H. Sigourney.—

Mrs. SIGOURNEY seems to take much pains with her MSS. Apparently she employs *black lines*. Every *t* is crossed, and every *i* dotted, with precision, while the punctuation is faultless. Yet the whole has nothing of effeminacy [illegible] formality. The individual characters are large, well and freely formed, and preserve a perfect uniformit[illegible] throughout. Something in her handwriting [illegible] in mind of Mr. Paulding's. In both MSS. pe[illegible] regularity exists, and in both the style is *formed* [illegible] *decided*. Both are beautiful; yet Mrs. Sigourney's [illegible] the most legible, and Mr. Paulding's nearly the m[illegible] illegible in the world. From that of Mrs. S. we m[illegible]t easily form a true estimate of her compositions. [illegible]reedom, dignity, precision, and grace, without originality, may be properly attributed to her. She has fine taste, without genius. Her paper is usually good — the seal small, of green and gold wax, and without impression.

Robert Walsh

Mr. WALSH'S MS. is peculiar, from its large, sprawling and irregular appearance — rather rotund than angular. It always seems to have been hurriedly written. The *t*'s are crossed with a sweeping scratch of the pen, which gives to his epistles a somewhat

droll appearance. A *dictatorial* air pervades the whole. His paper is of ordinary quality. His seal is commonly of brown wax mingled with gold, and bears a Latin motto, of which only the words *trans* and *mortuus* are legible.

Mr. Walsh cannot be denied talent; but his reputation, which has been bolstered into being by a *clique*, is not a thing to live. A blustering self-conceit betrays itself in his chirography, which upon the whole, is not very dissimilar to that of Mr. E. Everett, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

Mr. Ingraham, or Ingrahame (for he writes his name sometimes with, and sometimes without the *e*,) is one of our most *popular* novelists, if not one of our best. He appeals always to the taste of the ultra-romanticists (as a matter, we believe, rather of pecuniary policy than of choice) and thus is obnoxious to the charge of a certain cut-and-thrust, blue-fire, melodramaticism. Still, he is capable of better things. His chirography is very unequal; at times sufficiently clear and flowing, at others, shockingly scratchy and uncouth. From it nothing whatever can be predicated, except an uneasy vacillation of temper and of purpose.

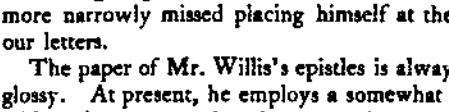
Mr. Bryant's MS. puts us entirely at fault. It is one of the most common-place clerk's hands which we ever encountered, and has no character about it beyond that of the day-book and ledger. He writes, in short, what mercantile men and professional penmen call a fair hand, but what artists would term an abominable one. Among its regular up and down strokes, waving lines and hair-lines, systematic taperings and flourishes, we look in vain for the force, polish, and decision of the poet. The *picturesque*, to be sure, is equally deficient in his chirography and in his poetical productions.

Mr. Halleck's hand is strikingly indicative of his genius. We see in it some force, more grace, and little of the picturesque. There is a great deal of freedom about it, and his MSS. seem to be written *currente calamo*, but without hurry. His flourishes, which are not many, look as if thoughtfully planned, and deliberately, yet firmly executed. His paper is very good, and of a blueish tint — his seal of red wax.

Mr. Willis, when writing carefully, would write a hand nearly resembling that of Mr. Halleck, although no similarity is perceptible in the signatures. His usual chirography is dashing, free, and not ungraceful, but is sadly deficient in force and picturesqueness.

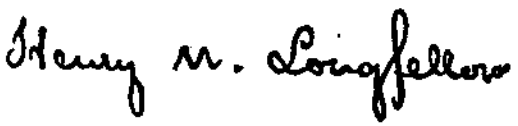
It has been the fate of this gentleman to be alternately condemned *ad infinitum*, and lauded *ad nauseam* — a fact which speaks much in his praise. We know of no American writer who has evinced greater versatility of talent; that is to say, of high talent, often amounting to genius, and we know of none who has more narrowly missed placing himself at the head of our letters.

The paper of Mr. Willis's epistles is always fine and glossy. At present, he employs a somewhat large seal, with a dove, or carrier-pigeon, at the top, the word "Glenmary" at bottom, and the initials "N. P. W." in the middle.



Mr. Dawes has been long known as a poet; but his claims are scarcely yet settled — his friends giving him rank with Bryant and Halleck, while his opponents treat his pretensions with contempt. The truth is, that the author of "Geraldine" and "Athenia of Damascus" has written occasional verses very well — so well, that some of his minor pieces may be con-

sidered equal to any of the minor pieces of either of the two gentlemen above-mentioned. His longer poems, however, will not bear examination. "Athenia of Damascus" is pompous nonsense, and "Geraldine" a most ridiculous imitation of Don Juan, in which the beauties of the original have been as sedulously avoided, as the blemishes have been blunderingly culled. In style, he is, perhaps, the most inflated, involved, and falsely-figurative of any of our more noted poets. This defect, of course, is only fully appreciable in what are termed his "sustained efforts," and thus his shorter pieces are often exceedingly good. His apparent erudition is mere verbiage, and, were it real, would be lamentably out of place where we see it. He seems to have been infected with a blind admiration of Coleridge — especially of his mysticism and cant.



H. W. Longfellow (Professor of Moral Philosophy at Harvard,) is entitled to the first place among the poets of America — certainly to the first place among those who have put themselves prominently forth as poets. His good qualities are all of the highest order, while his sins are chiefly those of affectation and imitation — an imitation sometimes verging upon downright theft.

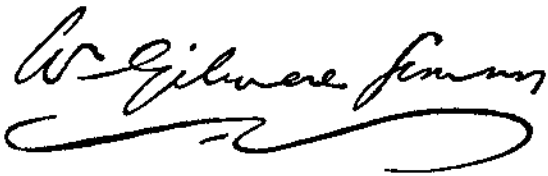
His MS. is remarkably good, and is fairly exemplified in the signature. We see here plain indications of the force, vigor, and glowing richness of his literary

style; the deliberate and steady *finish* of his compositions. The man who writes thus may not accomplish much, but what he does, will always be thoroughly done. The main beauty or at least one great beauty of his poetry, is that of *proportion*; another, is a freedom from extraneous embellishment. He oftener runs into affectation through his endeavors at simplicity, than through any other cause. Now this rigid simplicity and proportion are easily perceptible in the MS., which, altogether, is a very excellent one.

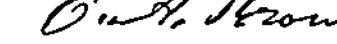
The Rev. J. Pierpont, who, of late, has attracted so much of the public attention, is one of the most accomplished poets in America. His "Airs of Palestine" is distinguished by the sweetness and vigor of its versification, and by the grace of its sentiments. Some of his shorter pieces are exceedingly terse and forcible, and none of our readers can have forgotten his Lines on Napoleon. His rhythm is at least equal in strength and modulation to that of any poet in America. Here he resembles Milman and Croly.

His chirography, nevertheless, indicates nothing beyond the common-place. It is an ordinary clerk's hand — one which is met with more frequently than any other. It is decidedly *formed*; and we have no doubt that he *never* writes otherwise than thus. The

MS. of his school-days has probably been persisted in to the last. If so, the fact is in full consonance with the steady precision of his style. The flourish at the end of the signature is but a part of the writer's general enthusiasm.



Mr. SIMMS is the author of "Martin Faber," "Atalantis," "Guy Rivers," "The Partisan," "Mellichampe," "The Yemassee," "The Damsel of Darien," "The Black Riders of the Congaree," and one or two other productions, among which we must not forget to mention several fine poems. As a poet, indeed, we like him far better than as a novelist. His qualities in this latter respect *resemble* those of Mr. Kennedy, although he equals him in no particular, except in his appreciation of the graceful. In his sense of beauty he is Mr. K.'s superior, but falls behind him in force, and the other attributes of the author of "Swallow Barn." These differences and resemblances are well shown in the MSS. That of Mr. S. has more slope, and more uniformity in detail, with less in the mass — while it has also less of the picturesque, although still much. The middle name is Gilmore; in the cut it looks like Gilm*ere*.



The Rev. Orestes A. Brownson is chiefly known to the literary world as the editor of the "Boston Quarterly Review," a work to which he contributes, each quarter, at least two-thirds of the matter. He has published little in book-form — his principal works being "Charles Elwood" and "New Views." Of these, the former production is, in many respects, one of the highest merit. In logical accuracy, in comprehensiveness of thought, and in the evident frankness and desire for truth in which it is composed, we know of few theological treatises which can be compared with it. Its conclusion, however, bears about it a species of hesitation and inconsequence, which betray the fact that the writer has not altogether succeeded in convincing himself of those important truths which he is so anxious to impress upon his readers. We must bear in mind, however, that this is the fault of Mr. Brownson's subject, and not of Mr. Brownson. However well a man may reason on the great topics of God and immortality, he will be forced to admit tacitly in the end, that God and immortality are things to be felt, rather than demonstrated.

On subjects less indefinite, Mr. B. reasons with the calm and convincing force of a Combe. He is, in every respect, an extraordinary man, and with the more extensive resources which would have been afforded him by early education, could not have failed to bring about important results.

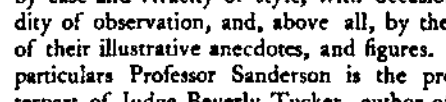
His MS. indicates, in the most striking manner, the unpretending simplicity, directness, and especially, the *indefatigability* of his mental character. His signature is more *petite* than his general chirography.

Judge Beverley Tucker, of the College of William and Mary, Virginia, is the author of one of the best novels ever published in America — "George Balcombe" — although for some reason the book was never a popular favorite. It was, perhaps, somewhat too didactic for the general taste.

He has written a great deal also for the Southern Literary Messenger, at different times; and, at one period acted in part, if not altogether, as editor of that Magazine, which is indebted to him for some very racy articles, in the way of criticism especially. He is apt, however, to be led away by personal feelings, and is more given to vituperation for the mere sake of *point* or pungency than is altogether consonant with his character as judge. Some five years ago there appeared in the "Messenger," under the editorial head, an article on the subject of the "Pickwick Papers" and some other productions of Mr. Dickens. This article, which abounded in well-written but extravagant denunciation of everything composed by the author of "The Curiosity Shop," and which prophesied his immediate downfall, we have reason to believe was from the pen of Judge Beverley Tucker. We take this opportunity of mentioning the subject, because the odium of the paper in question fell altogether upon our shoulders, and it is a burthen we are not disposed and never intended to bear. The review appeared in March, we think, and we had retired from the Messenger in the January preceding. About eighteen months previously, and when Mr. Dickens was scarcely known to the

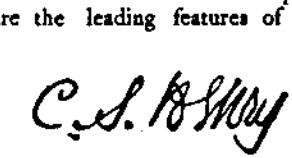
public at all, except as the author of some brief tales and essays, the writer of this article took occasion to predict in the Messenger, and in the most emphatic manner, that high and just distinction which the author in question has attained. Judge Tucker's MS. is diminutive, but neat and legible, and has much force and precision, with little of the picturesque. The care which he bestows upon his literary compositions makes itself manifest also in his chirography. The signature is more florid than the general hand.

Mr. Sanderson, Professor of the Greek and Latin languages in the High School of Philadelphia, is well known as the author of a series of letters entitled "The American in Paris." These are distinguished by ease and vivacity of style, with occasional profundity of observation, and, above all, by the frequency of their illustrative anecdotes, and figures. In all these particulars Professor Sanderson is the precise counterpart of Judge Beverly Tucker, author of "George Balcombe." The MSS. of the two gentlemen are nearly identical. Both are neat, clear, and legible. Mr. Sanderson's is somewhat the more crowded.

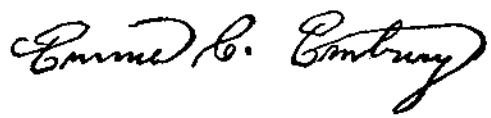


About Miss Gould's MS. there is great neatness, picturesqueness, and finish, without over-effeminacy.

The literary style of one who writes thus will always be remarkable for sententiousness and epigrammatism; and these are the leading features of Miss Gould's poetry.



Prof. HENRY, of Bristol College, is chiefly known by his contributions to our Quarterlies, and as one of the originators of the New York Review, in conjunction with Dr. Hawks and Professor Anthon. His chirography is now neat and picturesque, (much resembling that of Judge Tucker,) and now excessively scratchy, *clerky*, and slovenly — so that it is nearly impossible to say anything respecting it, except that it indicates a vacillating disposition, with unsettled ideas of the beautiful. None of his epistles, in regard to their chirography, end as well as they begin. This trait denotes *fatigability*. His signature, which is bold and decided, conveys not the faintest idea of the general MS.



Mrs. EMBURY is chiefly known by her contributions to the Periodicals of the country. She is one of the most nervous of our female writers, and is not destitute of originality — that rarest of all qualities in a woman, and especially in an American woman.

Her MS. evinces a strong disposition to fly off at a tangent from the old formulæ of the Boarding Acade-

mies. Both in it, and in her literary style, it would be well that she should no longer hesitate to discard the absurdities of mere fashion.

Wm. Landor.

Mr. Landor acquired much reputation as the author of "Stanley," a work which was warmly commended by the press throughout the country. He has also written many excellent papers for the Magazines. His chirography is usually *petite*, without hair-lines, close, and somewhat stiff. Many words are carefully erased. His epistles have always a rigorous formality about them. The whole is strongly indicative of his literary qualities. He is an elaborately careful, stiff, and pedantic writer, with much affectation and great talent. Should he devote himself ultimately to letters, he cannot fail of high success.

Eliza Leslie

Miss Leslie is celebrated for the homely naturalness of her stories and for the broad satire of her comic style. She has written much for the Magazines. Her chirography is distinguished for neatness and finish, without over-effeminacy. It is rotund, and somewhat diminutive; the letters being separate, and the words always finished with an inward twirl. She is never particular about the quality of her paper or the other externals of epistolary correspondence. From her

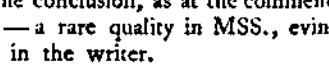
MSS. in general, we might suppose her solicitous rather about the effect of her compositions as a whole, than about the polishing of the constituent parts. There is much of the picturesque both in her chirography and in her literary style.

Mr. Neal has acquired a very extensive reputation through his "Charcoal Sketches," a series of papers originally written for the "Saturday News," of this city, and afterwards published in book form, with illustrations by Johnston. The whole design of the "Charcoal Sketches" may be stated as the depicting of the wharf and street *loafer;* but this design has been executed altogether in caricature. The extreme of burlesque runs throughout the work, which is, also, chargeable with a tedious repetition of slang and incident. The loafer always declaims the same nonsense, in the same style, gets drunk in the same way, and is taken to the watch-house after the same fashion. Reading one chapter of the book we read all. Any single description would have been an original idea well executed, but the dose is repeated *ad nauseam*, and betrays a woful poverty of invention. The manner in which Mr. Neal's book was belauded by his personal friends of the Philadelphia press, speaks little for their independence, or less for their taste. To dub the author of these "Charcoal Sketches" (which are really very excellent police-reports) with the title of "the American Boz," is either outrageous nonsense or malevolent irony.

In other respects, Mr. N. has evinced talents which cannot be questioned. He has conducted the "Pennsylvanian" with credit, and, as a political writer, he stands deservedly high. His MS. is simple and legible, with much space between the words. It has force, but little grace. Altogether, his chirography is good; but as he belongs to the editorial corps, it would not be just to suppose that any deductions in respect to character could be gleaned from it. His signature conveys the general MS. with accuracy.

Mr. Seba Smith has become somewhat widely celebrated as the author, in part, of the "Letters of Major Jack Downing." These were very clever productions; coarse, but full of fun, wit, sarcasm, and sense. Their manner rendered them exceedingly popular, until their success tempted into the field a host of brainless imitators. Mr. S. is also the author of several poems; among others, of "Powhatan, a Metrical Romance," which we do not very particularly admire. His MS. is legible, and has much simplicity about it. At times it vacillates, and appears unformed. Upon the whole, it is much such a MS. as David Crockett wrote, and precisely such a one as we might imagine would be written by a *veritable* Jack Downing; — by Jack Downing himself, had this creature of Mr. Smith's fancy been endowed with a real entity. The fact is that "The Major" is not *all* a creation; at least one-half of his character actually exists in the bosom of his originator. It was the Jack Downing half that composed "Powhatan."

Judge HOPKINSON's hand is forcible, neat, legible, and devoid of superfluity. The characters have much slope, and whole words are frequently run together. The lines are at equal distances, and a broad margin is at the left of the page, as is the case with the MSS. of Judge Marshall, and other jurists. The whole is too uniform to be picturesque. The writing is always as good at the conclusion, as at the commencement of the epistles — a rare quality in MSS., evincing *indefatigability* in the writer.



Lieutenant SLIDELL, some years ago, took the additional name of Mackenzie. His reputation at one period was extravagantly high — a circumstance owing, in some measure, to the *esprit de corps* of the navy, of which he is a member, and to his private influence, through his family, with the Review-cliques. Yet his fame was not altogether undeserved; although it cannot be denied that his first book, "A Year in Spain," was in some danger of being overlooked by his countrymen, until a benignant star directed the attention of the London Bookseller, Murray, to its merits. Cockney octavos prevailed; and the clever young writer, who was cut dead in his Yankee habiliments, met with bows innumerable in the gala dress of an English *imprimatur*. The work now ran through several editions, and prepared the public for the kind reception of "The American in England," which exalted his rep-

utation to its highest pinnacle. Both these books abound in racy description, but are chiefly remarkable for their gross deficiencies in grammatical construction.

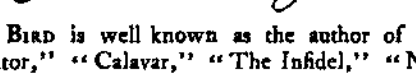
Lieut. Slidell's MS. is peculiarly neat and even — quite legible, but altogether too petite and effeminate. Few tokens of his literary character are to be found beyond the *petiteness*, which is exactly analogous with the minute detail of his descriptions.

Francis Lieber is Professor of History and Political Economy in the College of South Carolina, and has published many works distinguished by acumen and erudition. Among these we may notice a "Journal of a Residence in Greece," written at the instigation of the historian Niebuhr; "The Stranger in America," a piquant book abounding in various information relative to the United States; a treatise on "Education;" "Reminiscences of an intercourse with Niebuhr;" and an "Essay on International Copy-Right" — this last a valuable work.

Professor Lieber's personal character is that of the frankest and most unpretending *bonhomie*, while his erudition is rather massive than minute. We may therefore expect his MS. to differ widely from that of his brother scholar, Professor Anthon; and so in truth it does. His chirography is careless, heavy, black, and forcible, without the slightest attempt at ornament — very similar, upon the whole, to the well-known chirography of Chief Justice Marshall. His letters have the peculiarity of a wide margin left at the top of each page.

Mrs. HALE is well known for her masculine style of thought. This is clearly expressed in her chirography, which is far larger, heavier, and altogether bolder than that of her sex generally. It resembles in a great degree that of Professor Lieber, and is not easily deciphered.

Mr. EVERETT'S MS. is a noble one. It has about it an air of deliberate precision emblematic of the statesman, and a mingled grace and solidity betokening the scholar. Nothing can be more legible, and nothing need be more uniform. The man who writes thus will never grossly err in judgment, or otherwise; but we may also venture to say that he will never attain the loftiest pinnacle of renown. The letters before us have a seal of red wax, with an oval device bearing the initials E. E. and surrounded with a scroll, inscribed with some Latin words which are illegible.



Dr. BIRD is well known as the author of "The Gladiator," "Calavar," "The Infidel," "Nick of the Woods," and some other works — Calavar being,

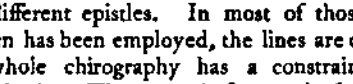
we think, by far the best of them, and beyond doubt one of the best of American novels.

His chirography resembles that of Mr. Benjamin very closely; the chief difference being in a curl of the final letters in Dr. B.'s. The characters, too, have the air of not being able to keep pace with the thought, and an uneasy want of finish seems to have been the consequence. A vivid imagination might easily be deduced from such a MS.

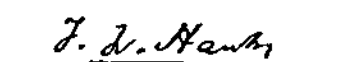
Mr. John Neal's MS. is exceedingly illegible and careless. Many of his epistles are perfect enigmas, and we doubt whether he could read them himself in half-an-hour after they are penned. Sometimes four or five words are run together. Any one, from Mr. Neal's penmanship, might suppose his mind to be what it really is — excessively flighty and irregular, but active and energetic.

The penmanship of Miss Sedgwick is excellent. The characters are well-sized, distinct, elegantly but not ostentatiously formed, and with perfect freedom of manner, are still sufficiently feminine. The hair-strokes differ little from the downward ones, and the MSS. have thus a uniformity they might not otherwise have. The paper she generally uses is good,

blue, and machine-ruled. Miss Sedgwick's handwriting points unequivocally to the traits of her literary style — which are strong common sense, and a masculine disdain of mere ornament. The signature conveys the general chirography.



Mr. Cooper's MS. is very bad — *unformed*, with little of distinctive character about it, and varying greatly in different epistles. In most of those before us a steel pen has been employed, the lines are crooked, and the whole chirography has a constrained and school-boyish air. The paper is fine, and of a blueish tint. A wafer is always used. Without appearing ill-natured, we could scarcely draw any inferences from such a MS. Mr. Cooper has seen many vicissitudes, and it is probable that he has not always written thus. Whatever are his faults, his genius cannot be doubted.



Dr. Hawks is one of the originators of the "New York Review," to which journal he has furnished many articles. He is also known as the author of the "History of the Episcopal Church of Virginia," and one or two minor works. He now edits the "Church Record." His style, both as a writer and as a preacher, is characterized rather by a perfect *fluency* than by any more lofty quality, and this trait is strikingly indicated in his chirography, of which the signature is a fair specimen.

Henry Wm Herbert

This gentleman is the author of "Cromwell," "The Brothers," "Ringwood, the Rover," and some other minor productions. He at one time edited the "American Monthly Magazine," in connection with Mr. Hoffman. In his compositions for the Magazines, Mr. HERBERT is in the habit of doing both them and himself gross injustice by neglect and hurry. His longer works evince much ability, although he is rarely entitled to be called original. His MS. is exceedingly neat, clear and forcible, the signature affording a just idea of it. It resembles that of Mr. Kennedy very nearly; but has more slope and uniformity, with, of course, less spirit, and less of the picturesque. He who writes as Mr. Herbert, will be found always to depend chiefly upon his merits of *style* for a literary reputation, and will not be unapt to fall into a pompous grandiloquence. The author of "Cromwell" is sometimes wofully turgid.

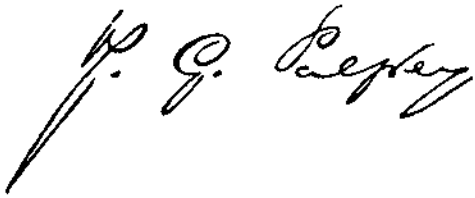
C. H. Waterman

Mrs. ESLING, formerly Miss Waterman, has attracted much attention, of late years, by the tenderness and melody of her short poems. She deserves *nearly* all the commendation which she has received. Her MS. would generally be considered beautiful; but formed, like that of most of her sex, upon a regular school-model, it is, of course, not in the slightest degree indicative of character.

E. F. Ellet

Mrs. E. F. Ellet has published one or two books, exclusively of a volume of poems, but is chiefly known to the literary world by her numerous contributions to the Magazines. As a translator from the Italian, she has acquired an enviable reputation. Her hand, of which the signature above scarcely conveys a full idea, is clear, neat, forcible and legible; just such a hand as one would desire for copying MSS. of importance. We have observed that the writers of such epistles as those before us, are often known as translators, but seldom evince high originality or very eminent talent of any kind.

Judge Noah has written several plays which took very well in their time, and also several essays and other works, giving evidence of no ordinary learning and penetration on certain topics — chiefly connected with Israelitish history. He is better known, however, from the wit and universal *bonhomie* of his editorial paragraphs. His peculiar traits of character may be traced in his writing, which has about it a free, rolling, and open air. His lines are never straight, and the letters taper too much to please the eye of an artist, and have now and then a twirl, like the tail of a pig, which gives to the whole MS. an indescribably quizzical appearance, and one altogether in consonance with the general notion respecting the quondam Major, and present Judge, than whom no man has more friends or fewer enemies.



Professor PALFREY is known to the public principally through his editorship of the "North American Review." He has a reputation for scholarship; and many of the articles which are attributed to his pen evince that his reputation is well based, so far as the common notion of scholarship extends. For the rest, he seems to dwell altogether within the narrow world of his *own* conceptions; imprisoning them by the very barrier which he has erected against the conceptions of others.

His MS. shows a total deficiency in the sense of the beautiful. It has great pretension — great straining after effect, but is altogether one of the most miserable MSS. in the world — forceless, graceless, tawdry, vacillating and unpicturesque. The signature conveys but a faint idea of its extravagance. However much we may admire the mere *knowledge* of the man who writes thus, it will not do to place any dependence upon his wisdom or upon his taste.

This article will be concluded in our next number, and will embrace the autograph of every writer of note in America.

A CHAPTER ON AUTOGRAPHY

BY

II.

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, December, 1841.]

[In this, our second "Chapter on Autography," we conclude the article and the year together. When we say that so complete a collection has never been published before, we assert only that which is obvious; and we are pleased to see that our exertions upon this head have been well received. As we claim only the sorry merit of the compiler, we shall be permitted to say that no Magazine paper has ever excited greater interest than the one now concluded. To all readers it has seemed to be welcome — but especially to those who themselves dabble in the waters of Helicon: — to those and their innumerable friends. The diligence required in getting together these autographs has been a matter of no little moment, and the expense of the whole undertaking will be at once comprehended; but we intend the article merely as an earnest of what we shall do next year. Our aim shall be to furnish our friends with variety, originality, and *piquancy*, without any regard to labor or to cost. — *Poe's Note.*]

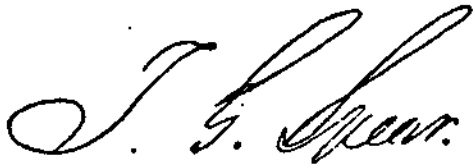
F. W. Thomas, who began his literary career at the early age of seventeen, by a poetical lampoon upon certain Baltimore fops, has since more particularly distinguished himself as a novelist. His "Clinton Bradshaw" is perhaps better known than any of his

later fictions. It is remarkable for a frank, unscrupulous portraiture of men and things, in high life and low, and by unusual discrimination and observation in respect to character. Since its publication he has produced "East and West" and "Howard Pinckney," neither of which seems to have been so popular as his first essay; although both have merit.

"East and West," published in 1836, was an attempt to portray the every-day events occurring to a fallen family emigrating from the East to the West. In it, as in "Clinton Bradshaw," most of the characters are drawn from life. "Howard Pinckney" was published in 1840.

Mr. Thomas was, at one period, the editor of the Cincinnati "Commercial Advertiser." He is also well known as a public lecturer on a variety of topics. His conversational powers are very great. As a poet, he has also distinguished himself. His "Emigrant" will be read with pleasure by every person of taste.

His MS. is more like that of Mr. Benjamin than that of any other literary person of our acquaintance. It has even more than the occasional nervousness of Mr. B.'s, and, as in the case of the editor of the "New World," indicates the passionate sensibility of the man.



Thomas G. Spear is the author of various poetical pieces which have appeared from time to time in our

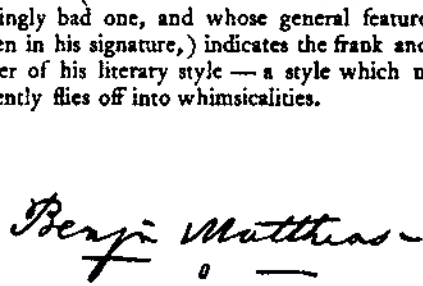
Magazines and other periodicals. His productions have been much admired, and are distinguished for pathos and grace. His MS. is well shown in the signature. It is too *clerky* for our taste.

Mr. Morris ranks, we believe, as the first of our Philadelphia poets since the death of Willis Gaylord Clark. His compositions, like those of his late lamented friend, are characterised by sweetness rather than strength of versification, and by tenderness and delicacy rather than by vigor or originality of thought. A late notice of him in the "Boston Notion" from the pen of Rufus W. Griswold, did his high qualities no more than justice. As a prose writer, he is chiefly known by his editorial contributions to the Philadelphia "Inquirer," and by occasional essays for the Magazines.

His chirography is usually very illegible, although at times sufficiently distinct. It has no marked characteristics, and like that of almost every editor in the country, has been so modified by the circumstances of his position, as to afford no certain indication of the mental features.

Ezra Holden has written much, not only for his paper, "The Saturday Courier," but for our periodicals generally, and stands high in the public estimation, as a sound thinker, and still more particularly as a fearless expresser of his thoughts.

His MS. (which we are constrained to say is a shockingly bad one, and whose general features may be seen in his signature,) indicates the frank and naïve manner of his literary style — a style which not unfrequently flies off into whimsicalities.



Mr. Matthias is principally known by his editorial conduct of the "Saturday Chronicle" of Philadelphia, to which he has furnished much entertaining and instructive matter. His MS. would be generally termed a fine one, but it affords little indication of mental character.

Mr. Graham is known to the literary world as the editor and proprietor of "Graham's Magazine," the most popular periodical in America, and also of the "Saturday Evening Post," of Philadelphia. For both of these journals he has written much and well.

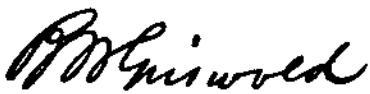
His MS. generally, is very bad, or at least very illegible. At times it is sufficiently distinct, and has force and picturesqueness, speaking plainly of the *energy* which particularly distinguishes him as a man. The signature above is more scratchy than usual.

Colonel Stone, the editor of the New York "Commercial Advertiser," is remarkable for the great difference which exists between the apparent public opinion respecting his abilities, and the real estimation in which he is privately held. Through his paper, and a bustling activity always prone to thrust itself forward, he has attained an unusual degree of influence in New York, and, not only this, but what appears to be a reputation for talent. But this talent we do not remember ever to have heard assigned him by any honest man's private opinion. We place him among our *literati*, because he has published certain books. Perhaps the best of these are his "Life of Brandt," and

"Life and Times of Red Jacket." Of the rest, his story called "Ups and Downs," his defence of Animal Magnetism, and his pamphlets concerning Maria Monk, are scarcely the most absurd. His MS. is heavy and sprawling, resembling his mental character in a species of utter unmeaningness, which lies like the nightmare, upon his autograph.

The labors of Mr. Sparks, Professor of History at Harvard, are well known and justly appreciated. His MS. has an unusually odd appearance. The characters are large, round, black, irregular, and perpendicular — the signature, as above, being an excellent specimen of his chirography in general. In all his letters now before us, the lines are as close together as possible, giving the idea of irretrievable confusion; still none of them are illegible upon close inspection. We can form no guess in regard to any mental peculiarities from Mr. Sparks' MS., which has been no doubt modified by the hurrying and intricate nature of his researches. We might imagine such epistles as these to have been written in extreme haste, by a man exceedingly busy, among great piles of books and papers huddled up around him, like the chaotic tomes of Magliabecchi. The paper used in all our epistles is uncommonly fine.

The name of H. S. LEGARE is written without an accent on the final *e*, yet is pronounced as if this letter were accented, — Legray. He contributed many articles of high merit to the "Southern Review," and has a wide reputation for scholarship and talent. His MS. resembles that of Mr. Palfrey of the "North American Review," and their mental features appear to us nearly identical. What we have said in regard to the chirography of Mr. Palfrey will apply with equal force to that of the present Secretary.



Mr. GRISWOLD has written much, but chiefly in the editorial way, whether for the papers, or in books. He is a gentleman of fine taste and sound judgment. His knowledge of American literature, in all its details, is not exceeded by that of any man among us. He is not only a polished prose-writer, but a poet of no ordinary power; although, as yet, he has not put himself much in the way of the public admiration.

His MS. is by no means a good one. It appears unformed, and vacillates in a singular manner; so that nothing can be predicated from it, except a certain unsteadiness of purpose.

Mr. George Lunt of Newburyport, Massachusetts, is known as a poet of much vigour of style and massiveness of thought. He delights in the grand, rather than in the beautiful, and is not unfrequently turgid, but never feeble. The traits here described impress themselves with remarkable distinctness upon his chirography, of which the signature gives a perfect idea.

Mr. Chandler's reputation as the editor of one of the best daily papers in the country, and as one of our finest *belles lettres* scholars, is deservedly high. He is well known through his numerous addresses, essays, miscellaneous sketches, and prose tales. Some of these latter evince imaginative powers of a superior order.

His MS. is not fairly shown in his signature, the latter being much more open and bold than his general chirography. His handwriting must be included in the editorial category — it seems to have been ruined by habitual hurry.

Count L. Fitzgerald Tasistro has distinguished himself by many contributions to the periodical literature of the day, and by his editorial conduct of the "Expositor,"—a critical journal of high merit in many respects, although somewhat given to verbiage.

His MS. is remarkable for a scratchy diminutiveness, and is by no means legible. We are not sufficiently cognizant of the literary character, to draw any parallel between it and his chirography. His signature is certainly a most remarkable one.

H. T. Tuckerman has written one or two books consisting of "Sketches of Travel." His "Isabel" is, perhaps, better known than any of his other productions, but was never a popular work. He is a *correct* writer so far as mere English is concerned, but an insufferably tedious and dull one. He has contributed much of late days to the "Southern Literary Messenger," with which journal, perhaps, the legibility of his MS. has been an important, if not the principal recommendation. His chirography is neat and distinct, and has some grace, but no force—evincing, in a remakable degree, the idiosyncrasies of the writer.

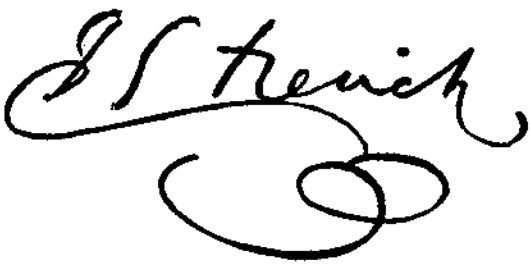
Mr. Bryan has written some very excellent poetry, and is appreciated by all admirers of "the good old Goldsmith school." He is, at present, postmaster at Alexandria, and has held office for many years, with all the good fortune of a Vicar of Bray.

His MS. is a free, sloping, and regular one, with more boldness than force, and not ungraceful. He is fond of *underscoring* his sentences; a habit exactly parallel with the augmentative nature of some of his best poems.

Mr. Godey is only known to the literary world as editor and publisher of "The Lady's Book," but his celebrity in this regard entitles him to a place in this collection. His MS. is remarkably distinct and graceful; the signature affording an excellent idea of it. The man who invariably writes so well as Mr. G. invariably does, gives evidence of a fine taste, combined with an indefatigability which will ensure his permanent success in the world's affairs. No man has warmer friends or fewer enemies.

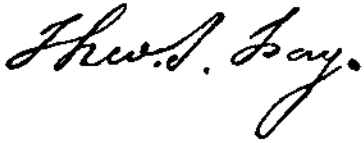
Mr. Du Solle is well known through his connection with the "Spirit of the Times." His prose is forcible, and often excellent in other respects. As a poet, he is entitled to higher consideration. Some of his Pindaric pieces are unusually good, and it may be doubted if we have a better *versifier* in America.

Accustomed to the daily toil of an editor, he has contracted a habit of writing hurriedly, and his MS. varies with the occasion. It is impossible to deduce any inferences from it, as regards the mental character. The signature shows rather how he can write than how he does.



Mr. French is the author of a "Life of David Crockett," and also of a novel called "Elkswatawa," a denunciatory review of which, in the "Southern Messenger," some years ago, deterred him from fur-

ther literary attempts. Should he write again, he will probably distinguish himself, for he is unquestionably a man of talent. We need no better evidence of this than his MS., which speaks of force, boldness, and originality. The flourish, however, betrays a certain *floridity* of taste.



The author of "Norman Leslie" and "The Countess Ida" has been more successful as an essayist about small matters, than as a novelist. "Norman Leslie" is more familiarly remembered as "The Great Used Up," while "The Countess" made no definite impression whatever. Of course we are not to expect remarkable features in Mr. Fay's MS. It has a wavering, finicky, and over-delicate air, without pretension to either grace or force; and the description of the chirography would answer, without alteration, for that of the literary character. Mr. F. frequently employs an amanuensis, who writes a very beautiful French hand. The one must not be confounded with the other.

Dr. Mitchell has published several pretty songs which have been set to music, and become popular. He has also given to the world a volume of poems, of

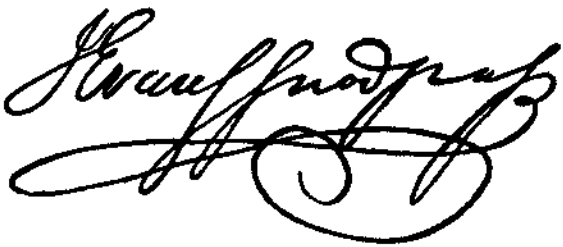
which the longest was remarkable for an old-fashioned polish and vigor of versification. His MS. is rather graceful than picturesque or forcible — and these words apply equally well to his poetry in general. The signature indicates the hand.

General Morris has composed many songs which have taken fast hold upon the popular taste, and which are deservedly celebrated. He has caught the true *tone* for these things, and hence his popularity — a popularity which his enemies would fain make us believe is altogether attributable to his editorial influence. The charge is true only in a measure. The tone of which we speak is that kind of frank, free, hearty *sentiment* (rather than philosophy) which distinguishes Béranger, and which the critics, for want of a better term, call *nationality*.

His MS. is a simple unornamental hand, rather rotund than angular, very legible, forcible, and altogether in keeping with his style.

Mr. Calvert was at one time principal editor of the "Baltimore American," and wrote for that journal some good paragraphs on the common topics of the day. He has also published many translations from

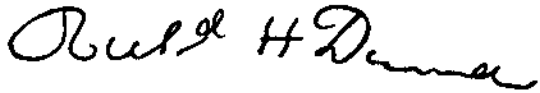
the German, and one or two original poems — among others an imitation of Don Juan called "Pelayo," which did him no credit. He is essentially a feeble and common-place writer of poetry, although his prose compositions have a certain degree of merit. His chirography indicates the "common-place" upon which we have commented. It is a very usual, scratchy, and tapering clerk's hand — a hand which no man of talent ever did or could indite, unless compelled by circumstances of more than ordinary force. The signature is far better than the general manuscript of his epistles.



Dr. Snodgrass was at one time the associate of Mr. Brooks in the "Baltimore Museum," a monthly journal published in the City of Monuments some years since. He wrote for that Magazine, and has occasionally written for others, articles which possessed the merit of precision of style, and a metaphysical cast of thought. We like his prose much better than his poetry. His chirography is bad — stiff, sprawling and illegible, with frequent corrections and interlineations, evincing inactivity not less than fastidiousness. The signature betrays a meretricious love of effect.

Mr. McJilton is better known from his contributions to the journals of the day than from any book-publications. He has much talent, and it is not improbable that he will hereafter distinguish himself, although as yet he has not composed anything of length which, as a whole, can be styled good. His MS. is not unlike that of Dr. Snodgrass, but it is somewhat clearer and better. We can predicate little respecting it beyond a love of exaggeration and *bizarrerie*.

Mr. Gallagher is chiefly known as a poet. He is the author of some of our most popular songs, and has written many long pieces of high but unequal merit. He has the true spirit, and will rise into a just distinction hereafter. His manuscript tallies well with our opinion. It is a very fine one, — clear, bold, decided and picturesque. The signature above does not convey, in full force, the general character of his chirography, which is more rotund, and more decidedly placed upon the paper.



Mr. Dana ranks among our most eminent poets, and he has been the frequent subject of comment in our Reviews. He has high qualities, undoubtedly, but his defects are many and great.

His MS. resembles that of Mr. Gallagher very nearly, but is somewhat more rolling, and has less boldness and decision. The literary traits of the two gentlemen are very similar, although Mr. Dana is by far the more polished writer, and has a scholarship which Mr. Gallagher wants.

Mr. McMichael is well known to the Philadelphia public by the number and force of his prose compositions, but he has seldom been tempted into book publication. As a poet, he has produced some remarkably vigorous things. We have seldom seen a finer composition than a certain celebrated "Monody."

His MS., when not hurried, is graceful and flowing, without picturesqueness. At times it is totally illegible. His chirography is one of those which have been so strongly modified by circumstances that it is nearly impossible to predicate any thing with certainty respecting them.

Mr. N. C. Brooks has acquired some reputation as a Magazine writer. His serious prose is often very good — is always well-worded — but in his comic attempts he fails, without appearing to be aware of his failure. As a poet he has succeeded far better. In a work which he entitled "Scriptural Anthology" among many inferior compositions of length, there were several shorter pieces of great merit; — for example "Shelley's Obsequies" and "The Nicthanthes." [1] Of late days we have seen little from his pen.

His MS. has much resemblance to that of Mr. Bryant, although altogether it is a better hand, with much more freedom and grace. With care Mr. Brooks can write a fine MS. just as with care he can compose a fine poem.

The Rev. Thomas H. Stockton has written many pieces of fine poetry, and has lately distinguished himself as the editor of the "Christian World."

His MS. is fairly represented by his signature, and bears much resemblance to that of Mr. N. C. Brooks of Baltimore. Between these two gentlemen there

[1] Nyctanthes?

exists also, a remarkable similarity, not only of thought, but of personal bearing and character. We have already spoken of the peculiarities of Mr. B.'s chirography.

Mr. Thomson has written many short poems, and some of them possess merit. They are characterised by tenderness and grace. His MS. has some resemblance to that of Professor Longfellow, and by many persons would be thought a finer hand. It is clear, legible, and open — what is called a rolling hand. It has too much tapering, and too much variation between the weight of the hair strokes and the downward ones, to be forcible or picturesque. In all those qualities which we have pointed out as especially distinctive of Professor Longfellow's MS. it is remarkably deficient; and, in fact, the literary character of no two individuals could be more radically different.

The Reverend W. E. Channing is at the head of our moral and didactic writers. His reputation both at home and abroad is deservedly high, and in regard

to the matters of purity, polish and modulation of style, he may be said to have attained the dignity of a standard and a classic. He has, it is true, been severely criticised, even in respect to these very points, by the Edinburgh Review. The critic, however, made out his case but lamely, and proved nothing beyond his own incompetence. To detect occasional, or even frequent inadvertences in the way of bad grammar, faulty construction, or mis-usage of language, is not to prove impurity of *style* — a word which happily has a bolder signification than any dreamed of by the Zoilus of the Review in question. Style regards, more than anything else, the *tone* of a composition. All the rest is not unimportant, to be sure, but appertains to the minor morals of literature, and can be learned by rote by the meanest simpletons in letters — can be carried to its highest excellence by dolts, who, upon the whole, are despicable as stylists. Irving's style is inimitable in its grace and delicacy; yet few of our practised writers are guilty of more frequent inadvertences of language. In what may be termed his mere English, he is surpassed by fifty whom we could name. Mr. Tuckerman's English, on the contrary, is sufficiently pure, but a more lamentable style than that of his "Sicily" it would be difficult to point out.

Besides those peculiarities which we have already mentioned as belonging to Dr. Channing's style, we must not fail to mention a certain calm, broad deliberateness which constitutes *force* in its highest character, and approaches to majesty. All these traits will be found to exist plainly in his chirography, the character of which is exemplified by the signature, although this is somewhat larger than the general manuscript.

Mr. WILMER has written and published much; but he has reaped the usual fruits of a spirit of independence, and has thus failed to make that impression on the *popular* mind which his talents, under other circumstances, would have effected. But better days are in store for him, and for all who "hold to the right way," despising the yelpings of the small dogs of our literature. His prose writings have all merit — always the merit of a chastened style. But he is more favorably known by his poetry, in which the student of the British classics will find much for warm admiration. We have few better versifiers than Mr. Wilmer.

His chirography plainly indicates the cautious polish and terseness of his style, but the signature does not convey the print-like appearance of the MS.

Mr. Dow is distinguished as the author of many fine sea-pieces, among which will be remembered a series of papers called "The Log of Old Ironsides." His land sketches are not generally so good. He has a fine imagination, which as yet is undisciplined, and leads him into occasional bombast. As a poet he has done better things than as a writer of prose.

His MS., which has been strongly modified by circumstances, gives no indication of his true character, literary or moral.

Mr. Weld is well known as the present working editor of the New York "Tattler" and "Brother Jonathan." His attention was accidentally directed to literature about ten years ago, after a minority, to use his own words, "spent at sea, in a store, in a machine shop, and in a printing-office." He is now, we believe, about thirty-one years of age. His deficiency of what is termed regular education would scarcely be gleaned from his editorials, which, in general, are unusually well written. His "Corrected Proofs" is a work which does him high credit, and which has been extensively circulated, although "printed at odd times by himself, when he had nothing else to do."

His MS. resembles that of Mr. Joseph C. Neal in many respects, but is less open and less legible. His signature is altogether much better than his general chirography.

Mr. McMakin is one of the editors of the "Philadelphia Saturday Courier," and has given to the world several excellent specimens of his poetical ability. His MS. is clear and graceful; the signature affording a very good idea of it. The general hand, in fact, is fully as good.

M. St. Leon Loud

Mrs. M. St. Leon Loud is one of the finest poets of this country; possessing, we think, more of the true divine *afflatus* than any of her female contemporaries. She has, in especial, *imagination* of no common order, and unlike many of her sex whom we could mention, is not

Content to dwell in decencies forever.

While she *can*, upon occasion, compose the ordinary metrical sing-song with all the decorous proprieties which are in fashion, she yet ventures very frequently into a more ethereal region. We refer our readers to a truly beautiful little poem entitled the "Dream of the Lonely Isle," lately published in this Magazine.

Mrs. Loud's MS. is exceedingly clear, neat and forcible, with just sufficient effeminacy and no more.

Pliny Earle.

Dr. Pliny Earle, of Frankford, Pa., has not only distinguished himself by several works of medical and general science, but has become well known to the literary world, of late, by a volume of very fine poems, the longest, but by no means the best of which, was entitled "Marathon." This latter is not greatly inferior to the "Marco Bozzaris" of Halleck; while some of the minor pieces equal any American poems. His chirography is peculiarly neat and beautiful, giving indication of the elaborate finish which characterises his compositions. The signature conveys the general hand.

Dr. JOHN C. MCCABE, of Richmond, Virginia, has written much and generally well, in prose and poetry, for the periodicals of the day — for the "Southern Literary Messenger" in especial, and other journals.

His MS. is in every respect a bad one — an ordinary clerk's hand, meaning nothing. It has been strongly modified, however, by circumstances which would scarcely have permitted it to be otherwise than it is.

JOHN TOMLIN, Esq., Postmaster at Jackson, Tennessee, has contributed many excellent articles to the periodicals of the day — among others to the "Gentleman's" and to "Graham's" Magazine, and to several of the Southern and Western Journals.

His chirography resembles that of Mr. Paulding in being at the same time very *petite*, very beautiful, and very illegible. His MSS., in being equally well written throughout, evince the indefatigability of his disposition.

DAVID HOFFMAN, Esq., of Baltimore, has not only contributed much and well to monthly Magazines and Reviews, but has given to the world several valuable publications in book form. His style is terse, pungent, and otherwise excellent, although disfigured by a half comic half serious pedantry.

His MS. has about it nothing strongly indicative of character.

S. D. LANGTREE, has been long and favorably known to the public as editor of the "Georgetown Metropolitan," and, more lately, of the "Democratic Review," both of which journals he has conducted with distinguished success. As a critic he has proved himself just, bold and acute, while his prose compositions generally, evince the man of talent and taste.

His MS. is not remarkably good, being somewhat too scratchy and tapering. We include him, of course, in the editorial category.

Judge CONRAD occupies, perhaps, the first place among our Philadelphia *literati*. He has distinguished

himself both as a prose writer and a poet — not to speak of his high legal reputation. He has been a frequent contributor to the periodicals of this city, and, we believe, to one at least of the Eastern Reviews. His first production which attracted general notice was a tragedy entitled "Conrad, King of Naples." It was performed at the Arch Street Theatre, and elicited applause from the more judicious. This play was succeeded by "Jack Cade," performed at the Walnut Street Theatre, and lately modified and reproduced under the title of "Aylmere." In its new dress, this drama has been one of the most successful ever written by an American, not only attracting crowded houses, but extorting the good word of our best critics. In occasional poetry Judge Conrad has also done well. His lines "On a Blind Boy Soliciting Charity" have been greatly admired, and many of his other pieces evince ability of a high order. His political fame is scarcely a topic for these pages, and is, moreover, too much a matter of common observation to need comment from us.

His MS. is neat, legible, and forcible, evincing combined caution and spirit in a very remarkable degree.

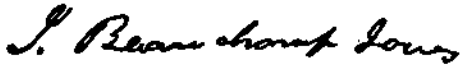
J. Q. Adams.

The chirography of Ex-President Adams (whose poem, "The Wants of Man," has, of late, attracted so much attention,) is remarkable for a certain steadiness of purpose pervading the whole, and overcoming even the constitutional tremulousness of the writer's hand. Wavering in every letter, the entire MS. has yet a firm, regular, and decisive appearance. It is also very legible.

P. P. Cooke, Esq., of Winchester, Virginia, is well known, especially in the South, as the author of numerous excellent contributions to the "Southern Literary Messenger." He has written some of the finest poetry of which America can boast. A little piece of his, entitled "Florence Vane," and contributed to the "Gentleman's Magazine" of this city, during our editorship of that journal, was remarkable for the high ideality it evinced, and for the great delicacy and melody of its rhythm. It was universally admired and copied, as well here as in England. We saw it not long ago, *as original*, in Bentley's Miscellany. Mr. Cooke has, we believe, nearly ready for press a novel called "Maurice Werterbern," whose success we predict with confidence. His MS. is clear, forcible, and legible, but disfigured by some little of that affectation which is scarcely a blemish in his literary style.

Prof. Thomas R. Dew, of William and Mary College in Virginia, was one of the able contributors who aided to establish the "Southern Literary Messenger" in the days of its *début*. His MS. is precisely in keeping with his literary character. Both are heavy, massive, unornamented and *diffuse* in the extreme.

His epistles seemed to have been scrawled with the stump of a quill dipped in very thick ink, and one or two words extend sometimes throughout a line. The signature is more compact than the general MS.

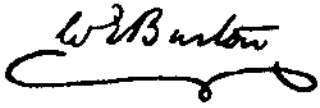


Mr. J. Beauchamp Jones has been, we believe, connected for many years past with the lighter literature of Baltimore, and at present edits the "Baltimore Saturday Visiter," with much judgment and general ability. He is the author of a series of papers of high merit now in course of publication in the "Visiter," and entitled "Wild Western Scenes."

His MS. is distinct, and might be termed a fine one; but is somewhat too much in consonance with the ordinary clerk style to be either graceful or forcible.

Mr. Charles J. Peterson has for a long time been connected with the periodical literature of Philadelphia, as one of the editors of "Graham's Magazine" and of "The Saturday Evening Post."

His MS., when unhurried, is a very good one — clear, weighty, and picturesque; but when carelessly written is nearly illegible, on account of a too slight variation of form in the short letters.



Mr. Burton is better known as a comedian than as a literary man; but he has written many short prose articles of merit, and his quondam editorship of the "Gentleman's Magazine" would, at all events, entitle him to a place in this collection. He has, moreover, published one or two books. An annual issued by Carey and Hart in 1840, consisted entirely of prose contributions from himself, with poetical ones from Charles West Thompson, Esq. In this work many of the tales were good.

Mr. Burton's MS. is scratchy and petite, betokening indecision and care or caution. The whole chirography resembles that of Mr. Tasistro very nearly.

Richard Henry Wilde, Esq., of Georgia, has acquired much reputation as a poet, and especially as the author of a little piece entitled "My Life is like the Summer Rose," whose claim to originality has been made the subject of repeated and reiterated attack and defence. Upon the whole it is hardly worth quarrelling about. Far better verses are to be found in every second newspaper we take up. Mr. Wilde

has also lately published, or is about to publish, a "Life of Tasso," for which he has been long collecting material.

His MS. has all the peculiar sprawling and elaborate tastelessness of Mr. Palfrey's, to which altogether it bears a marked resemblance. The love of effect, however, is more perceptible in Mr. Wilde's than even in Mr. Palfrey's.

G. G. Foster, Esq., has acquired much reputation, especially in the South and West, by his poetical contributions to the literature of the day. All his articles breathe the true spirit. At one period he edited a weekly paper in Alabama; more lately the "Bulletin" at St. Louis; and, at present, he conducts the "Pennant," in that city, with distinguished ability. Not long ago he issued the prospectus of a monthly magazine. Should he succeed in getting the journal under way, there can be no doubt of his success.

His MS. is remarkably clear and graceful; evincing a keen sense of the beautiful. It seems, however, to be somewhat deficient in force; and his letters are never so well written in their conclusion as in their commencement. We have before remarked that this peculiarity in MSS. is a sure indication of *fatigability* of temper. Few men who write thus are free from a certain vacillation of purpose. The signature above is rather heavier than that from which it was copied.

Lewis Cass, the Ex-Secretary of War, has distinguished himself as one of the finest *belles-lettres* scholars of America. At one period he was a very regular contributor to the "Southern Literary Messenger," and even lately he has furnished that journal with one or two very excellent papers.

His MS. is clear, deliberate, and statesmanlike; resembling that of Edward Everett very closely. It is not often that we see a letter written altogether by himself. He generally employs an amanuensis, whose chirography does not differ materially from his own, but is somewhat more regular.

Mr. James Brooks enjoys rather a private than a public literary reputation; but his talents are unquestionably great, and his productions have been numerous and excellent. As the author of many of the celebrated Jack Downing letters, and as the reputed author of the whole of them, he would at all events be entitled to a place among our *literati*.

His chirography is simple, clear and legible, with little grace and less boldness. These traits are precisely true of his literary style.

Jack Downing

As the authorship of the Jack Downing letters is even still considered by many a moot point, (although in fact there should be no question about it,) and as we have already given the signature of Mr. Seba Smith, and (just above) of Mr. Brooks, we now present our readers with a facsimile signature of the "*veritable Jack*" himself, written by him individually in our own bodily presence. Here, then, is an opportunity of comparison.

The chirography of "the veritable Jack" is a very good, honest sensible hand, and not very dissimilar to that of Ex-President Adams.

J. R. Lowell.

Mr. J. R. Lowell, of Massachusetts, is entitled, in our opinion, to at least the second or third place among the poets of America. We say this on account of the vigor of his *imagination* — a faculty to be first considered in all criticism upon poetry. In this respect he surpasses, we think, any of our writers (at least any of those who have put themselves prominently forth as poets) with the exception of Longfellow, and perhaps one other. His ear for rhythm, nevertheless, is imperfect, and he is very far from possessing the artistic ability of either Longfellow, Bryant, Halleck, Sprague, or Pierpont. The reader desirous of properly estimating the powers of Mr. Lowell will find a very beautiful little poem from his pen in the October

number of this Magazine. There is one also (not quite so fine) in the number for last month. He will contribute regularly.

His MS. is strongly indicative of the vigor and precision of his poetical thought. The man who writes thus, for example, will never be guilty of metaphorical extravagance, and there will be found *terseness* as well as strength in all that he does.

Mr. L. J. Cist, of Cincinnati, has not written much prose, and is known especially by his poetical compositions, many of which have been very popular, although they are at times disfigured by false metaphor, and by a meretricious straining after effect. This latter foible makes itself clearly apparent in his chirography, which abounds in ornamental flourishes, not illy executed, to be sure, but in very bad taste.

Mr. Arthur is not without a rich talent for description of scenes in low life, but is uneducated, and too fond of mere vulgarities to please a refined taste. He has published "The Subordinate," and "Insubordination," two tales distinguished by the peculiarities

above mentioned. He has also written much for our weekly papers and the "Lady's Book."

His hand is a commonplace clerk's hand, such as we might expect him to write. The signature is much better than the general MS.

Mr. Heath is almost the only person of any literary distinction residing in the chief city of the Old Dominion. He edited the "Southern Literary Messenger" in the five or six first months of its existence; and, since the secession of the writer of this article, has frequently aided in its editorial conduct. He is the author of "Edge-Hill," a well-written novel, which, owing to the circumstances of its publication, did not meet with the reception it deserved. His writings are rather polished and graceful, than forcible or original; and these peculiarities can be traced in his chirography.

Dr. Thomas Holley Chivers, of New York, is at the same time one of the best and one of the worst poets in America. His productions affect one as a wild dream — strange, incongruous, full of images of more than arabesque monstrosity, and snatches of sweet unsustained song. Even his worst nonsense (and some of it is horrible) has an indefinite charm of sentiment and melody. We can never be sure that there is *any* meaning in his words — neither is

there any meaning in many of our finest musical airs — but the effect is very similar in both. His figures of speech are metaphor run mad, and his grammar is often none at all. Yet there are as fine individual passages to be found in the poems of Dr. Chivers, as in those of any poet whatsoever.

His MS. resembles that of P. P. Cooke very nearly, and in poetical character the two gentlemen are closely akin. Mr. Cooke is, by much, the more *correct;* while Dr. Chivers is sometimes the more poetic. Mr. C. always sustains himself; Dr. C. never.

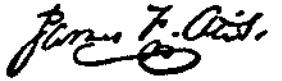
Judge Story, and his various literary and political labors, are too well known to require comment.

His chirography is a noble one — bold, clear, massive, and deliberate, betokening in the most unequivocal manner all the characteristics of his intellect. The plain, unornamented style of his compositions is impressed with accuracy upon his hand-writing, the whole air of which is well conveyed in the signature.

Mr. John Frost, Professor of Belles Lettres in the High School of Philadelphia, and at present editor of "The Young People's Book," has distinguished himself by numerous literary compositions for the periodicals of the day, and by a great number of published

works which come under the head of the *utile* rather than of the *dulce* — at least in the estimation of the young. He is a gentleman of fine taste, sound scholarship, and great general ability.

His chirography denotes his mental idiosyncrasy with great precision. Its careful neatness, legibility, and finish are but a part of that turn of mind which leads him so frequently into compilation. The signature here given is more diminutive than usual.



Mr. J. F. Otis is well known as a writer for the Magazines; and has, at various times, been connected with many of the leading newspapers of the day — especially with those in New York and Washington. His prose and poetry are equally good; but he writes too much and too hurriedly to write invariably well. His taste is fine, and his judgment in literary matters is to be depended upon at all times when not interfered with by his personal antipathies or predilections.

His chirography is exceedingly illegible and, like his style, has every possible fault except that of the common-place.

Mr. Reynolds occupied at one time a distinguished position in the eye of the public on account of his great

and laudable exertions to get up the American South Polar expedition, from a personal participation in which he was most shamefully excluded. He has written much and well. Among other works, the public are indebted to him for a graphic account of the noted voyage of the frigate Potomac to Madagascar.

His MS. is an ordinary clerk's hand, giving no indication of character.

Mr. William Cutter, a young merchant of Portland, Maine, although not very generally known as a poet beyond his immediate neighborhood, (or at least our of the Eastern States,) has given to the world numerous compositions which prove him to be possessed of the true fire. He is, moreover, a fine scholar, and a prose writer of distinguished merit.

His chirography is very similar to that of Count Tasistro, and the two gentlemen resemble each other very peculiarly in their literary character.

David Paul Brown is scarcely more distinguished in his legal capacity than by his literary compositions. As a dramatic writer he has met with much success. His "Sertorius" has been particularly well received both upon the stage and in the closet. His fugitive productions, both in prose and verse, have also been numerous, diversified, and excellent.

His chirography has no doubt been strongly modi-

fied by the circumstances of his position. No one can expect a lawyer in full practice to give in his MS. any true indication of his intellect or character.

E. C. Stedman

Mrs. E. Clementine Stedman has lately attracted much attention by the delicacy and grace of her poetical compositions, as well as by the piquancy and spirit of her prose. For some months past we have been proud to rank her among the best of the contributors to "Graham's Magazine."

Her chirography differs as materially from that of her sex in general as does her literary manner from the usual namby-pamby of our blue-stockings. It is, indeed, a beautiful MS., very closely resembling that of Professor Longfellow, but somewhat more diminutive, and far more full of grace.

John G. Whittier

J. Greenleaf Whittier is placed by his particular admirers in the very front rank of American poets. We are not disposed, however, to agree with their decision in every respect. Mr. Whittier is a fine versifier, so far as strength is regarded independently of modulation. His subjects, too, are usually chosen with the view of affording scope to a certain *vivida vis* of expression which seems to be his forte; but in taste, and especially in *imagination*, which Coleridge has justly styled the *soul* of all poetry, he is ever remarkably deficient. His themes are *never* to our liking.

His chirography is an ordinary clerk's hand, affording little indication of character.

Mrs. Ann S. Stephens was at one period the editor of the "Portland Magazine," a periodical of which we have not heard for some time, and which, we presume, has been discontinued. More lately her name has been placed upon the title-page of "The Lady's Companion" of New York, as one of the conductors of that journal — to which she has contributed many articles of merit and popularity. She has also written much and well, for various other periodicals, and will, hereafter, enrich this magazine with her compositions, and act as one of its editors.

Her MS. is a very excellent one, and differs from that of her sex in general, by an air of more than usual force and freedom.

III.

An Appendix of Autographs.[1]

[Text: *Graham's Magazine*, January, 1842.]

In our November and December numbers we gave *fac-simile* signatures of no less than *one hundred and nine* of the most distinguished American *literati*. Our design was to furnish the readers of the Magazine with

[1] The Appendix contains nineteen signatures, beginning with Sprague and ending with G. C. Verplanck. — Ed.

a *complete* series of Autographs, embracing a specimen of the MS. of *each of the most noted among our living male and female writers.* For obvious reasons, we made no attempt at classification or arrangement — either in reference to reputation or our own private opinion of merit. Our second article will be found to contain as many of the *Dii majorum gentium* as our first; and this, our third and last, as many as either — although fewer names, upon the whole, than the preceding papers. The impossibility of procuring the signatures now given, at a period sufficiently early for the immense edition of December, has obliged us to introduce this Appendix.

It is with great pleasure that we have found our anticipations fulfilled, in respect to the *popularity* of these chapters — our individual claim to merit is so trivial that we may be permitted to say so much — but we confess it was with no less surprise than pleasure that we observed so little discrepancy of opinion manifested in relation to the hasty critical, or rather gossiping observations which accompanied the signatures. Where the subject was so wide and so necessarily *personal* — where the claims of more than one hundred *literati*, summarily disposed of, were turned over for re-adjudication to a press so intricately bound up in their interest as is ours — it is really surprising how little of dissent was mingled with so much of general comment. The fact, however, speaks loudly to one point: — to the *unity of truth.* It assures us that the differences which exist among us, are differences not of real, but of affected opinion, and that the voice of him who maintains fearlessly what he believes honestly, is pretty sure to find an echo (if the speaker be not mad) in the vast heart of the world at large.

The "Writings of CHARLES SPRAGUE" were first collected and published about nine months ago by Mr. Charles S. Francis, of New York. At the time of the issue of the book, we expressed our opinion frankly, in respect to the general merits of the author — an opinion with which one or two members of the Boston press did not see fit to agree — but which, as yet, we have found no reason for modifying. What we say now is, in spirit, merely a repetition of what we said then. Mr. Sprague is an accomplished *belles-lettres* scholar, so far as the usual ideas of scholarship extend. He is a very correct rhetorician of the old school. His versification has not been equalled by that of any American — has been surpassed by no one, living or dead. In this regard there are to be found finer passages in his poems than any elsewhere. These are his chief merits. In the *essentials* of poetry he is excelled by twenty of our countrymen whom we could name. Except in a very few instances he gives no evidence of the loftier ideality. His "Winged Worshippers" and "Lines on the Death of M. S. C." are *beautiful* poems — but he has written nothing else which should be called so. His "Shakspeare Ode," upon which his high reputation mainly depended, is quite a *second-hand* affair — with no merit whatever beyond that of a polished and vigorous versification. Its imitation of "Collins' Ode to the Passions" is obvious. Its allegorical conduct is mawkish, *passé*,

and absurd. The poem, upon the whole, is just such a one as would have obtained its author an Etonian prize some forty or fifty years ago. It is an exquisite specimen of mannerism without meaning and without merit — of an artificial, but most inartistical style of composition, of which conventionality is the soul, — taste, nature and reason the antipodes. A man may be a clever financier without being a genius.

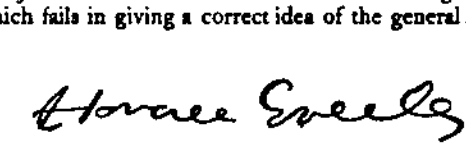
It requires but little effort to see in Mr. Sprague's MS. all the idiosyncrasy of his intellect. Here are distinctness, precision, and vigor — but vigor employed upon *grace* rather than upon its legitimate functions. The signature fully indicates the general hand — in which the spirit of elegant imitation and conservatism may be seen reflected as in a mirror.

Mr. Cornelius Mathews is one of the editors of "Arcturus," a monthly journal which has attained much reputation during the brief period of its existence. He is the author of "Puffer Hopkins," a clever satirical tale somewhat given to excess in caricature, and also of the well-written retrospective criticisms which appear in his Magazine. He is better known, however, by "The Motley Book," published some years ago — a work which we had no opportunity of reading. He is a gentleman of taste and judgment, unquestionably.

His MS. is much to our liking — bold, distinct and picturesque — such a hand as no one destitute of talent indites. The signature conveys the hand.

Mr. Charles Fenno Hoffman is the author of "A Winter in the West," "Greyslaer," and other productions of merit. At one time he edited, with much ability, the "American Monthly Magazine" in conjunction with Mr. Benjamin, and, subsequently, with Dr. Bird. He is a gentleman of talent.

His chirography is not unlike that of Mr. Mathews. It has the same boldness, strength, and picturesqueness, but is more diffuse, more ornamented and less legible. Our *fac-simile* is from a somewhat hurried signature, which fails in giving a correct idea of the general hand.



Mr. Horace Greeley, present editor of "The Tribune," and formerly of the "New-Yorker," has for many years been remarked as one of the most able and honest of American editors. He has written much and invariably well. His political knowledge is equal to that of any of his contemporaries — his general information extensive. As a *belles-lettres* critic he is entitled to high respect.

His MS. is a remarkable one — having about it a peculiarity which we know not how better to designate than as a *converse* of the picturesque. His characters are scratchy and irregular, ending with an *abrupt taper* — if we may be allowed this contradiction in terms, where we have the *fac-simile* to prove that there is no contradiction in fact. All abrupt MSS., save this,

have square or *concise* terminations of the letters. The whole chirography puts us in mind of a *jig*. We can fancy the writer jerking up his hand from the paper at the end of each word, and, indeed, of each letter. What mental idiosyncrasy lies *perdu* beneath all this, is more than we can say, but we will venture to assert that Mr. Greeley (whom we do not know personally) is, *personally*, a very remarkable man.

The name of Mr. Prosper M. Wetmore is familiar to all readers of American light literature. He has written a great deal, at various periods, both in prose and poetry, (but principally in the latter) for our Papers, Magazines, and Annuals. Of late days we have seen but little, comparatively speaking, from his pen.

His MS. is not unlike that of Fitz-Greene Halleck, but is by no means so good. Its clerky flourishes indicate a love of the beautiful with an undue straining for effect — qualities which are distinctly traceable in his poetic efforts. As many as five or six words are occasionally run together; and no man who writes thus will be noted for *finish* of style. Mr. Wetmore is sometimes very slovenly in his best compositions.

Professor Ware, of Harvard, has written some very excellent poetry, but is chiefly known by his "Life

of the Saviour," "Hints on Extemporaneous Preaching," and other religious works.

His MS. is fully shown in the signature. It evinces the direct, unpretending strength and simplicity which characterize the man, not less than his general compositions.

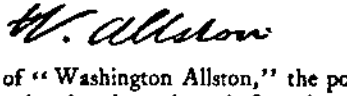
The name of WILLIAM B. O. PEABODY, like that of Mr. Wetmore, is known chiefly to the readers of our light literature, and much more familiarly to Northern than to Southern readers. He is a resident of Springfield, Mass. His occasional poems have been much admired.

His chirography is what would be called beautiful by the ladies universally, and, perhaps, by a large majority of the bolder sex. Individually, we think it a miserable one — too careful, undecided, tapering, and effeminate. It is not unlike Mr. Paulding's, but is more regular and more legible, with less force. We hold it as undeniable that no man of *genius* ever wrote such a hand.

EPES SARGENT, Esq., has acquired high reputation as the author of "Velasco," a tragedy full of beauty

as a poem, but not adapted — perhaps not intended — for representation. He has written, besides, many very excellent poems — "The Missing Ship," for example, published in the "Knickerbocker" — the "Night Storm at Sea" — and, especially, a fine production entitled "Shells and Sea-Weeds." One or two Theatrical Addresses from his pen are very creditable *in their way* — but the way itself is, as we have before said, execrable. As an editor, Mr. Sargent has also distinguished himself. He is a gentleman of taste and high talent.

His MS. is too much in the usual clerk style to be either vigorous, graceful, or easily read. It resembles Mr. Wetmore's, but has somewhat more force. The signature is better than the general hand, but conveys its idea very well.



The name of "Washington Allston," the poet and painter, is one that has been long before the public. Of his paintings we have here nothing to say — except briefly, that the most noted of them are not to our taste. His poems are not all of a high order of merit; and, in truth the faults of his pencil and of his pen are identical. Yet every reader will remember his "Spanish Maid" with pleasure, and the "Address to Great Britain," first published in Coleridge's "Sibylline Leaves," and attributed to an English author, is a production of which Mr. Allston may be proud.

His MS., notwithstanding an exceedingly simple and even boyish air, is one which we particularly admire. It is forcible, picturesque and legible, without

ornament of any description. Each letter is formed with a thorough distinctness and individuality. Such a MS. indicates caution and precision, most unquestionably — but we say of it as we say of Mr. Peabody's (a very different MS.) that no man of original genius ever did or could habitually indite it under any circumstances whatever. The signature conveys the general hand with accuracy.

Mr. Alfred B. Street has been long before the public as a poet. At as early an age as fifteen, some of his pieces were published by Mr. Bryant in the "Evening Post" — among these was one of much merit, entitled a "Winter Scene." In the "New-York Book," and in the collections of American poetry by Messieurs Keese and Bryant, will be found many excellent specimens of his maturer powers. "The Willewemoc," "The Forest Tree," "The Indian's Vigil," "The Lost Hunter," and "White Lake" we prefer to any of his other productions which have met our eye. Mr. Street has fine taste, and a keen sense of the beautiful. He writes carefully, elaborately, and correctly. He has made Mr. Bryant his model, and in all Mr. Bryant's good points would be nearly his equal, were it not for the sad and too perceptible stain of the imitation. That he has imitated at all — or rather that, in mature age, he has persevered in his imitations — is sufficient warranty for placing him among the men of talent rather than among the men of genius.

His MS. is full corroboration of this warranty. It is a very pretty chirography, graceful, legible, and neat. By most persons it would be called beautiful. The fact is, it is without fault — but its merits, like those of his poems, are chiefly negative.

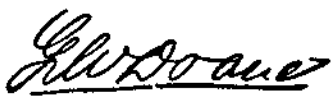
Mr. Richard Penn Smith, although, perhaps, better known in Philadelphia than elsewhere, has acquired much literary reputation. His chief works are "The Forsaken," a novel; a pseudo-auto-biography called "Colonel Crocket's Tour in Texas;" the tragedy of "Caius Marius," and two domestic dramas entitled "The Disowned" and "The Deformed." He has also published two volumes of miscellanies under the title of "The Actress of Padua and other Tales," besides occasional poetry. We are not sufficiently cognisant of any of these works to speak with decision respecting their merits. In a biography of Mr. Smith, however, very well written by his friend Mr. McMichael of this city, we are informed of "The Forsaken" that "a large edition of it was speedily exhausted" — of "The Actress of Padua," that it "had an extensive sale and was much commended" — of the "Tour in Texas," that "few books attained an equal popularity" — of "Caius Marius," that "it has great capabilities for an acting play" — of "The Disowned" and "The Deformed," that they "were performed at the London theatres, where they both made a favorable impression" — and of his

poetry in general, "that it will be found superior to the average quality of that commodity." "It is by his dramatic efforts," says the biographer, "that his merits as a poet must be determined, and judged by these he will be assigned a place in the foremost rank of American writers." We have only to add that we have the highest respect for the judgment of Mr. McMichael.

Mr. Smith's MS. is clear, graceful, and legible, and would generally be called a fine hand, but is somewhat too clerky for our taste.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, of Boston, late Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at Dartmouth College, has written many productions of merit, and has been pronounced, by a very high authority, the best of the humorous poets of the day.

His chirography is remarkably fine, and a quick fancy might easily detect, in its graceful yet picturesque quaintness, an analogy with the vivid drollery of his style. The signature is a fair specimen of the general MS.



Bishop Doane, of New Jersey, is somewhat more extensively known in his clerical than in a literary capacity, but has accomplished much more than suffi-

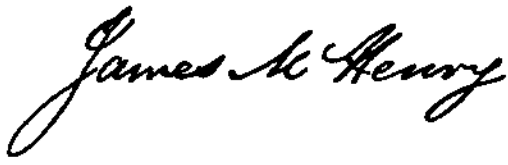
cient in the world of books to entitle him to a place among the most noted of our living men of letters. The compositions by which he is best known were published, we believe, during his professorship of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in Washington College, Hartford.

His MS. has some resemblance to that of Mr. Greeley of "The Tribune." The signature is far bolder and altogether better than the general hand.

We believe that Mr. ALBERT PIKE has never published his poems in book form; nor has he written anything since 1834. His "Hymns to the Gods," and "Ode to the Mocking Bird," being printed in Blackwood, are the chief basis of his reputation. His lines "To Spring" are, however, much better in every respect, and a little poem from his pen, entitled "Ariel," and originally published in the "Boston Pearl," is one of the finest of American compositions. Mr. Pike has unquestionably merit, and that of a high order. His ideality is rich and well-disciplined. He is the most *classic* of our poets in the best sense of the term, and of course his classicism is very different from that of Mr. Sprague — to whom, nevertheless, he bears much resemblance in other respects. Upon the whole, there are few of our native writers to whom we consider him inferior.

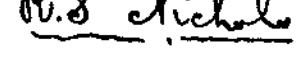
His MS. shows clearly the spirit of his intellect. We observe in it a keen sense not only of the beautiful and graceful but of the picturesque — neatness, precision and general finish, verging upon effeminacy. In

force it is deficient. The signature fails to convey the entire MS. which depends upon masses for its peculiar character.



Dr. James McHenry, of Philadelphia, is well known to the literary world as the writer of numerous articles in our Reviews and lighter journals, but more especially as the author of "The Antediluvians," an epic poem which has been the victim of a most shameful cabal in this country, and the subject of a very disgraceful pasquinade on the part of Professor Wilson. Whatever may be the demerits, in some regard, of this poem, there can be no question of the utter want of fairness and even of common decency which distinguished the Philippic in question. The writer of a *just* review of the "Antediluvians" — the only tolerable American epic — would render an important service to the literature of his country.

Dr. McHenry's MS. is distinct, bold and simple, without ornament or superfluity. The signature well conveys the idea of the general hand.



Mrs. R. S. Nichols has acquired much reputation of late years by frequent and excellent contributions

to the Magazines and Annuals. Many of her compositions will be found in our pages.

Her MS. is fair, neat and legible, but formed somewhat too much upon the ordinary boarding-school model to afford any indication of character. The signature is a good specimen of the hand.

Mr. Richard Adams Locke is one among the few men of *unquestionable genius* whom the country possesses. Of the "Moon Hoax" it is supererogatory to say one word — not to know *that* argues one's self unknown. Its rich imagination will long dwell in the memory of every one who read it, and surely if

> the worth of any thing
> Is just so much as it will bring —

if, in short, we are to judge of the value of a literary composition in any degree by its *effect* — then was the "Hoax" most precious.

But Mr. Locke is also a poet of high order. We have seen — nay more — we have heard him read — verses of his own which would make the fortune of two-thirds of our poetasters; and he is yet so modest as never to have published a volume of poems. As an editor — as a political writer — as a writer in general — we think that he has scarcely a superior in America. There is no man among us to whose sleeve we would rather pin — not our *faith* (of that we say nothing) — but our *judgment*.

His MS. is clear, bold, and forcible — somewhat modified, no doubt, by the circumstances of his editorial position — but still sufficiently indicative of his fine intellect.

Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson belongs to a class of gentlemen with whom we have no patience whatever — the mystics for mysticism's sake. Quintilian mentions a pedant who taught obscurity, and who once said to a pupil "this is excellent, for I do not understand it myself." How the good man would have chuckled over Mr. E.! His present *rôle* seems to be the out-Carlyling Carlyle. *Lycophron Tenebrosus* is a fool to him. The best answer to his twaddle is *cui bono?* — a very little Latin phrase very generally mistranslated and misunderstood — *cui bono?* — to whom is it a benefit? If not to Mr. Emerson individually, then surely to no man living.

His love of the obscure does not prevent him, nevertheless, from the composition of occasional poems in which beauty is apparent *by flashes*. Several of his effusions appeared in the "Western Messenger" — more in the "Dial," of which he is the soul — or the sun — or the shadow. We remember the "Sphynx," the "Problem," the "Snow Storm," and some fine old-fashioned verses entitled "Oh fair and stately maid whose eye."

His MS. is bad, sprawling, illegible and irregular — although sufficiently bold. This latter trait may be, and no doubt is, only a portion of his general affectation.

The name of GULIAN C. VERPLANCK has long been familiar to all American readers, and it is scarcely necessary to say more than that we coincide in the general view of his merits. His orations, reviews, and other compositions all evince the cultivated belles-lettres scholar, and man of intellect and taste. To high genius he has about the same claim as Mr. Sprague, whom in many respects he closely resembles.

His chirography is unusually rambling and school-boyish — but has vigor and precision. It has no doubt been greatly modified by adventitious circumstances, so that it would be impossible to predicate anything respecting it.

APPENDIX.

Below follow the "Literati" papers on C. F Briggs, Thomas Dunn "Brown" (English),[1] James Lawson, Frances Sargent Osgood, and Mary E. Hewitt as they appear in Griswold, Vol. III. Poe's own articles will be found in their proper places. — EDITOR.

CHARLES F. BRIGGS.

MR. BRIGGS is better known as Harry Franco, a *nom de plume* assumed since the publication, in the "Knickerbocker Magazine," of his series of papers called "Adventures of Harry Franco." He also wrote for "The Knickerbocker" some articles entitled "The Haunted Merchant," which have been printed since as a novel, and from time to time subsequently has been a contributor to that journal. The two productions just mentioned have some merit. They depend for their effect upon the relation in a straightforward manner, just as one would talk, of the most commonplace events — a kind of writing which, to ordinary, and especially to indolent intellects, has a very observable charm. To cultivated or to active minds it is in an equal degree distasteful, even when claiming the merit of originality. Mr. Briggs's manner, however, is an obvious imitation of Smollett, and, as usual with all imitation, produces an unfavorable

[1] "Brown" does not occur in Poe's paper as printed in "Godey's."

impression upon those conversant with the original. It is a common failing, also, with imitators, to out-Herod Herod in aping the peculiarities of the model, and too frequently the faults are more pertinaciously exaggerated than the merits. Thus, the author of "Harry Franco" carries the simplicity of Smollett sometimes to insipidity, and his picturesque low-life is made to degenerate into sheer vulgarity.

If Mr. Briggs has a *forte*, it is a Flemish fidelity that omits nothing, whether agreeable or disagreeable; but I cannot call this *forte* a virtue. He has also some humor, but nothing of an original character. Occasionally he has written good things. A magazine article, called "Dobbs and his Cantelope," was quite easy and clever in its way; but the way is necessarily a small one. And I ought not to pass over without some allusion to it, his satirical novel of "Tom Pepper." As a novel, it really has not the slightest pretensions. To a genuine artist in literature, he is as Plumbe to Sully. Plumbe's daguerreotypes have more fidelity than any portrait ever put on canvas, and so Briggs's sketches of E. A. Duyckinck (Tibbings) and the author of Puffer Hopkins (Ferocious) are as lifelike as any portraits in words that have ever been drawn. But the subjects are little and mean, pretending and vulgar. Mr. Briggs would not succeed in delineating a gentleman. And some letters of his in Hiram Fuller's paper — perhaps for the reason that they run through a desert of stupidity — some letters of his, I say, under the apt signature of "Ferdinand Mendoza Pinto," are decidedly clever as examples of caricature — absurd, of course, but sharply absurd, so that, with a knowledge of their design, one could hardly avoid occasional laughter. I once thought Mr. Briggs could cause

laughter only by his efforts at a serious kind of writing.

In connexion with Mr. John Bisco, he was the originator of the late "Broadway Journal" — my editorial association with that work not having commenced until the sixth or seventh number, although I wrote for it occasionally from the first. Among the principal papers contributed by Mr. B., were those discussing the paintings at the preceding exhibition of the Academy of Fine Arts in New York. I may be permitted to say, that there was scarcely a point in his whole series of criticisms on this subject at which I did not radically disagree with him. Whatever taste he has in art is, like his taste in letters, Flemish. There is a portrait painter for whom he has an unlimited admiration. The unfortunate gentleman is Mr. Page.

Mr. Briggs is about five feet six inches in height, somewhat slightly framed, with a sharp, thin face, narrow forehead, nose sufficiently prominent, mouth rather pleasant in expression, eyes not so good, gray and small, although occasionally brilliant. In dress he is apt to affect the artist, felicitating himself especially upon his personal acquaintance with artists and his general connoisseurship. He walks with a quick, nervous step. His address is quite good, frank and insinuating. His conversation has now and then the merit of humor, and more frequently of a smartness, allied to wit, but he has a perfect mania for contradiction, and it is sometimes impossible to utter an uninterrupted sentence in his hearing. He has much warmth of feeling, and is not a person to be disliked, although very apt to irritate and annoy. Two of his most marked characteristics are vacillation of purpose and a passion for being mysterious. He

has, apparently, travelled; has some knowledge of French; has been engaged in a variety of employments; and now, I believe, occupies a lawyer's office in Nassau-street. He is from Cape Cod or Nantucket, is married, and is the centre of a little circle of rather intellectual people, of which the Kirklands, Lowell, and some other notabilities are honorary members. He goes little into general society, and seems about forty years of age.

Thomas Dunn Brown.

I have seen one or two scraps of verse with this gentleman's *nom de plume*[1] appended, which had considerable merit. For example:

A sound melodious shook the breeze
  When thy beloved name was heard;
  Such was the music in the word
  Its dainty rhythm the pulses stirred
But passed forever joys like these.
  There is no joy, no light, no day;
  But black despair and night *al-way*
    And thickening gloom;
And this, Asthene, is my doom.

Was it for this, for weary years,
  I strove among the sons of men,
  And by *the magic of my pen* —
  Just sorcery — walked the lion's den
Of slander void of tears and fears —
  And all for thee? For thee! — alas,
  As is the image on a glass
    So baseless *seems*,
  Asthene, all my early *dreams*.

[1] Thomas Dunn English. — Griswold's Note.

I must confess, however, that I do not appreciate the "dainty rhythm" of such a word as "Azthene," and, perhaps, there is some taint of egotism in the passage about "the magic" of Mr. Brown's pen. Let us be charitable, however, and set all this down under the head of the pure imagination or invention — the first of poetical requisites. The *inexcusable* sin of Mr. Brown is imitation — if this be not too mild a term. When Barry Cornwall, for example, sings about a "dainty rhythm," Mr. Brown forthwith, in B flat, hoots about it too. He has taken, however, his most unwarrantable liberties in the way of plagiarism, with Mr. Henry B. Hirst of Philadelphia — a poet whose merits have not yet been properly estimated.

I place Mr. Brown, to be sure, on my list of literary people not on account of his poetry, (which I presume he himself is not weak enough to estimate very highly,) but on the score of his having edited, for several months, "with the aid of numerous collaborators," a magazine called "The Aristidean." This work, although professedly a "monthly," was issued at irregular intervals, and was unfortunate, I fear, in not attaining at any period more than about fifty subscribers.

Mr. Brown has at least that amount of talent which would enable him to succeed in his father's profession — that of a ferryman on the Schuylkill — but the fate of "The Aristidean" should indicate to him that, to prosper in any higher walk of life, he must apply himself to study. No spectacle can be more ludicrous than that of a man without the commonest school education, busying himself in attempts to instruct mankind on topics of polite literature. The absurdity, in such cases, does not lie merely in the ignorance displayed

by the would-be instructor, but in the transparency of the shifts by which he endeavors to keep this ignorance concealed. The "editor of the Aristidean," for example, was not the public laughing-stock throughout the five months of his magazine's existence, so much on account of writing "lay" for "lie," "went" for "gone," "set" for "sit," etc. etc., or for coupling nouns in the plural with verbs in the singular — as when he writes, above,

> —— so baseless *seems*,
> Asthene, all my earthly *dreams* —

he was not, I say, laughed at *so much* on account of his excusable deficiencies in English grammar (although an editor should undoubtedly be able to write *his own name*) as on account of the pertinacity with which he exposed his weakness, in lamenting the "typographical blunders" which so unluckily *would* creep into his work. He should have reflected that there is not in all America a proof-reader so blind as to permit *such* errors to escape him. The rhyme, for instance, in the matter of the "dreams" that "seems," would have distinctly shown even the most uneducated printers' devil that he, the devil, had no right to meddle with so obviously an *intentional* peculiarity.

Were I writing merely for American readers, I should not, of course, have introduced Mr. Brown's name in this book. With us, *grotesqueries* such as "The Aristidean" and its editor, are not altogether unparalleled, and are sufficiently well understood — but my purpose is to convey to foreigners some idea of a condition of literary affairs among us, which otherwise they might find it difficult to comprehend or to conceive. That Mr. Brown's blunders are

really such as I have described them — that I have not distorted their character or exaggerated their grossness in any respect — that there existed in New York, for some months, as conductor of a magazine that called itself *the organ of the Tyler party*, and was even mentioned, at times, by respectable papers, a man who obviously *never went to school*, and was so profoundly ignorant as not to know that he could not spell — are serious and positive facts — uncolored in the slightest degree — demonstrable, in a word, upon the spot, by reference to almost any editorial sentence upon any page of the magazine in question. But a single instance will suffice: — Mr. Hirst, in one of his poems, has the lines,

> Oh Odin! 't was pleasure — 't was passion to see
> Her serfs sweep like wolves on a lambkin like me.

At page 200 of "The Aristidean" for September, 1845, Mr. Brown, commenting on the English of the passage, says: — "This lambkin might have used better language than '*like me*' — unless he intended it for a specimen of choice Choctaw, when it may, for all we know to the contrary, pass muster." It is needless, I presume, to proceed farther in a search for the most direct proof possible or conceivable, of the ignorance of Mr. Brown — who, in similar cases, invariably writes — "like I."

In an editorial announcement on page 242 of the same "number," he says: — "This and the three succeeding *numbers brings* the work up to January and with the two *numbers* previously published *makes* up a volume or half year of *numbers*." But enough of this absurdity: — Mr. Brown had, for the motto on his magazine cover, the words of Richelieu,

——— Men call me cruel;
I am not: — I am *just*.

Here the two monosyllables "an ass" should have been appended. They were no doubt omitted through "one of those d——d typographical blunders" which, through life, have been at once the bane and the antidote of Mr. Brown.

I make these remarks in no spirit of unkindness. Mr. B. is yet young — certainly not more than thirty-eight or nine — and might readily improve himself at points where he is most defective. No one of any generosity would think the worse of him for getting private instruction.

I do not personally know him. About his appearance there is nothing very remarkable — except that he exists in a perpetual state of vacillation between mustachio and goatee. In character, a *windbeutel*.

James Lawson.

Mr. Lawson has published, I believe, only "Giordano," a tragedy, and two volumes entitled "Tales and Sketches by a Cosmopolite." The former was condemned (to use a gentle word) some years ago at the Park Theatre; and never was condemnation more religiously deserved. The latter are in so much more tolerable than the former, that they contain one non-execrable thing — "The Dapper Gentleman's Story" — in manner, as in title, an imitation of one of Irving's "Tales of a Traveller."

I mention Mr. L., however, not on account of his literary labors, but because, although a Scotchman, he

has always professed to have greatly at heart the welfare of American letters. He is much in the society of authors and booksellers, converses fluently, tells a good story, is of social habits, and, with no taste whatever, is quite enthusiastic on all topics appertaining to Taste.

Frances Sargent Osgood.

Mrs. Osgood, for the last three or four years, has been rapidly attaining distinction; and this, evidently, with no effort at attaining it. She seems, in fact, to have no object in view beyond that of giving voice to the fancies or the feelings of the moment. "Necessity," says the proverb, "is the mother of Invention;" and the invention of Mrs. O., at least, springs plainly from necessity — from the necessity of invention. *Not* to write poetry — not to act it, think it, dream it, and be it, is entirely out of her power.

It may be questioned whether with more industry, more method, more definite purpose, more ambition, Mrs. Osgood would have made a more decided impression on the public mind. She might, upon the whole, have written better poems; but the chances are that she would have failed in conveying so vivid and so just an idea of her powers as a poet. The warm *abandonnement* of her style — that charm which now so captivates — is but a portion and a consequence of her unworldly nature — of her disregard of mere fame; but it affords us glimpses, which we could not otherwise have obtained, of a capacity for accomplishing what she has not accomplished, and in all probability

never will. In the world of poetry, however, there is already more than enough of uncongenial ambition and pretence.

Mrs. Osgood has taken no care whatever of her literary fame. A great number of her finest compositions, both in verse and prose, have been written anonymously, and are now lying *perdus* about the country, in out-of-the-way nooks and corners. Many a goodly reputation has been reared upon a far more unstable basis than her unclaimed and uncollected "fugitive pieces."

Her first volume, I believe, was published, seven or eight years ago, by Edward Churton, of London, during the residence of the poetess in that city. I have now lying before me a second edition of it, dated 1842 — a beautifully printed book, dedicated to the Reverend Hobard Caunter. It contains a number of what the Bostonians call "juvenile" poems, written when Mrs. O. (then Miss Locke) could not have been more than thirteen, and evincing unusual precocity. The leading piece is "Elfrida, a Dramatic Poem," but in many respects well entitled to the appellation "drama." I allude chiefly to the passionate expression of particular portions, to delineation of character, and to occasional scenic effect: — in construction, or plot — in general conduct and plausibility, the play fails; comparatively, of course — for the hand of genius is evinced throughout.

The story is the well known one of Edgar, Elfrida, and Earl Athelwood. The king, hearing of Elfrida's extraordinary beauty, commissions his favorite, Athelwood, to visit her and ascertain if report speaks truly of her charms. The earl, becoming himself enamored, represents the lady as anything but beautiful or

agreeable. The king is satisfied. Athelwood soon afterward woos and weds Elfrida — giving Edgar to understand that the heiress' wealth is the object. The true state of the case, however, is betrayed by an enemy; and the monarch resolves to visit the earl at his castle and to judge for himself. Hearing of this resolve, Athelwood, in despair, confesses to his wife his duplicity, and entreats her to render null as far as possible the effect of her charms by dressing with unusual plainness. This the wife promises to do; but, fired with ambition and resentment at the wrong done her, arrays herself in her most magnificent and becoming costume. The king is charmed, and the result is the destruction of Athelwood and the elevation of Elfrida to the throne.

These incidents are well adapted to dramatic purposes, and with more of that art which Mrs. Osgood does not possess, she might have woven them into a tragedy which the world would not willingly let die. As it is, she has merely succeeded in showing what she might, should, and could have done, and yet, unhappily, did not.

The character of Elfrida is the bright point of the play. Her beauty and consciousness of it — her indignation and uncompromising ambition — are depicted with power. There is a fine blending of the poetry of passion and the passion of poetry, in the lines which follow:

—— Why even now he bends
In courtly reverence to some mincing dame,
Haply the star of Edgar's festival,
While I, with this high heart and queenly form,
Pine in neglect and solitude. Shall it *be?*
Shall I not rend my fetters and be free?
Ay! — be the cooing turtle-dove content,

Safe in her own loved nest! — the eagle soars
On restless plumes to meet the imperial sun.
And Edgar is my day-star in whose light
This heart's proud wings shall yet be furled to rest.
Why wedded I with Athelwood? For this?
No! — even at the altar when I stood —
My hand in his, his gaze upon my cheek —
I did forget his presence and the scene;
A gorgeous vision rose before mine eyes
Of power and pomp and regal pageantry;
A king was at my feet and, as he knelt,
I smiled and, turning, met — a husband's kiss.
But still I smiled — for in my guilty soul
I blessed him as the being by whose means
I should be brought within my idol's sphere —
My haughty, glorious, brave, impassioned Edgar!
Well I remember when these wondering eyes
Beheld him first. I was a maiden then —
A dreaming child — but from that thrilling hour
I've been a queen in visions!

Very similar, but even more glowing, is the love-inspired eloquence of Edgar.

Earth hath no language, love, befitting thee,
For its own children it hath pliant speech;
And mortals know to call a blossom fair,
A wavelet graceful, and a jewel rich;
But thou! — oh, teach me, sweet, the angel tongue
They talked in Heaven ere thou didst leave its bowers
To bloom below!

To this Elfrida replies —

If Athelwood should hear thee!

And to this, Edgar —

Name not the felon knave to me, Elfrida!
My soul is flame whene'er I think of him.
Thou lovest him not? — oh, *say* thou dost not love him!

The answer of Elfrida at this point is profoundly true to nature, and would alone suffice to assure any critic of Mrs. Osgood's dramatic talent.

When but a child I saw thee in my dreams!

The woman's soul here shrinks from the direct avowal of want of love for her husband, and flies to poetry and appeals to fate, by way of excusing that infidelity which is at once her glory and her shame.

In general, the "situations" of "Elfrida" are improbable or ultra-romantic, and its incidents unconsequential, seldom furthering the business of the play. The *dénouement* is feeble, and its moral of very equivocal tendency indeed — but I have already shown that it is the especial office neither of poetry nor of the drama, to inculcate truth, unless incidentally. Mrs. Osgood, however, although she has unquestionably failed in writing a good play, has, even in failing, given indication of dramatic power. The great tragic element, passion, breathes in every line of her composition, and had she but the art, or the patience, to model or control it, she might be eminently successful as a playwright. I am justified in these opinions not only by "Elfrida," but by "Woman's Trust, a Dramatic Sketch," included, also, in the English edition.

A Masked Ball. Madelon and a Stranger in a Recess.

Mad. — Why hast thou led me here?
My friends may deem it strange — unmaidenly,
This lonely converse with an unknown mask.
Yet in thy voice there is a thrilling power
That makes me love to linger. It is like
The tone of one far distant — only his
Was gayer and more soft.

Strang. — Sweet Madelon!
Say thou wilt smile upon the passionate love
That thou alone canst waken! Let me hope!

Mad. — Hush! hush! I may not hear thee. Know 'st thou not
I am betrothed?

Strang. — Alas! too well I know;
But I could tell thee such a tale of him —
Thine early love — 't would fire those timid eyes
With lightning pride and anger — curl that lip —
That gentle lip to passionate contempt
For man's light falsehood. Even now he bends —
Thy Rupert bends o'er one as fair as thou,
In fond affection. Even now his heart —

Mad. — Doth my eye flash? — doth my lip curl with scorn?
'T is scorn of thee, thou perjured stranger, not —
Oh, not of him, the generous and the true!
Hast thou e'er seen my Rupert? — hast thou met
Those proud and fearless eyes that never quailed,
As Falsehood quails, before another's glance —
As thine even now are shrinking from mine own —
The spirit beauty of that open brow —
The noble head — the free and gallant step —
The lofty mien whose majesty is won
From inborn honor — hast thou seen all this?
And darest thou speak of faithlessness and him
In the same idle breath? Thou little know'st
The strong confiding of a woman's heart,
When woman loves as — I do. Speak no more!

Strang. — Deluded girl! I tell thee he is false —
False as yon fleeting cloud!

Mad. — True as the sun!

Strang. — The very wind less wayward than his heart!

Mad. — The forest oak less firm! He loved me not
For the frail rose-hues and the fleeting light
Of youthful loveliness — ah, many a cheek
Of softer bloom, and many a dazzling eye
More rich than mine may win my wanderer's gaze.
He loved me for my love, the deep, the fond —
For my unfaltering truth; he cannot find —

Rove where he will — a heart that beats for him
With such intense, absorbing tenderness —
Such idolizing constancy as mine.
Why should he change, then? — I am still the same.

Strang. — Sweet infidel! *wilt* thou have ruder proof?
Remembered thou a little golden case
Thy Rupert wore, in which a gem was shrined?
A gem I would not barter for a world —
An angel face; its *sunny wealth of hair*
In radiant ripples bathed the graceful throat
And dimpled shoulders; round the rosy curve
Of the sweet mouth a smile seemed wandering ever
While in the depths of azure fire that gleamed
Beneath the drooping lashes, slept a world
Of eloquent meaning, passionate yet pure —
Dreamy — subdued — but oh, how beautiful!
A look of timid, pleading tenderness
That should have been a talisman to charm
His restless heart for aye. Remembered thou?

Mad. — (*impatiently.*) I do — I do remember — 't was my own.
He prized it as his life — I gave it to him —
What of it! — speak!

Strang. — (*showing a miniature,*) Lady, behold that gift!

Mad. — (*clasping her hands*) Merciful Heaven! is my Rupert dead.
(*After a pause, during which she seems overwhelmed with agony*)
How died he? — when? — oh, *thou* wast by his side
In that last hour and *I* was far away!
My blessed love! — give me that token! — speak!
What message sent he to his Madelon?

Strang. — (*Supporting her and strongly agitated,*)
He is not dead, dear lady! — grieve not thus!

Mad. — *He is not false, sir stranger!*

Strang. — For thy sake,
Would he were worthier! One other proof
I 'll give thee, loveliest! if thou lov'st him still,
I 'll not believe thee woman. Listen, then!
A faithful lover breathes not of his bliss
To other ears. Wilt hear a fable, lady?

Here the stranger details some incidents of the first wooing of Madelon by Rupert, and concludes with,

Lady, my task is o'er — dost doubt me still?

Mad. Doubt thee, my Rupert! ah, I know thee now.
Fling by that hateful mask! — let me unclasp it!
No! thou wouldst *not* betray thy Madelon.

The "Miscellaneous Poems" of the volume — many of them written in childhood — are, of course, various in character and merit. "The Dying Rosebud's Lament," although by no means one of the best, will very well serve to show the earlier and most characteristic manner of the poetess:

Ah, me! — ah wo is me
That I should perish now,
With the dear sunlight just let in
Upon my balmy brow.

My leaves, instinct with glowing life,
Were quivering to unclose:
My happy heart with love was rife —
I was almost a rose.

Nerved by a hope, warm, rich, intense,
Already I had risen
Above my cage's curving fence —
My green and graceful prison.

My pouting lips, by Zephyr pressed,
Were just prepared to part,
And whispered to the wooing wind
The rapture of my heart.

In new-born fancies revelling,
My mossy cell half riven,
Each thrilling leaflet seemed a wing
To bear me into Heaven.

How oft, while yet *an infant-flower,*
My crimson cheek I've laid
Against the green bars of my bower,
Impatient of the shade.

And, pressing up and peeping through
Its small but precious vistas,
Sighed for the lovely light and dew
That blessed my elder sisters.

I saw the *sweet breeze rippling* o'er
Their leaves that loved the play,
Though the light thief stole all the store
Of dew-drop gems away.

I thought how happy I should be
Such diamond wreaths to wear,
And frolic with a rose's glee
With sunbeam, bird and air.

Ah, me! — ah, wo is me, that I,
Ere yet my leaves unclose,
With all my wealth of sweets *must die*
Before I am a rose!

The poetical reader will agree with me that few things have ever been written (by any poet, at any age,) more delicately fanciful than the passages italicized — and yet they are the work of a girl not more than fourteen years of age. The clearness and force of expression, and the nice appositeness of the overt and insinuated meaning, are, when we consider the youth of the writer, even more remarkable than the fancy.

I cannot speak of Mrs. Osgood's poems without a strong propensity to ring the changes upon the indefinite word "grace" and its derivatives. About everything she writes we perceive this indescribable charm — of which, perhaps, the elements are a vivid fancy and a quick sense of the proportionate. Grace, however, may be most satisfactorily defined as "a term applied, in despair, to that class of the impressions of Beauty which admit of no analysis." It is in this irresoluble effect that Mrs. Osgood excels any poetess of her country

— and it is to this easily appreciable effect that her *popularity* is owing. Nor is she more graceful herself than a lover of the graceful, under whatever guise it is presented to her consideration. The sentiment renders itself manifest, in innumerable instances, as well throughout her prose as her poetry. Whatever be her theme, she at once *extorts* from it its whole essentiality of *grace*. Fanny Ellsler has been often lauded; true poets have sung her praises; but we look in vain for anything written about her, which so distinctly and vividly paints her to the eye as the half dozen quatrains which follow. They are to be found in the English volume:

She comes! — the spirit of the dance!
  And but for those large eloquent eyes,
Where passion speaks in every glance,
  She 'd seem a wanderer from the skies.

So light that, *gazing breathless there,*
  Lest the celestial dream should go,
You 'd think the music in the air
  Waved the fair vision to and fro.

Or think the melody's sweet flow
  Within the radiant creature played,
And those soft wreathing arms of snow
  And white sylph feet the music made.

Now gliding slow with dreamy grace,
  Her eyes beneath their lashes lost,
Now motionless, with lifted face,
  And small hands on her bosom crossed.

And now with flashing eyes she springs —
  Her whole bright figure raised in air,
As if her soul had spread its wings
  And poised her one wild instant there!

She spoke not — but, so richly fraught
  With language are her glance and smile,
That, when the curtain fell, I thought
  She had been talking all the while.

This is, indeed, poetry — and of the most unquestionable kind — poetry *truthful* in the proper sense — that is to say, breathing of Nature. There is here nothing forced or artificial — no hardly sustained enthusiasm. The poetess speaks because she feels, and *what* she feels; but then what she feels is felt only by the truly poetical. The thought in the last line of the quatrain will not be so fully appreciated by the reader as it should be; for latterly it has been imitated, plagiarized, repeated *ad infinitum:* — but the other passages italicized have still left them all their original effect. The idea in the two last lines is exquisitely *naïve* and natural; that in the two last lines of the second quatrain, beautiful beyond measure; that of the whole fifth quatrain, *magnificent* — unsurpassed in the entire compass of American poetry. It is instinct with the noblest poetical requisite — imagination.

Of the same trait I find, to my surprise, one of the best exemplifications among the "Juvenile Rhymes."

> For Fancy is a fairy that can hear,
> Ever, the melody of Nature's voice
> And see all lovely visions that she will.
> She drew *a picture of a beauteous bird*
> *With plumes of radiant green and gold inwoven,*
> *Banished from its beloved resting place,*
> *And fluttering in vain hope from tree to tree,*
> *And bade us think how, like it, the sweet season*
> *From one bright shelter to another fled —*
> *First from the maple waved her emerald pinions,*
> *But lingered still upon the oak and elm,*
> *Till, frightened by rude breezes even from them,*
> *With mournful sigh she moaned her sad farewell.*

The little poem called "The Music Box" has been as widely circulated as any of Mrs. Osgood's compositions. The melody and harmony of this *jeu*

d'esprit are perfect, and there is in it a rich tint of that epigrammatism for which the poetess is noted. Some of the *intentional* epigrams interspersed through the works are peculiarly happy. Here is one which, while replete with the rarest "spirit of point," is yet something more than pointed.

TO AN ATHEIST POET.

Lovest thou the music of the sea?
  Callest thou the sunshine bright?
His voice is more than melody —
  His smile is more than light.

Here again, is something very similar:

Fanny shuts her smiling eyes,
  Then because she cannot see,
Thoughtless simpleton! she cries
  "Ah! you can't see me."

Fanny 's like the sinner vain
  Who, with spirit shut and dim,
Thinks, because he sees not Heaven,
  Heaven beholds not him.

Is it not a little surprising, however, that a writer capable of so much precision and finish as the author of these epigrams *must* be, should have failed to see how much of force is lost in the inversion of "the sinner vain"? Why not have written "Fanny's like the silly sinner"? — or, if "silly" be thought too jocose, "the blinded sinner"? The rhythm, at the same time, would thus be much improved by bringing the lines,

Fanny 's like the silly sinner,
Thinks because he sees not Heaven

into *exact* equality.

In mingled epigrams and *espièglerie* Mrs. Osgood is even more especially at home. I have seldom seen anything in this way more happily done than the song entitled "*If he can.*"

"The Unexpected Declaration" is, perhaps, even a finer specimen of the same manner. It is one of that class of compositions which Mrs. Osgood has made almost exclusively her own. Had I seen it without her name, I should have had no hesitation in ascribing it to her; for there is no other person — in America certainly — who does anything of a similar kind with anything like a similar piquancy.

The point of this poem, however, might have been sharpened, and the polish increased in lustre, by the application of the emery of brevity. From what the lover says much might well have been omitted; and I should have preferred leaving out altogether the autorial comments; for the story is fully told without them. The "Why do you weep?" "Why do you frown?" and "Why do you smile?" supply all the imagination requires; to supply *more* than it requires, oppresses and offends it. Nothing more deeply grieves it — or more vexes the true taste in general, than *hyperism* of any kind. In Germany, *Wohlgeboren* is a loftier title than *Edelgeboren;* and in Greece, the thrice-victorious at the Olympic games could claim a statue of the size of life, while he who had conquered but once was entitled *only* to a colossal one.

The English collection of which I speak was entitled "A Wreath of Wild Flowers from New England." It met with a *really* cordial reception in Great Britain — was favorably noticed by the "Literary Gazette," "Times," "Atlas," "Monthly Chronicle," and especially by the "Court Journal,"

"The Court and Ladies' Magazine," "La Belle Assemblée," and other similar works. "We have long been familiar," says the high authority of the "Literary Gazette," "with the name of our fair author. . . . Our expectations have been fulfilled, and we have here a delightful gathering of the sweetest of wild flowers, all looking as fresh and beautiful as if they had grown in the richest of English pasture in place of having been 'nursed by the cataract.' True, the wreath might have been improved with a little more care — a trifling attention or two paid to the formation of it. A stalk here and there that obtrudes itself between the bells of the flowers, might have become so interwoven as to have been concealed, and the whole have looked as if it had grown in that perfect and beautiful form. Though, after all, we are perhaps too chary; for in Nature every leaf is not ironed out to a form, nor propped up with a wiry precision, but blown and ruffled by the refreshing breezes, and looking as careless and easy and unaffected as a child that bounds along with its silken locks tossed to and fro just as the wind uplifts them. Page after page of this volume have we perused with a feeling of pleasure and admiration." The "Court Journal" more emphatically says: — "Her wreath is one of violets, sweet-scented, pure and modest; so lovely that the hand that wove it should not neglect additionally to enrich it by turning her love and kindness to things of larger beauty. Some of the smaller lyrics in the volume are *perfectly* beautiful — beautiful in their chaste and exquisite simplicity and the perfect elegance of their composition." In fact, there was *that* about "The Wreath of Wild Flowers" — that inexpressible *grace* of thought and manner — which never fails to find ready echo in the

hearts of the aristocracy and refinement of Great Britain; — and it was here especially that Mrs. Osgood found welcome. Her husband's merits as an artist had already introduced her into distinguished society, (she was petted, in especial, by Mrs. Norton and Rogers,) but the publication of her poems had at once an evidently favorable effect upon his fortunes. His pictures were placed in a most advantageous light by her poetical and conversational ability.

Messrs. Clarke and Austin, of New York, have lately issued another, but still a very uncomplete collection of "Poems by Frances S. Osgood." In general, it includes by no means the best of her works. "The Daughter of Herodias" — one of her longest compositions, and a very noble poem, putting me in mind of the best efforts of Mrs. Hemans — is omitted: — it is included, however, in the last edition of Dr. Griswold's "Poets and Poetry of America." In Messrs. C. and A.'s collection there occur, too, very many of those half sentimental, half allegorical compositions of which, at one period, the authoress seemed to be particularly fond — for the reason, perhaps, that they afforded her good opportunity for the exercise of her ingenuity and epigrammatic talent: — no poet, however, can admit them to be poetry at all. Still, the volume contains some pieces which enable us to take a new view of the powers of the writer. A few additional years, with their inevitable sorrow, appear to have stirred the depths of her *heart*. We see less of frivolity — less of vivacity — more of tenderness — earnestness — even passion — and far more of true imagination as distinguished from its subordinate, fancy. The one prevalent trait, *grace*, alone distinctly remains. "The Spirit of Poetry,"

"To Sybil," "The Birth of the Callitriche," and "The Child and its Angel-Playmate," would do honor to any of our poets. "She Loves Him Yet," nevertheless, will serve, better than either of these poems, to show the alteration of manner referred to. It is not only rhythmically perfect, but it evinces much originality in its structure. The verses commencing, "Yes, lower to the level," are in a somewhat similar tone, but are more noticeable for their terse energy of expression.

In not presenting to the public at one view all that she has written in verse, Mrs. Osgood has incurred the risk of losing that credit to which she is entitled on the score of versatility — of variety in invention and expression. There is scarcely a form of poetical composition in which she has not made experiment; and there is none in which she has not very happily succeeded. Her defects are chiefly negative and by no means numerous. Her versification is sometimes exceedingly good, but more frequently feeble through the use of harsh consonants, and such words as "*thou'dst*" for "*thou wouldst*," with other unnecessary contractions, inversions, and obsolete expressions. Her imagery is often mixed; — indeed it is rarely otherwise. The epigrammatism of her conclusions gives to her poems, as wholes, the air of being more skilfully constructed than they really are. On the other hand, we look in vain throughout her works for an offence against the finer taste, or against decorum — for a low thought or a platitude. A happy refinement — an instinct of the pure and delicate — is one of her most noticeable excellencies. She may be properly commended, too, for originality of poetic invention, whether in the conception of a theme or in the

manner of treating it. Consequences of this trait are her point and piquancy. Fancy and *naiveté* appear in all she writes. Regarding the loftier merits, I am forced to speak of her in more measured terms. She has occasional passages of true imagination — but scarcely the glowing, vigorous, and *sustained* ideality of Mrs. Maria Brooks — or even, in general, the less ethereal elevation of Mrs. Welby. In that indescribable something, however, which, for want of a more definite term, we are accustomed to call "grace" — that charm so magical, because at once so shadowy and so potent — that Will o' the Wisp which, in its *supreme* development, may be said to involve nearly all that is valuable in poetry — she has, unquestionably, no rival among her countrywomen.

Of pure prose — of prose proper — she has, perhaps, never written a line in her life. Her usual magazine papers are a class by themselves. She begins with a resolute effort at being sedate — that is to say, sufficiently prosaic and matter-of-fact for the purpose of a legend or an essay; but, after a few sentences, we behold uprising the leaven of the Muse; then, with a flourish and some vain attempts at repression, a scrap of verse renders itself manifest; then comes a little poem outright; then another and another and another, with impertinent patches of prose in between — until at length the mask is thrown fairly off and far away, and the whole article — sings.

Upon the whole, I have spoken of Mrs. Osgood so much in detail, less on account of what she has actually done than on account of what I perceive in her the ability to do.

In character she is ardent, sensitive, impulsive —

the very soul of truth and honor; a worshipper of the beautiful, with a heart so radically artless as to seem abundant in art; universally admired, respected, and beloved. In person, she is about the medium height, slender even to fragility, graceful whether in action or repose; complexion usually pale; hair black and glossy; eyes a clear, luminous grey, large, and with singular capacity for expression.

Mary E. Hewitt.

I am not aware that Mrs. Hewitt has written any prose, but her poems have been many, and occasionally excellent. A collection of them was published, in an exquisitely tasteful form, by Ticknor & Co., of Boston. The leading piece, entitled "Songs of our Land," although the longest, was by no means the most meritorious. In general, these compositions evince poetic fervor, classicism, and keen appreciation both of moral and physical beauty. No one of them, perhaps, can be judiciously commended as a whole; but no one of them is without merit, and there are several which would do credit to any poet in the land. Still, even these latter are particularly rather than generally commendable. They lack unity, totality — ultimate effect, but abound in forcible passages. For example:

> Shall I portray thee in thy glorious seeming,
> Thou that the pharos of my darkness art? . . .
>
> Like the blue lotos on its own clear river
> Lie thy soft eyes, beloved, upon my soul. . . .

And there the slave, a slave no more,
Hung reverent up the chain he wore. . . .

Here 'mid your wild and dark defile
  O'erawed and wonder-whelmed I stand,
And ask — "is this the fearful vale
  That opens on the shadowy land?". . .

Oh friends! we would be treasured still,
  Though Time's cold hand should cast
His misty veil, in after years,
  Over the idol Past,
Yet send to us some offering thought
  O'er Memory's ocean wide,
Pure as the Hindoo's votive lamp
  On Ganga's sacred tide.

Mrs. Hewitt has warm partialities for the sea and all that concerns it. Many of her best poems turn upon sea adventures or have reference to a maritime life. Some portions of her "God bless the Mariner" are *naïve* and picturesque: e. g. —

God bless the happy mariner!
  A homely garb wears he,
And he goeth with *a rolling gait,*
  Like a ship before the sea.

He hath piped the loud "ay, ay, Sir!"
  O'er the voices of the main
Till his deep tones have the hoarseness
  Of the rising hurricane.

But oh, a spirit looketh
  From out his clear blue eye,
With a truthful childlike earnestness,
  Like an angel from the sky.

A venturous life that sailor leads
  Between the sky and sea,
But, when the hour of dread is past,
  A merrier who than he?

The tone of some quatrains entitled "Alone," differs materially from that usual with Mrs. Hewitt. The idea is happy and well managed.

Mrs. Hewitt's sonnets are upon the whole, her most praiseworthy compositions. One entitled "Hercules and Omphale" is noticeable for the vigor of its rhythm.

> Reclined, enervate, on the couch of ease,
> No more he pants for deeds of high emprize;
> For Pleasure holds in soft voluptuous ties
> Enthralled, great Jove-descended Hercules.
> The hand that bound the Erymanthean boar,
> Hesperia's dragon slew with bold intent,
> That from his quivering side in triumph rent
> *The skin the Cleonæan lion wore,*
> Holds forth the goblet — while the Lydian queen,
> Robed like a nymph, her brow enwreathed with vine,
> Lifts high the amphora brimmed with rosy wine,
> And pours the draught the crowned cup within.
> And thus the soul, abased to sensual sway,
> Its worth forsakes — its might foregoes for aye.

The unusual force of the line italicized will be observed. This force arises first, from the directness, or colloquialism without vulgarity, of its expression: — (the relative pronoun "which" is very happily omitted between "skin" and "the") — and, secondly, to the musical repetition of the vowel in "Cl*e*on*æ*an," together with the alliterative terminations in "Cleon*æan*," and "li*on*." The effect, also, is much aided by the sonorous conclusion "wore."

Another and better instance of fine versification occurs in "Forgotten Heroes."

> "And the peasant mother at her door,
> To the babe that climbed her knee,
> Sang aloud the land's heroic songs —
> *Sang of Thermopylæ—*

Sang of Mycale — of Marathon —
Of proud Platæa's day,
Till the wakened hills, from peak to peak,
Echoed the glorious lay.
Oh, godlike name! — oh, godlike deed!
Song-borne afar on every breeze,
Ye are sounds to thrill like a battle shout, —
Leonidas! Miltiades!"

The general intention here is a line of four iambuses alternating with a line of three; but, less through rhythmical skill than a musical ear, the poetess has been led into some exceedingly happy variations of the theme. For example; — in place of the ordinary iambus as the first foot of the first, of the second, and of the third line, a bastard iambus has been employed. These lines are thus scanned:

And the peas | ant moth | er at | her door |
4 4 2 2 2
To the babe | that climbed | her knee |
4 4 2 2
Sang aloud | the land's | hero | ic songs |
4 4 2 2 2

The fourth line,

Sang of | Thermo | pylæ,
2 2 2

is well varied by a trochee, instead of an iambus, in the first foot; and the variation expresses forcibly the enthusiasm excited by the topic of the supposed songs, "Thermopylæ." The fifth line is scanned as the three first. The sixth is the general intention, and consists simply of iambuses. The seventh is like the three first and the fifth. The eighth is like the fourth; and here again the opening trochee is admirably adapted to the *movement* of the topic. The ninth is the general intention, and is formed of four iambuses. The

tenth is an alternating line and yet has four iambuses, instead of the usual three; as has also the final line — an alternating one, too. A fuller volume is in this manner given to the close of the subject; and this volume is fully in keeping with the rising enthusiasm. The last line but one has *two* bastard iambuses, thus:

Ye are sounds | to thrill | like a bat | tle shout |.
4 4 2 4 4 2

Upon the whole, it may be said that the most skilful versifier could not have written lines better suited to the purposes of the poet. The errors of "Alone," however, and of Mrs. Hewitt's poems generally, show that we must regard the beauties pointed out above, merely in the light to which I have already alluded — that is to say, as occasional happiness to which the poetess is led by a musical ear.

I should be doing this lady injustice were I not to mention that, at times, she rises into a higher and purer region of poetry than might be supposed, or inferred, from any of the passages which I have hitherto quoted. The conclusion of her "Ocean Tide to the Rivulet" puts me in mind of the rich spirit of Horne's noble epic, "Orion."

Sadly the flowers their faded petals close
Where on thy banks they languidly repose,
  Waiting in vain to hear thee onward press;
And pale Narcissus by thy margin side
Hath lingered for thy coming, drooped and died,
  Pining for thee amid the loneliness.

Hasten, beloved! — *here! 'neath the o'erhanging rock!*
Hark! from the deep, my anxious hope to mock,
  They call me back unto my parent main,
Brighter than Thetis thou — and *ah, more fleet!*
I hear the rushing of thy fair white feet!
  Joy! joy! — my breast receives its own again!

The personifications here are well managed. The "Here! — 'neath the o'erhanging rock!" has the high merit of being truthfully, by which I mean *naturally*, expressed, and imparts exceeding vigor to the whole stanza. The idea of the ebb-tide, conveyed in the second line italicized, is one of the happiest imaginable; and too much praise can scarcely be bestowed on the "rushing" of the "fair white feet." The passage altogether is full of fancy, earnestness, and the truest poetic strength. Mrs. Hewitt has given many such *indications* of a fire which, with more earnest endeavor, might be readily fanned into flame.

In character, she is sincere, fervent, benevolent — sensitive to praise and to blame; in temperament melancholy; in manner subdued; converses earnestly yet quietly. In person she is tall and slender, with black hair and full gray eyes; complexion dark; general expression of the countenance singularly interesting and agreeable.