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THE

MODERN

BRITISH ESSAYISTS.

VOL. VI.

LORD JEFFREY.

PHILADELPHIA:
A. HART, LATE CAREY & HART.
1852.

CONTRIBUTIONS

TO THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW.

BY

FRANCIS JEFFREY,

NOW ONE OF THE JUDGES OF THE COURT OF SESSION IN SCOTLAND

FOUR VOLUMES.

COMPLETE IN ONE.

PHILADELPHIA:
A. HART, LATE CAREY & HART,
CORNER OF FOURTH AND CHESNUT STREETS.
1852.

FROM THE NEW YORK EVENING MIRROR.

"The true Jeffrey whom we meet with in these volumes, presents a character somewhat of this sort:—

"He was formed undoubtedly to be the first critic of the age: and of poetry, he was probably the best judge that ever lived. An intellect of the highest capacity and of a very rare order of completeness,—educated by a perfect acquaintance with the best systems of metaphysical philosophy,—is, in him, pervaded and informed by those moral perceptions which indeed form so invariable an adjunct of the highest kind of great understandings, that they ought perhaps to be treated as merely the loftiest sort of mental qualities. His perception of truth is almost an instinct, and his love of it truly conscientious. His objects, in taking up any work or subject, are to appreciate and to judge; his searching and sensitive intelligence makes him sure of the former, and the soundness of his views fits him for the other. His temper is admirable. He seems to have no prepossessions—to be free from all vanity and jealousy—to possess a tone of impartiality and generous candour, almost cavalier in its loftiness. He has not a particle of cant, none of the formality or pretension of professional style; but on the contrary, writes thoroughly like a gentleman, and with the air of perfect breeding. He inspires you with entire confidence and a cordial liking. All his own displays are in the truest good taste—simple, easy, natural, without ambition or effort. He has the powers, the morals, and the manners of the best style of writing. There are, however, but two persons who stand so prominently before the world, that they deserve to be set for comparison with Jeffrey: they, of course are Carlyle and Macauley. We should distinguish them by saying that Macauley is a good reviewer, but a sorry critic; Carlyle an admirable critic, but a miserable reviewer; while we look on Jeffrey as being at once the best critic and the best reviewer of the age.

"We must content ourselves with this brief note tending to propitiate the regard of the reader, in advance, for the Lord Jeffrey; for our limits forbid extracts. Else, we could show a specimen of the most exquisite beauty in composition, and of the noblest eloquence, that the literature of any age can furnish. But the strength of Jeffrey does not lie in a paragraph, and sentences; but in the vigour, soundness and candour of the whole criticism."

STEREOTYPED BY J. C. D. CHRISTMAN & CO.
C. SHERMAN & CO., PRINTERS.

TO

THE REVEREND SYDNEY SMITH,

THE ORIGINAL PROJECTOR OF THE EDINBURGH REVIEW,

LONG ITS BRIGHTEST ORNAMENT,

AND ALWAYS MY TRUE AND INDULGENT FRIEND,

I now Dedicate this Republication;

FROM LOVE OF OLD RECOLLECTIONS,

AND IN TOKEN

OF UNCHANGED AFFECTION AND ESTEEM.

F. JEFFREY.

PREFACE.

No reasonable man, I suppose, could contemplate without alarm, a project for reprinting, with his name, a long series of miscellaneous papers—written hastily, in the intervals of graver occupations, and published anonymously, during the long course of Forty preceding years!—especially if, before such a suggestion was made, he had come to be placed in a Situation which made any recurrence to past indiscretions, or rash judgments, peculiarly unbecoming. I expect therefore to be very readily believed, when I say that the project of this publication did not originate, and never would have originated with me: And that I have been induced to consent to it, only after great hesitation; and not without misgivings—which have not yet been entirely got over. The true account of the matter is this.

The papers in question are the lawful property, and substantially at the disposal, of the publishers of the Edinburgh Review: And they, having conceived an opinion that such a publication would be for their advantage, expressed a strong desire that I should allow it to go out with the sanction of my name, and the benefit of such suggestions as I might be disposed to offer for its improvement: and having, in the end, most liberally agreed that I should have the sole power both of determining to what extent it should be carried, and also of selecting the materials of which it should be composed, I was at last persuaded to agree to the proposition: and this the more readily, in consequence of intimation having been received of a similar publication being in contemplation in the United States of America;*—over which, of course, I could not, under any arrangements, expect to exercise the same efficient control.

With all this, however, I still feel that I am exposed to the imputation, not only of great presumption, in supposing that any of these old things could be worth reprinting, but of a more serious Impropriety, in thus openly acknowledging, and giving a voluntary sanction to the republication (of some at least) of the following pieces: And I am far from being sure that there may not be just grounds for such an imputation. In palliation of the offence, however—if such offence shall be taken—I would beg leave humbly to state, First, that what I now venture to reprint, is but a small part—less I believe than a third,—of what I actually contributed to the Review; and, Secondly, that I have honestly endeavoured to select from that great mass—*not* those articles which I might think most likely still to attract notice, by boldness of view, severity of remark, or vivacity of expression—but those, much rather, which, by enforcing what appeared to me just principles and useful opinions, I really thought had a tendency to make men happier and better.

I am quite aware of the arrogance which may be ascribed to this statement—and even of the ridicule which may attach to it. Nevertheless, it is the only apology which I now wish to make—or could seriously think of making, for the present publication: And if it should be thought utterly to fail me, I shall certainly feel that I have been betrayed into an act, not of imprudence merely, but of great impropriety. I trust, however, that I shall not be driven back on so painful a conviction.

The Edinburgh Review, it is well known, aimed high from the beginning:—And, refusing to confine itself to the humble task of pronouncing on the mere literary merits of the works that came before it, professed to go deeply into *the Principles* on which its judgments were to be rested; as well as to take large and Original views of all the important questions to which those works might relate. And, on the whole, I think it is now pretty generally admitted that it attained the end it aimed at. Many errors there were, of course—and some considerable blunders:—abundance of indiscretions, especially in the earlier numbers; and far too many excesses, both of party zeal, overweening confidence, and intemperate blame. But with all these drawbacks, I think it must be allowed to have substantially succeeded—in familiarising the public mind (that is, the minds of very many individuals) with higher

* Carey & Hart, Philadelphia, announced that a selection would be made from the Edinburgh Review, at the time they first published a selection of Mr. Macauley's "Critical Miscellanies," and wrote to a friend of Lord Jeffrey, soliciting a list of that writer's articles. The publishers of the Review afterwards concluded to print these "Contributions," and at the author's request, forwarded a copy of the work to C. & H., from which the present edition is printed, verbatim, without abridgment. — (*American Publishers.*)

speculations, and sounder and larger views of the great objects of human pursuit, than had ever before been brought as effectually home to their apprehensions; and also, in permanently raising the standard, and increasing the influence of all such Occasional writings; not only in this country, but over the greater part of Europe, and the free States of America: While it proportionally enlarged the capacity, and improved the relish of the growing multitudes to whom such writings were addressed, for "the stronger meats" which were then first provided for their digestion.

With these convictions and impressions, it will not I think be expected, or required of me, that I should look back—from *any* station—upon the part I took in originating and conducting such a work, without some mixture of agreeable feelings: And, while I seek not to decline my full share of the faults and follies to which I have alluded, I trust I may be allowed to take credit, at the same time, for some participation in the Merits by which these were, to a certain extent at least, redeemed or atoned for.

If I might be permitted farther to state, in what particular department, and generally, on account of what, I should most wish to claim a share of those merits, I should certainly say, that it was by having constantly endeavoured to combine Ethical precepts with Literary Criticism, and earnestly sought to impress my readers with a sense, both of the close connection between sound Intellectual attainments and the higher elements of Duty and Enjoyment; and of the just and ultimate subordination of the former to the latter. The praise in short to which I aspire, and to merit which I am conscious that my efforts were most constantly directed, is, that I have, more uniformly and earnestly than any preceding critic, made the Moral tendencies of the works under consideration a leading subject of discussion; and neglected no opportunity, in reviews of Poems and Novels as well as of graver productions, of elucidating the true constituents of human happiness and virtue: and combating those besetting prejudices and errors of opinion which appear so often to withhold men from the path of their duty—or to array them in foolish and fatal hostility to each other. I cannot, of course, do more, in this place, than *intimate* this proud claim: But for the proof—or at least the explanation of it,—I think I may venture to refer to the greater part of the papers that follow.

I wrote the first article in the first Number of the Review, in October 1802:—and sent my last contribution to it, in October 1840! It is a long period, to have persevered in well—or in ill doing! But I was by no means equally alert in the service during all the intermediate time. I was sole Editor, from 1803 till late in 1829; and during that period was no doubt a large and regular contributor. In that last year, however, I received the great honour of being elected, by my brethren of the Bar, to the office of Dean of the Faculty of Advocates:—When it immediately occurred to me that it was not quite fitting that the official head of a great Law Corporation should continue to be the conductor of what might be fairly enough represented as, in many respects, a Party Journal: and I consequently withdrew at once and altogether from the management:*—which has ever since been in such hands, as can have left those who take an interest in its success, no cause to regret my retirement. But I should not have acted up to the spirit of this resignation, nor felt that I had redeemed the pledge of neutrality I meant to give by it, if I had not at the same time substantially ceased to contribute to, or to concern myself, in any way, with the conduct or future fortunes of the Review. I wrote nothing for it, accordingly, for a considerable time subsequent to 1829: and during the whole fourteen years that have since elapsed, have sent in all but Four papers to that work—none of them on political subjects. I ceased, in reality to be a contributor, in 1829.

In a professed Reprint of former publications I did not of course think myself entitled to make (and accordingly I have not made) any change in the substance of what was originally published—nor even in the expression, except where a slight verbal correction seemed necessary, to clear the meaning, or to remedy some mere slip of the pen. I have not however held myself equally precluded from making occasional *retrenchments* from the papers as they first appeared; though these are mostly confined to *the citations* that had been given from the books reviewed—at least in the three first of these volumes: But notice, I believe, is given of all the considerable omissions—(with some intimation of the reasons)—in the places where they occur.

It will be observed that, in the Arrangement of the pieces composing this collection, I have not followed, in any degree, the Chronological order of the original publications: though the actual date of its first appearance is prefixed to each paper. The great extent and very

* For my own sake in part, but principally for the honour of my Conservative Brethren who ultimately concurred in my appointment, I think it right to state, that this resignation was in no degree a matter of compromise or arrangement, with a view to that appointment:—the fact being, on the contrary, that I gave no hint of my purpose, in any quarter, till after the election was over—or at all events till after the withdrawal of the learned and distinguished Person who had been put in nomination against me, had made it certain that my return would be unanimous. His perseverance, I doubt not, might have endangered that result: For, though considerably my junior, his eminence in the profession was, even then I believe, quite equal to mine. But he generously deferred to my Seniority.

miscellaneous nature of the subjects discussed, seemed to make such a course ineligible; and rather to suggest the propriety of a distribution with reference to these subjects. I have now attempted therefore to class them under a few general Heads or titles, with a view to such a connection: And, though not very artificially digested, or strictly adhered to, I think the convenience of most readers will be found to have been consulted by this arrangement. The particular papers in each group or division, have also been placed in the order, rather of their natural dependence, or analogy to each other, than of the times when they were respectively written. I am now sensible that, by adopting this plan, I have brought more strikingly into view, the repetitions, as well as the discrepancies and small inconsistencies, which I take to be incident to this kind of writing. But this is a reproach, or disadvantage, to which I must be content to submit: and from which I do not apprehend that I shall have much to suffer, in the judgment of good-natured readers. There are many more important matters as to which I am conscious that I shall need all their indulgence: But to which I do not think it necessary, as I am sure it would not be *prudent*, now to direct their attention.

Before closing this notice, there is a little matter as to which several of my friends have suggested that I ought to take this opportunity of giving an explanation. My own first impression was, that this was unnecessary; and, but for the illustrious name which is connected with the subject, I should still be of that opinion. As it is, I cannot now refuse to say a few words on it.

In the second volume of Mr. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott, there are (at page 219) several extracts from a letter of Sir Walter to Mr. George Ellis, dated in December 1808, and referring among other things to the projected establishment of the Quarterly Review: in connection with which topic, the following passage occurs—"Jeffrey has offered terms of pacification—*engaging that no party politics should again appear in his Review.* I told him I thought it was now too late; and reminded him that I had often pointed out to him the consequences of letting his work become a party tool. He said, he did not care for the consequences; They were but four men he feared as opponents, &c. All this was in great good humour. He has no suspicion of our Review whatever."

Now though I have no particular recollection of the conversation here alluded to, and should never dream, at any rate, of setting up any recollection of so distant an occurrence in opposition to a contemporary record of it by such a man as Sir Walter Scott—I feel myself fully warranted in saying that the words I have put in italics are calculated to convey an inaccurate impression of any thing I could possibly have said on that occasion;—and that I am morally certain that I never offered to come under any such engagement as these words, in their broad and unqualified sense, would seem to imply. Of course, I impute no intentional misrepresentation to Sir Walter Scott. Of that he was as incapable, as I trust I am of the baseness of making the imputation. Neither can I think it possible that he should have misunderstood me at the time. But in hastily writing a familiar letter I am satisfied that he has expressed himself inaccurately—or at least imperfectly—and used words which convey a far larger and more peremptory meaning than truly belonged to any thing I could have uttered. My reasons for this conviction I think may be stated, to the satisfaction even of those to whom the circumstances of the parties may yet be unknown.

My first reason is, that I most certainly *had no power* to come under any such engagement, without the consent of the original and leading Contributors,—from whom no such consent could then have been expected. I was not the Proprietor of the work—nor the representative, in any sense, of the proprietors—but merely the chosen (and removeable) manager for the leading contributors; the greater part of whom certainly then looked upon the *Political* influence of the Review, as that which gave it its chief value and importance. This condition of things was matter of notoriety at Edinburgh at the time. But at all events nobody was more thoroughly aware of it than Sir Walter Scott. He has himself mentioned, in the passage already quoted, that he had frequently before remonstrated with me on what he thought the intemperate tone of some our political articles: and though I generally made the best defence I could for them, I distinctly remember more than one occasion on which, after admitting that the youthful ardour of some of our associates had carried them farther than I could approve of, I begged him to consider that it was quite impossible for me always to repress this—and to remember that I was but a *Feudal* monarch, who had but a slender control over his greater Barons—and really could not prevent them from occasionally waging a little private war, upon griefs or resentments of their own. I am as certain of having repeatedly expressed this sentiment, and used this illustration to Sir Walter Scott, as I am of my own existence.

But in the next place it requires no precise recollection of words or occasions, to enable me now to say, that, neither in 1808, nor for long periods before and after, did my party principles (or prejudices or predilections) sit so loosely upon me, as that I should ever have agreed to lay them aside, or to desist from their assertion, merely to secure the assistance of a contributor (however distinguished), to what would then have been a mere literary undertaking. For the value I then set on those principles I may still venture to refer to twenty-five years spent as their uncompromising advocate—at the hazard at least, if not to the injury, of my personal and professional interests. I have no wish at this moment to recall the particulars of that advocacy: But I think I may safely say that if, in December

1808, I could have bargained to desist from it, *and to silence the Edinburgh Review as an organ of party*, I might have stipulated for somewhat higher advantages than the occasional co-operation of Sir Walter Scott (for he never was a *regular* contributor even to the Quarterly) in a work in which I had little interest beyond that of commanding a ready vehicle for the dissemination of my own favoured opinions.

All this rests, it will be observed, not upon the terms of any particular conversation, which might of course be imperfectly remembered—but upon my own certain knowledge of the principles by which I was actuated for a long course of years; and which I cannot but think were then indicated by a sufficient number of overt acts, to make it easy to establish the mastery they exercised over me, by extrinsic evidence, if necessary. If the prevalence of these principles, however, is plainly inconsistent with the literal accuracy of the passage in question, or the fact of my having actually made such an offer as is there mentioned, I think myself entitled to conclude that the statement in that passage *is* inaccurate; and that a careless expression has led to an incorrect representation of the fact.

And here also I hope I may be permitted to refer to a very distinct recollection of the tenor, not of one but of many conversations with Sir Walter, in which he was directly apprised of the impossibility (even if I could have desired it) of excluding politics (which of course could mean nothing but party politics) from the Review. The undue preponderance of such articles in that journal was a frequent subject of remonstrance with him: and I perfectly remember that, when urging upon me the expediency of making Literature our great staple, and only indulging occasionally in those more exciting discussions, I have repeatedly told him that, with the political influence we had already acquired, this was not to be expected—and that by such a course the popularity and authority of the Review would be fatally impaired, even for its literary judgments:—and upon one of these occasions, I am quite certain that I made use of this expression to him—"The Review, in short, has but two legs to stand on. Literature no doubt is one of them: But its *Right leg* is Politics." Of this I have the clearest recollection.

I have dwelt too long, I fear, on this slight but somewhat painful incident of my early days. But I cannot finally take leave of it without stating my own strong conviction of what must have actually passed on the occasion so often referred to; and of the way in which I conceive my illustrious friend to have been led to the inaccuracy I have already noticed, in his report of it. I have already said, that I do not pretend to have any recollection of this particular conversation: But combining the details which are given in Sir Walter's letter, with my certain knowledge of the tenor of many previous conversations on the same subject, I have now little doubt that, after deprecating his threatened secession from our ranks, I acknowledged my regret at the needless asperity of some of our recent *diatribes* on politics—expressed my own disapprobation of violence and personality in such discussions—and engaged to do what I could to repress or avoid such excesses for the future. It is easy, I think, to see how *this* engagement,—to discourage, so far as my influence went, *all violent and unfair party politics*,—might be represented, in Sir Walter's brief and summary report, as an engagement to avoid party politics altogether:—the inaccuracy amounting only to the omission of a qualification,—to which he probably ascribed less importance than truly belonged to it.

Other imputations, I am aware, have been publicly made against me, far heavier than this which has tempted me into so long an explanation. But with these I do not now concern myself: And, as they never gave me a moment's anxiety at the time, so I am now contented to refer, for their refutation, to the tenor of all I have ever written, and the testimony of all to whom I have been personally known. With any thing bearing the name of Sir Walter Scott, however, the case is different: And when, from any statement of his, I feel that I may be accused, even of the venial offences of assuming a power which did not truly belong to me—or of being too ready to compromise my political opinions, from general love to literature or deference to individual genius, I think myself called upon to offer all the explanations in my power:—While I do not stoop to meet, even with a formal denial, the absurd and degrading charges with which I have been occasionally assailed, by persons of a different description.

F. JEFFREY.

Craigcrook, 10th November, 1843.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE v

GENERAL LITERATURE AND LITERARY BIOGRAPHY.

Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste. By ARCHIBALD ALISON, LL. B., F.R. S., Prebendary of Sarum 13

De la Littérature considérée dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales. Par Mad. de STAËL-HOLSTEIN. Avec un Précis de la Vie et les Ecrits de l'Auteur 40

The Complete Works, in Philosophy, Politics, and Morals, of the late Dr. Benjamin Franklin. Now first collected and arranged. With Memoirs of his Early Life, written by Himself 60

The Works of Jonathan Swift, D. D., Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. Containing Additional Letters, Tracts, and Poems, not hitherto published. With Notes, and a Life of the Author, by WALTER SCOTT, Esq 68

Correspondance inédite de Madame du Deffand, avec D'Alembert, Montesquieu, le Président Henault, La Duchesse du Maine, Mesdames de Choiseul, De Staal, &c. &c.. 93

Lettres de Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, écrites depuis l'Année 1773 jusqu' à l'Année 1776, &c. ..... *ib.*

Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship: a Novel. From the German of GOETHE 104

The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, Author of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison; selected from the original Manuscripts bequeathed to his Family. To which are prefixed, a Biographical Account of that Author, and Observations on his Writings. By ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD 121

Correspondance, Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique. Adressée à un Souverain d'Allemagne, depuis 1770 jusqu'à 1782. Par le BARON DE GRIMM, et par DIDEROT 129

Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Victor Alfieri. Written by Himself 143

The Life and Posthumous Writings of William Cowper, Esq. With an Introductory Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Cowper. By WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq..... 154, 163

HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MEMOIRS.

Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson, Governor of Nottingham Castle and Town, Representative of the County of Nottingham in the Long Parliament, and of the Town of Nottingham in the First Parliament of Charles II. &c.; with Original Anecdotes of many of the most distinguished of his Contemporaries, and a summary Review of Public Affairs: Written by his Widow, Lucy, daughter of Sir Allen Apsley, Lieutenant of the Tower, &c. Now first published from the Original Manuscript, by the Rev. JULIUS HUTCHINSON, &c. &c. To which is prefixed the Life of Mrs. Hutchinson, written by Herself, a Fragment 168

Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, Wife of the Right Honourable Sir Richard Fanshawe, Baronet, Ambassador from Charles the Second to the Court of Madrid in 1665. Written by Herself. To which are added, Extracts from the Correspondence of Sir Richard Fanshawe 179

Memoirs of Samuel Pepys, Esq. F. R. S., Secretary to the Admiralty in the Reigns of Charles II. and James II., comprising his Diary from 1659 to 1669, deciphered by the Rev. John Smith, A. B., of St. John's College, Cambridge, from the original Shorthand MS. in the Pepysian Library, and a Selection from his Private Correspondence. Edited by RICHARD LORD BRAYBROOKE 183

A History of the early Part of the Reign of James the Second; with an Introductory Chapter. By the Right Honourable CHARLES JAMES FOX. To which is added an Appendix 197

PAGE.

Mémoires d'un Témoin de la Révolution; ou Journal des faits qui se sont passé sous ses yeux, et qui ont preparé et fixé la Constitution Française. Ouvrage Posthume de Jean Sylvain Bailly, Premier Président de l'Assemblée Nationale Constituant, Premier Maire de Paris, et Membre des Trois Académies..... 210

Considérations sur les Principaux Evènemens de la Révolution Française. Ouvrage Posthume de Madame la Baronne de Staël. Publié par M. le Duc De Broglie et M. le Baron A. De Staël..... 216

Mémoires de Madame la Marquise de Larochejaquelein; avec deux Cartes du Théatre de la Guerre de La Vendée..... 234

Mémoires de Frederique Sophie Wilhelmine de Prusse, Margrave de Bareith, Sœur de Frederic le Grand. Ecrits de sa Main..... 249

History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus. By Washington Irving.... 259

Memoirs of Zehir-ed-din Muhammed Baber, Emperor of Hindustan, written by Himself, in the Jaghatai Turki, and translated partly by the late John Leyden, Esq. M. D., partly by William Erskine, Esq. With Notes and a Geographical and Historical Introduction: together with a Map of the Countries between the Oxus and Jaxartes, and a Memoir regarding its Construction, by Charles Waddington, Esq., of the East India Company's Engineers..... 272

POETRY.

Specimens of the British Poets; with Biographical and Critical Notices, and an Essay on English Poetry. By Thomas Campbell..... 286

The Dramatic Works of John Ford; with an Introduction and Explanatory Notes. By Henry Weber, Esq..... 299

Characters of Shakespeare's Plays. By William Hazlitt..... 309

Sardanapalus, a Tragedy. The Two Foscari, a Tragedy. Cain, a Mystery. By Lord Byron..... 316

Manfred; a Dramatic Poem. By Lord Byron..... 330

Reliques of Robert Burns, consisting chiefly of Original Letters, Poems, and Critical Observations on Scottish Songs. Collected and published by R. H. Cromek..... 335

Gertrude of Wyoming, a Pennsylvania tale; and other Poems. By Thomas Campbell, author of "The Pleasures of Hope," &c..... 347

Theodric, a Domestic Tale: with other Poems. By Thomas Campbell..... 354

The Lay of the Last Minstrel: a Poem. By Walter Scott..... 359

The Lady of the Lake: a Poem. By Walter Scott..... 367

Poems. By the Reverend George Crabbe..... 380

The Borough: a Poem, in Twenty-four Letters. By the Rev. George Crabbe, LL.B.. 387

Tales. By the Reverend George Crabbe..... 396

Tales of the Hall. By the Reverend George Crabbe..... 405

Endymion: a Poetic Romance. By John Keats..... 413

Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and other Poems. By John Keats, author of "Endymion"..... *ib.*

Human Life: a Poem. By Samuel Rogers..... 419

Roderick: The Last of the Goths. By Robert Southey, Esq., Poet-Laureate, and Member of the Royal Spanish Academy..... 424

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto the Third. By Lord Byron..... 434

The Prisoner of Chillon, and other Poems. By Lord Byron..... *ib.*

Lalla Rookh; an Oriental Romance. By Thomas Moore..... 446

The Excursion; being a Portion of the Recluse, a Poem. By William Wordsworth. 457

The White Doe of Rylstone; or the Fate of the Nortons: a Poem. By William Wordsworth..... 469

Records of Women: with other Poems. By Felicia Hemans..... 473

The Forest Sanctuary: with other Poems. By Felicia Hemans..... *ib.*

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MIND, METAPHYSICS, AND JURISPRUDENCE.

Traités de Législation Civile et Pénale; précédés de Principes Généraux de Législation, et d'une Vue d'un Corps complet de Droit; terminés par un Essai sur l'influence des Tems et des Lieux relativement aux Lois. Par M. Jérémie Bentham, Jurisconsulte Anglois. Publiés en François par M. Dumont de Genève, d'après les Manuscrits confiés par l'Auteur..... 479

PAGE.

Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Reid, D.D., F.R.S. Edinburgh, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. By Dugald Stewart, F.R.S.. 486

Memoirs of Dr. Joseph Priestley, to the Year 1795, written by himself: With a Continuation to the Time of his Decease, by his Son Joseph Priestley; and Observations on his Writings. By Thomas Cooper, President Judge of the Fourth District of Pennsylvania, and the Reverend William Christie..... 492

Academical Questions. By the Right Honourable William Drummond, K.C., F.R.S., F.R.S.E. Author of a Translation of Persius..... 496

An Account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie, LL.D., late Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic in the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen: including many of his original Letters. By Sir W. Forbes of Pitsligo, Baronet, one of the Executors of Dr. Beattie..... 501

Philosophical Essays. By Dugald Stewart, Esq., F.R.S. Edinburgh, Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, &c. &c..... 504

NOVELS, TALES, AND PROSE WORKS OF FICTION.

Tales of Fashionable Life. By Miss Edgeworth, Author of "Practical Education," "Belinda," "Castle Rackrent," &c..... 512. 517

Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since..... 523

Tales of My Landlord, collected and arranged by Jedediah Cleishbotham, Schoolmaster and Parish Clerk of the Parish of Gandercleugh..... 528

Rob Roy. By the Author of "Waverley," "Guy Mannering," and "The Antiquary" 535

Ivanhoe. A Romance. By the Author of "Waverley," &c..... 537

The Novels and Tales of the Author of "Waverley;" comprising "Waverley," "Guy Mannering," "Antiquary," "Rob Roy," "Tales of My Landlord, First, Second, and Third Series;" New Edition, with a copious Glossary..... *ib.*

The Fortunes of Nigel. By the Author of "Waverley," "Kenilworth," &c..... 543

Annals of the Parish, or the Chronicles of Dalmailing, during the Ministry of the Rev. Micah Balwhidder. Written by Himself..... 548

The Ayrshire Legatees, or the Pringle Family. By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c..... *ib.*

The Provost. By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," "Ayrshire Legatees," &c.... *ib.*

Sir Andrew Wyllie of that Ilk. By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c..... *ib.*

The Steam Boat. By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c..... *ib.*

The Entail, or the Lairds of Grippy. By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," "Sir Andrew Wyllie," &c..... *ib.*

Ringan Gilhaize, or the Covenanters. By the Author of "Annals of the Parish," &c... *ib.*

Valerius, a Roman Story..... *ib.*

Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life..... *ib.*

Some Passages in the Life of Mr. Adam Blair, Minister of the Gospel at Cross-Meikle.. *ib.*

The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay. By the Author of "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life"..... *ib.*

Reginald Dalton. By the Author of "Valerius," and "Adam Blair"..... *ib.*

GENERAL POLITICS.

Essay on the Practice of the British Government, distinguished from the abstract Theory on which it is supposed to be founded. By Gould Francis Leckie..... 564

A Song of Triumph. By W. Sotheby, Esq..... 577

L'Acte Constitutionnel, en la Séance du 9 Avril, 1814..... *ib.*

Of Bonaparte, the Bourbons, and the Necessity of rallying round our legitimate Princes for the Happiness of France and of Europe. By F. Chateaubriand..... *ib.*

Speech of the Right Hon. William Windham, in the House of Commons, May 26, 1809, on Mr. Curwen's Bill, "for better securing the Independence and Purity of Parliament, by Preventing the procuring or obtaining of Seats by corrupt Practices".. 594

Short Remarks on the State of Parties at the Close of the Year 1809..... 604

The History of Ireland. By John O'Driscol..... 610

Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honourable Richard Brinsley Sheridan. By Thomas Moore..... 616

MISCELLANEOUS.

PAGE.

An Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain respecting the United States of America. Part First. Containing an Historical Outline of their Merits and Wrongs as Colonies, and Strictures on the Calumnies of British Writers. By Robert Walsh, Esq. 621

Bracebridge Hall; or, the Humourists. By Geoffrey Crayon, Gent., Author of "The Sketch Book," &c. 637

A Portraiture of Quakerism, as taken from a View of the Moral Education, Discipline, Peculiar Customs, Religious Principles, Political and Civil Economy, and Character of the Society of Friends. By Thomas Clarkson, M. A., Author of several Essays on the Subject of the Slave Trade 643

Memoirs of the Private and Public Life of William Penn. By Thomas Clarkson, M. A. 651

A Selection from the Public and Private Correspondence of Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood: interspersed with Memoirs of his Life. By G. L. Newnham Collingwood, Esq., F. R. S. 659

Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824, 1825 (with Notes upon Ceylon); an Account of a Journey to Madras and the Southern Provinces, 1826; and Letters written in India. By the late Right Reverend Reginald Heber, Lord Bishop of Calcutta 666

Sketches of India. Written by an Officer, for Fire-Side Travellers at Home 674

Scenes and Impressions in Egypt and in Italy. By the Author of "Sketches of India," and "Recollections of the Peninsula" . . . . . *ib.*

Letters from a late eminent Prelate to one of his Friends 683

Memoirs of the Political and Private Life of James Caulfield, Earl of Charlemont, Knight of St. Patrick, &c. &c. By Francis Hardy, Esq., Member of the House of Commons in the three last Parliaments of Ireland 693

An Inquiry whether Crime and Misery are produced or prevented by our present System of Prison discipline. Illustrated by Descriptions of the Borough Compter, Tothill Fields Prison, the Jail at St. Albans, the Jail at Guilford, the Jail at Bristol, the Jails at Bury and Ilchester, the Maison de Force at Ghent, the Philadelphia Prison, the Penitentiary at Millbank, and the Proceedings of the Ladies' Committee at Newgate. By Thomas Fowell Buxton 700

Memoirs of Richard Cumberland: written by Himself. Containing an Account of his Life and Writings, interspersed with Anecdotes and Characters of the most distinguished Persons of his Time with whom he had Intercourse or Connection 707

The Works of the Right Honourable Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Including her Correspondence, Poems, and Essays 711

The Life of the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, late Master of the Rolls in Ireland. By his Son, William Henry Curran, Barrister-at-Law 717

Switzerland, or a Journal of a Tour and Residence in that Country in the Years 1817, 1818, 1819. Followed by an Historical Sketch of the Manners and Customs of Ancient and Modern Helvetia, in which the Events of our own Time are fully Detailed; together with the Causes to which they may be referred. By L. Simond, Author of "Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain during the Years 1810 and 1811" 725

Rejected Addresses; or the New Theatrum Poetarum 732

Œuvres Inédites de Madame la Baronne de Staël, publiées par son Fils; précédées d'une Notice sur le Caractère et les Ecrits de M. de Staël. Par Madame Necker Saussure 737

Memoirs of the Life of the Right Honourable Sir James Mackintosh. Edited by his Son, Robert James Mackintosh, Esq. 742

Notice of the Honourable Henry Erskine 756

Notice and Character of Professor Playfair 757

Notice and Character of James Watt 760

GENERAL LITERATURE

AND

LITERARY BIOGRAPHY.

(May, 1811.)

Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste.—By Archibald Alison, LL.B., F. R. S., Prebendary of Sarum,* &c. 2 vols. 8vo.

There are few parts of our nature which have given more trouble to philosophers, or appeared more simple to the unreflecting, than the perceptions we have of Beauty, and the circumstances under which these are presented to us. If we ask one of the latter (and larger) class, what beauty is? we shall most probably be answered, that it is what makes things pleasant to look at; and if we remind him that many other things are called and perceived to be beautiful, besides objects of sight, and ask how, or by what faculty he supposes that we distinguish such objects, we must generally be satisfied with hearing that it has pleased God to make us capable of such a perception. The science of mind may not appear to be much advanced by these responses; and yet, if it could be made out, as some have alleged, that our perception of beauty was a simple sensation, like our perception of colour, and that the faculty of taste was an original and distinct sense, like that of seeing or hearing; this would be truly the only account that could be given, either of the sense or of its object;—and all that we could do, in investigating the nature of the latter, would be to ascertain and enumerate the circumstances under which it was found to indicate itself to its appropriate organ. All that we can say of colour, if we consider it very strictly, is, that it is that property in objects by which they make themselves known to the faculty of sight; and the faculty of sight can scarcely be defined in any other way than as that by which we are enabled to discover the existence of colour. When we attempt to proceed farther, and, on being asked to define what green or red is, say that green is the colour of grass, and red of roses or of blood, it is plain that we do not in any respect explain the nature of those colours, but only *give instances* of their occurrence; and that one who had never seen the objects referred to could learn nothing whatever from these pretended definitions. Complex ideas, on the other hand, and compound emotions, may always be defined, and explained to a certain extent, by enumerating the parts of which they are made up, or resolving them into the elements of which they are composed: and we may thus acquire, not only a substantial, though limited, knowledge of their nature, but a practical power in their regulation or production.

It becomes of importance, therefore, in the very outset of this inquiry, to consider whether our sense of beauty be really a simple sensation, like some of those we have enumerated, or a compound or derivative feeling, the sources or elements of which may be investigated and ascertained. If it be the former, we have then only to refer it to the peculiar sense or faculty of which it is the object; and to determine, by repeated observation, under what circumstances that sense is called into action: but if it be the latter, we shall have to proceed, by a joint process of observation and reflection, to ascertain what are the primary feelings to which it may be referred; and by what peculiar modification of them it is produced and distinguished. We are not quite prepared, as yet, to exhaust the whole of this important discussion, to which we shall be obliged to return in the sequel of our inquiry; but it is necessary, in order to explain and to set forth, in their natural order, the difficulties with which the subject is surrounded, to state here, in a very few words, one or two of the most obvious, and, as we think, decisive objections against the notion of beauty being a simple sensation, or the object of a separate and peculiar faculty.

The first, and perhaps the most consider-

* The greater part of this paper was first printed in the Edinburgh Review for May 1811; but was afterwards considerably enlarged, and inserted as a separate article (under the word Beauty) in the supplement to the *Encyclopædia Brittannica*, published in 1824, and subsequently incorporated into the new edition of that great work in 1841, from which it is now reprinted in its complete form, by the liberal allowance of the proprietors.

able, is the want of agreement as to the presence and existence of beauty in particular objects, among men whose organization is perfect, and who are plainly possessed of the faculty, whatever it may be, by which beauty is discerned. Now, no such thing happens, we imagine, or can be conceived to happen, in the case of any other simple sensation, or the exercise of any other distinct faculty. Where one man sees light, all men who have eyes see light also. All men allow grass to be green, and sugar to be sweet, and ice to be cold; and the unavoidable inference from any apparent disagreement in such matters necessarily is, that the party is insane, or entirely destitute of the sense or organ concerned in the perception. With regard to beauty, however, it is obvious, at first sight, that the case is entirely different. One man sees it perpetually, where to another it is quite invisible, or even where its reverse seems to be conspicuous. Nor is this owing to the insensibility of either of the parties; for the same contrariety exists where both are keenly alive to the influences of the beauty they respectively discern. A Chinese or African lover would probably see nothing at all attractive in a belle of London or Paris; and, undoubtedly, an *elegans formarum spectator* from either of those cities would discover nothing but deformity in the Venus of the Hottentots. A little distance in time often produces the same effects as distance in place;—the gardens, the furniture, the dress, which appeared beautiful in the eyes of our grandfathers, are odious and ridiculous in ours. Nay, the difference of rank, education, or employments, gives rise to the same diversity of sensation. The little shop-keeper sees a beauty in his roadside box, and in the staring tile roof, wooden lions, and clipped boxwood, which strike horror into the soul of the student of the picturesque; while *he* is transported in surveying the fragments of ancient sculpture, which are nothing but ugly masses of mouldering stone, in the judgment of the admirer of neatness. It is needless, however, to multiply instances, since the fact admits of no contradiction. But how can we believe that beauty is the object of a peculiar sense or faculty, when persons undoubtedly possessed of the faculty, and even in an eminent degree, can discover nothing of it in objects where it is distinctly felt and perceived by others with the same use of the faculty?

This one consideration, we confess, appears to us conclusive against the supposition of beauty being a real property of objects, addressing itself to the power of taste as a separate sense or faculty; and it seems to point irresistibly to the conclusion, that our sense of it is the result of other more elementary feelings, into which it may be analysed or resolved. A second objection, however, if possible of still greater force, is suggested, by considering the prodigious and almost infinite variety of things to which this property of beauty is ascribed; and the impossibility of imagining any one inherent quality which can belong to them all, and yet at the same time possess so much unity as to pass universally by the same name, and be recognised as the peculiar object of a separate sense or faculty. All simple qualities that are perceived in any one object, are immediately recognised to be *the same*, when they are again perceived in another; and the objects in which they are thus perceived are at once felt so far to resemble each other, and to partake of the same nature. Thus snow is seen to be white, and chalk is seen to be white; but this is no sooner seen, than the two substances, however unlike in other respects, are felt at once to have *this* quality in common, and to resemble each other completely in all that relates to the quality of colour, and the sense of seeing. But is this felt, or could it even be intelligibly asserted, with regard to the quality of beauty? Take even a limited and specific sort of beauty—for instance, the beauty of form. The form of a fine tree is beautiful, and the form of a fine woman, and the form of a column, and a vase, and a chandelier. Yet how can it be said that the form of a woman has any thing in common with that of a tree or a temple? or to which of the senses by which forms are distinguished can it be supposed to appear that they have any resemblance or affinity?

The matter, however, becomes still more inextricable when we recollect that beauty does not belong merely to forms or colours, but to sounds, and perhaps to the objects of other senses; nay, that in all languages and in all nations, it is not supposed to reside exclusively in material objects, but to belong also to sentiments and ideas, and intellectual and moral existences. Not only is a tree beautiful, as well as a palace or a waterfall; but a poem is beautiful, and a theorem in mathematics, and a contrivance in mechanics. But if things intellectual and totally segregated from matter may thus possess beauty, how can it possibly be a quality of material objects? or what sense or faculty can that be, whose proper office it is to intimate to us the existence of some property which is common to a flower and a demonstration, a valley and an eloquent discourse?

The only answer which occurs to this is plainly enough a bad one; but the statement of it, and of its insufficiency, will serve better, perhaps, than any thing else, to develope the actual difficulties of the subject, and the true state of the question with regard to them. It may be said, then, in answer to the questions we have suggested above, that all these objects, however various and dissimilar, agree at least in being agreeable, and that this *agreeableness*, which is the only quality they possess in common, may probably be the beauty which is ascribed to them all. Now, to those who are accustomed to such discussions, it would be quite enough to reply, that though the agreeableness of such objects depend plainly enough upon their beauty, it by no means follows, but quite the contrary, that their beauty depends upon their agreeableness; the latter being the more comprehensive or generic term, under which beauty must rank as one of the species. Its nature, there

fore, is no more explained, nor is less absurdity substantially committed, by saying that things are beautiful because they are agreeable, than if we were to give the same explanation of the sweetness of sugar; for no one, we suppose, will dispute, that though it be very true that sugar is agreeable because it is sweet, it would be manifestly preposterous to say that it was sweet because it was agreeable. For the benefit, however, of those who wish or require to be more regularly initiated in these mysteries, we beg leave to add a few observations.

In the first place, then, it seems evident, that agreeableness, in general, cannot be the same with beauty, because there are very many things in the highest degree agreeable, that can in no sense be called beautiful. Moderate heat, and savoury food, and rest, and exercise, are agreeable to the body; but none of these can be called beautiful; and among objects of a higher class, the love and esteem of others, and fame, and a good conscience, and health, and riches, and wisdom, are all eminently agreeable; but none at all beautiful, according to any intelligible use of the word. It is plainly quite absurd, therefore, to say that beauty consists in agreeableness, without specifying in consequence of what it is agreeable—or to hold that any thing whatever is taught as to its nature, by merely classing it among our pleasurable emotions.

In the second place, however, we may remark, that among all the objects that are agreeable, whether they are also beautiful or not, scarcely any two are agreeable on account of the same qualities, or even suggest their agreeableness to the same faculty or organ. Most certainly there is no resemblance or affinity whatever between the qualities which make a peach agreeable to the palate, and a beautiful statue to the eye; which soothe us in an easy chair by the fire, or delight us in a philosophical discovery. The truth is, that agreeableness is not properly a quality of any object whatsoever, but the effect or result of certain qualities, the nature of which, in every particular instance, we can generally define pretty exactly, or of which we know at least with certainty that they manifest themselves respectively to some one particular sense or faculty, and to no other; and consequently it would be just as obviously ridiculous to suppose a faculty or organ, whose office it was to perceive agreeableness in general, as to suppose that agreeableness was a distinct quality that could thus be perceived.

The class of agreeable objects, thanks to the bounty of Providence, is exceedingly large. Certain things are agreeable to the palate, and others to the smell and to the touch. Some again are agreeable to our faculty of imagination, or to our understanding, or to our moral feelings; and none of all these we call beautiful. But there are others which we do call beautiful; and those we say are agreeable to our faculty of taste;—but when we come to ask what is the faculty of taste, and what are the qualities which recommend the subjects to that faculty?—we have no such answer to give; and find ourselves just where we were at the beginning of the discussion, and embarrassed with all the difficulties arising from the prodigious diversity of objects which seem to possess these qualities.

We know pretty well what is the faculty of seeing or hearing; or, at least, we know that what is agreeable to one of those faculties, has no effect whatever on the other. We know that bright colours afford no delight to the ear, nor sweet tones to the eye; and are therefore perfectly assured that the qualities which make the visible objects agreeable, cannot be the same with those which give pleasure to the ear. But it is by the eye and by the ear that all material beauty is perceived; and yet the beauty which discloses itself to these two separate senses, and consequently *must* depend upon qualities which have no sort of affinity, is supposed to be one distinct quality, and to be perceived by a peculiar sense or faculty! The perplexity becomes still greater when we think of the beauty of poems or theorems, and endeavour to imagine what qualities they can possess in common with the agreeable modifications of light or of sound.

It is in these considerations undoubtedly that the difficulty of the subject consists. The faculty of taste, plainly, is not a faculty like any of the external senses, the range of whose objects is limited and precise, as well as the qualities by which they are gratified or offended; and beauty, accordingly, is discovered in an infinite variety of objects, among which it seems, at first sight, impossible to discover any other bond of connexion. Yet boundless as their diversity may appear, it is plain that they *must* resemble each other in *something*, and in something more definite and definable than merely in being agreeable; since they are all classed together, in every tongue and nation, under the common appellation of beautiful, and are felt indeed to produce emotions in the mind that have some sort of kindred or affinity. The words beauty and beautiful, in short, do and must mean something; and are universally felt to mean something much more definite than agreeableness or gratification in general: and while it is confessedly by no means easy to describe or define what that something is, the force and clearness of our perception of it is demonstrated by the readiness with which we determine, in any particular instance, whether the object of a given pleasurable emotion is or is not properly described as beauty.

What we have already said, we confess, appears to us conclusive against the idea of this beauty being any fixed or inherent property of the objects to which it is ascribed, or itself the object of any separate and independent faculty; and we will no longer conceal from the reader what we take to be the true solution of the difficulty. In our opinion, then, our sense of beauty depends entirely on our previous experience of simpler pleasures or emotions, and consists in the *suggestion* of agreeable or interesting sensations with which we had formerly been made familiar by the

direct and intelligible agency of our common sensibilities; and that vast variety of objects, to which we give the common name of beautiful, become entitled to that appellation, merely because they all possess the power of recalling or reflecting those sensations of which they have been the accompaniments, or with which they have been associated in our imagination by any other more casual bond of connection. According to this view of the matter, therefore, beauty is not an inherent property or quality of objects at all, but the result of the accidental relations in which they may stand to our experience of pleasures or emotions; and does not depend upon any particular configuration of parts, proportions, or colours, in external things, nor upon the unity, coherence, or simplicity of intellectual creations—but merely upon the associations which, in the case of every individual, may enable these inherent, and otherwise indifferent qualities, to suggest or recall to the mind emotions of a pleasurable or interesting description. It follows, therefore, that no object is beautiful in itself, or could appear so antecedent to our experience of direct pleasures or emotions; and that, as an infinite variety of objects may thus reflect interesting ideas, so all of them may acquire the title of beautiful, although utterly diverse and disparate in their nature, and possessing nothing in common but this accidental power of reminding us of other emotions.

This theory, which, we believe, is now very generally adopted, though under many needless qualifications, shall be farther developed and illustrated in the sequel. But at present we shall only remark, that it serves, at least, to solve the great problem involved in the discussion, by rendering it easily conceivable how objects which have no inherent resemblance, nor, indeed, any one quality in common, should yet be united in one common relation, and consequently acquire one common name; just as all the things that belonged to a beloved individual may serve to remind us of him, and thus to awake a kindred class of emotions, though just as unlike each other as any of the objects that are classed under the general name of beautiful. His poetry, for instance, or his slippers—his acts of bounty or his saddle-horse—may lead to the same chain of interesting remembrances, and thus agree in possessing a power of excitement, for the sources of which we should look in vain through all the variety of their physical or metaphysical qualities.

By the help of the same consideration, we get rid of all the mystery of a peculiar sense or faculty, imagined for the express purpose of perceiving beauty; and discover that the power of taste is nothing more than the habit of tracing those associations, by which almost all objects may be connected with interesting emotions. It is easy to understand, that the recollection of any scene of delight or emotion must produce a certain agreeable sensation, and that the objects which introduce these recollections should not appear altogether indifferent to us: nor is it, perhaps, very difficult to imagine, that recollections thus strikingly suggested by some real and present existence, should present themselves under a different aspect, and move the mind somewhat differently from those which arise spontaneously in the ordinary course of our reflections, and do not thus grow out of a direct, present, and peculiar impression.

The whole of this doctrine, however, we shall endeavour by and bye to establish upon more direct evidence. But having now explained, in a general way, both the difficulties of the subject, and our suggestion as to their true solution, it is proper that we should take a short review of the more considerable theories that have been proposed for the elucidation of this curious question; which is one of the most delicate as well as the most popular in the science of metaphysics—was one of the earliest which exercised the speculative ingenuity of philosophers—and has at last, we think, been more successfully treated than any other of a similar description.

In most of these speculations we shall find rather imperfect truth than fundamental error; or, at all events, such errors only as arise naturally from that peculiar difficulty which we have already endeavoured to explain, as consisting in the prodigious multitude and diversity of the objects in which the common quality of beauty was to be accounted for. Those who have not been sufficiently aware of the difficulty have generally dogmatised from a small number of instances, and have rather given examples of the occurrence of beauty in some few classes of objects, than afforded any light as to that upon which it essentially depended in all; while those who felt its full force have very often found no other resource, than to represent beauty as consisting in properties so extremely vague and general, (such, for example, as the power of exciting ideas of relation,) as almost to elude our comprehension, and, at the same time, of so abstract and metaphysical a description, as not to be very intelligibly stated, as the elements of a strong, familiar, and pleasurable emotion.

This last observation leads us to make one other remark upon the general character of these theories; and this is, that some of them, though not openly professing that doctrine, seem necessarily to *imply* the existence of a peculiar sense or faculty for the perception of beauty; as they resolve it into properties that are not in any way interesting or agreeable to any of our known faculties. Such are all those which make it consist in proportion—or in variety, combined with regularity—or in waving lines—or in unity—or in the perception of relations—without explaining, or attempting to explain, how any of these things should, in any circumstances, affect us with delight or emotion. Others, again, do not require the supposition of any such separate faculty; because in them the sense of beauty is considered as arising from other more simple and familiar emotions, which are in themselves and beyond all dispute agreeable. Such are those which teach that

beauty depends on the perception of utility, or of design, or fitness, or in tracing associations between its objects and the common joys or emotions of our nature. Which of these two classes of speculation, to one or other of which, we believe, all theories of beauty may be reduced, is the most philosophical in itself, we imagine can admit of no question; and we hope in the sequel to leave it as little doubtful, which is to be considered as most consistent with the fact. In the mean time, we must give a short account of some of the theories themselves.

The most ancient of which it seems necessary to take any notice, is that which may be traced in the Dialogues of Plato—though we are very far from pretending that it is possible to give any intelligible or consistent account of its tenor. It should never be forgotten, however, that it is to this subtle and ingenious spirit that we owe the suggestion, that it is *mind* alone that is beautiful; and that, in perceiving beauty, it only contemplates the shadow of its own affections;—a doctrine which, however mystically unfolded in his writings, or however combined with extravagant or absurd speculations, unquestionably carries in it the the germ of all the truth that has since been revealed on the subject. By far the largest dissertation, however, that this great philosopher has left upon the nature of beauty, is to be found in the dialogue entitled *The Greater Hippias*, which is entirely devoted to that inquiry. We do not learn a great deal of the author's own opinion, indeed, from this performance; for it is one of the dialogues which have been termed *Anatreptic*, or confuting—in which nothing is concluded in the affirmative, but a series of sophistical suggestions or hypotheses are successively exposed. The plan of it is to lead on Hippias, a shallow and confident sophist, to make a variety of dogmatical assertions as to the nature of beauty, and then to make him retract and abandon them, upon the statement of some obvious objections. Socrates and he agree at first in the notable proposition, "that beauty is that by which all beautiful things are beautiful;" and then, after a great number of suggestions, by far too childish and absurd to be worthy of any notice—such as, that the beautiful may peradventure be gold, or a fine woman, or a handsome mare—they at last get to some suppositions, which show that almost all the theories that have since been propounded on this interesting subject had occurred thus early to the active and original mind of this keen and curious inquirer. Thus, Socrates first suggests that beauty may consist in the fitness or suitableness of any object to the place it occupies; and afterwards, more generally and directly, that it may consist in utility—a notion which is ultimately rejected, however, upon the subtle consideration that the useful is that which produces good, and that the producer and the product being necessarily different, it would follow, upon that supposition, that beauty could not be good, nor good beautiful. Finally, he suggests that beauty may be the mere organic delight of the eye or the ear; to which, after stating very slightly the objection, that it would be impossible to account upon this ground for the beauty of poetry or eloquence, he proceeds to rear up a more refined and elaborate refutation, upon such grounds as these:—If beauty be the proper name of that which is naturally agreeable to the sight and hearing, it is plain, that the objects to which it is ascribed must possess some common and distinguishable property, besides that of being agreeable, in consequence of which they are separated and set apart from objects that are agreeable to our *other* senses and faculties, and, at the same time, classed together under the common appellation of beautiful. Now, we are not only quite unable to discover what this property is, but it is manifest, that objects which make themselves known to the ear, *can* have no property as such, in common with objects that make themselves known to the eye; it being impossible that an object which is beautiful by its colour, can be beautiful, from the same quality, with another which is beautiful by its sound. From all which it is inferred, that as beauty is admitted to be something real, it cannot be merely what is agreeable to the organs of sight or hearing.

There is no practical wisdom, we admit, in those fine-drawn speculations; nor any of that spirit of patient observation by which alone any sound view of such objects can ever be attained. There are also many marks of that singular incapacity to distinguish between what is absolutely puerile and foolish, and what is plausible, at least, and ingenious, which may be reckoned among the characteristics of "the divine philosopher," and in some degree of all the philosophers of antiquity: but they show clearly enough the subtle and abstract character of Greek speculation, and prove at how early a period, and to how great an extent, the inherent difficulties of the subject were felt, and produced their appropriate effects.

There are some hints on these subjects in the works of Xenophon; and some scattered observations in those of Cicero; who was the first, we believe, to observe, that the sense of beauty is peculiar to man; but nothing else, we believe, in classical antiquity, which requires to be analysed or explained. It appears that St. Augustin composed a large treatise on beauty; and it is to be lamented, that the speculations of that acute and ardent genius on such a subject have been lost. We discover, from incidental notices in other parts of his writings, that he conceived the beauty of all objects to depend on their unity, or on the perception of that principle or design which fixed the relations of their various parts, and presented them to the intellect or imagination as one harmonious whole. It would not be fair to deal very strictly with a theory with which we are so imperfectly acquainted: but it may be observed, that, while the author is so far in the right as to make beauty consist in a relation to mind, and not in any physical quality, he has taken

far too narrow and circumscribed a view of the matter, and one which seems almost exclusively applicable to works of human art; it being plain enough, we think, that a beautiful landscape, or a beautiful horse, has no more unity, and no more traces of design, than one which is not beautiful.

We do not pretend to know what the schoolmen taught upon this subject during the dark ages; but the discussion does not seem to have been resumed for long after the revival of letters. The followers of Leibnitz were pleased to maintain that beauty consisted in perfection; but what constituted perfection (in this respect) they did not attempt to define. M. Crouzas wrote a long essay, to show that beauty depended on these five elements, variety, unity, regularity, order, and proportion; and the Père André, a still longer one to prove, that, admitting these to be the true foundations of beauty, it was still most important to consider, that the beauty which results from them is either essential, or natural, or artificial—and that it may be greater or less, according as the characteristics of each of these classes are combined or set in opposition.

Among ourselves, we are not aware of any considerable publication on the subject till the appearance of Lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristics;* in which a sort of rapturous Platonic doctrine is delivered as to the existence of a primitive and Supreme Good and Beauty, and of a certain internal sense, by which both beauty and moral merit are distinguished. Addison published several ingenious papers in *The Spectator*, on the pleasures of the imagination, and was the first, we believe, who referred them to the specific sources of beauty, sublimity, and novelty. He did not enter much, however, into the metaphysical discussion of the nature of beauty itself; and the first philosophical treatise of note that appeared on the subject, may be said to have been the *Inquiry* of Dr. Hucheson, first published, we believe, in 1735.

In this work, the notion of a peculiar internal sense, by which we are made sensible of the existence of beauty, is very boldly promulgated, and maintained by many ingenious arguments: Yet nothing, we conceive, can be more extravagant than such a proposition; and nothing but the radical faults of the other parts of his theory could possibly have driven the learned author to its adoption. Even after the existence of the sixth sense was assumed, he felt that it was still necessary that he should explain what were the qualities by which it was gratified; and these, he was pleased to allege, were nothing but the combinations of variety with uniformity; all objects, as he has himself expressed it, which are equally uniform, being beautiful in proportion to their variety—and all objects equally various being beautiful in proportion to their uniformity. Now, not to insist upon the obvious and radical objection that this is not true in fact, as to flowers, landscapes, or indeed of any thing but architecture, if it be true of that—it could not fail to strike the ingenious author that these qualities of uniformity and variety were not of themselves agreeable to any of our known senses or faculties, except when considered as symbols of utility or design, and therefore could not intelligibly account for the very lively emotions which we often experience from the perception of beauty, where the notion of design or utility is not at all suggested. He was constrained, therefore, either to abandon this view of the nature of beauty altogether, or to imagine a new sense or faculty, whose only function it should be to receive delight from the combinations of uniformity and variety, without any consideration of their being significant of things agreeable to our other faculties; and this being accomplished by the mere force of the definition, there was no room for farther dispute or difficulty in the matter.

Some of Hucheson's followers, such as Gerard and others, who were a little startled at the notion of a separate faculty, and yet wished to retain the doctrine of beauty depending on variety and uniformity, endeavoured, accordingly, to show that these qualities were *naturally* agreeable to the mind, and were recommended by considerations arising from its most familiar properties. Uniformity or simplicity, they observed, renders our conception of objects easy, and saves the mind from all fatigue and distraction in the consideration of them; whilst variety, if circumscribed and limited by an ultimate uniformity, gives it a pleasing exercise and excitement, and keeps its energies in a state of pleasurable activity. Now, this appears to us to be mere trifling. The varied and lively emotions which we receive from the perception of beauty, obviously have no sort of resemblance to the pleasure of moderate intellectual exertion; nor can any thing be conceived more utterly dissimilar than the gratification we have in gazing on the form of a lovely woman, and the satisfaction we receive from working an easy problem in arithmetic or geometry. If a triangle is more beautiful than a regular polygon, as those authors maintain, merely because its figure is more easily comprehended, the number *four* should be more beautiful than the number 327, and the form of a gibbet far more agreeable than that of a branching oak. The radical error, in short, consists in fixing upon properties that are not interesting in themselves, and can never be conceived, therefore, to excite any emotion, as the fountain-spring of all our emotions of beauty: and it is an absurdity that must infallibly lead to others—whether these take the shape of a violent attempt to disguise the truly different nature of the properties so selected, or of the bolder expedient of creating a peculiar faculty, whose office it is to find them interesting.

The next remarkable theory was that proposed by Edmund Burke, in his *Treatise of the Sublime and Beautiful*. But of this, in spite of the great name of the author, we cannot persuade ourselves that it is necessary to say much. His explanation is founded upon a species of materialism—not much to have been expected from the general character of

his genius, or the strain of his other speculations—for it all resolves into this—that all objects appear beautiful, which have the power of producing a peculiar relaxation of our nerves and fibres, and thus inducing a certain degree of bodily languor and sinking. Of all the suppositions that have been at any time hazarded to explain the phenomena of beauty, this, we think, is the most unfortunately imagined, and the most weakly supported. There is no philosophy in the doctrine—and the fundamental assumption is in every way contradicted by the most familiar experience. There is no relaxation of the fibres in the perception of beauty—and there is no pleasure in the relaxation of the fibres. If there were, it would follow, that a warm bath would be by far the most beautiful thing in the world—and that the brilliant lights, and bracing airs of a fine autumn morning, would be the very reverse of beautiful. Accordingly, though the treatise alluded to will always be valuable on account of the many fine and just remarks it contains, we are not aware that there is any accurate inquirer into the subject (with the exception, perhaps, of Mr. Price, in whose hands, however, the doctrine assumes a new character) by whom the fundamental principle of the theory has not been explicitly abandoned.

A yet more extravagant doctrine was soon afterwards inculcated, and in a tone of great authority, in a long article from the brilliant pen of Diderot, in the French *Encyclopédie;* and one which exemplifies, in a very striking manner, the nature of the difficulties with which the discussion is embarrassed. This ingenious person, perceiving at once, that the beauty which we ascribe to a particular class of objects, could not be referred to any peculiar and inherent quality in the objects themselves, but depended upon their power of exciting certain sentiments in our minds; and being, at the same time, at a loss to discover what common power could belong to so vast a variety of objects as pass under the general appellation of beautiful, or by what tie all the various emotions which are excited by the perception of beauty could be united, was at last driven, by the necessity of keeping his definition sufficiently wide and comprehensive, to hazard the strange assertion, that all objects were beautiful which excite in us the idea of *relation;* that our sense of beauty consisted in tracing out the relations which the object possessing it might have to other objects; and that its actual beauty was in proportion to the number and clearness of the relations thus suggested and perceived. It is scarcely necessary, we presume, to expose by any arguments the manifest fallacy, or rather the palpable absurdity, of such a theory as this. In the first place, we conceive it to be obvious, that all objects whatever have an *infinite*, and consequently, an equal number of relations, and are equally likely to suggest them to those to whom they are presented;—or, at all events, it is certain, that ugly and disagreeable objects have just as many relations as those that are agreeable, and ought, therefore, to be just as beautiful, if the sense of beauty consisted in the perception of relations. In the next place, it seems to be sufficiently certain, from the experience and common feelings of all men, that the perception of relations among objects is not in itself accompanied by any pleasure whatever; and in particular has no conceivable resemblance to the emotion we receive from the perception of beauty. When we perceive one ugly old woman sitting exactly opposite to two other ugly old women, and observe, at the same moment, that the first is as big as the other two taken together, we humbly conceive, that this clear perception of the relations in which these three Graces stand to each other, cannot well be mistaken for a sense of beauty, and that it does not in the least abate or interfere with our sense of their ugliness. Finally, we may observe, that the sense of beauty results instantaneously from the perception of the object; whereas the discovery of its relations to other objects must necessarily be a work of time and reflection, in the course of which the beauty of the object, so far from being created or brought into notice, must, in fact, be lost sight of and forgotten.

Another more plausible and ingenious theory was suggested by the Père Buffier, and afterwards adopted and illustrated with great talent in the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds. According to this doctrine, beauty consists, as Aristotle held virtue to do, in mediocrity, or conformity to that which is most usual. Thus a beautiful nose, to make use of Dr. Smith's very apt, though homely, illustration of this doctrine, is one that is neither very long nor very short—very straight nor very much bent—but of an ordinary form and proportion, compared with all the extremes. It is the form, in short, which nature seems to have aimed at in all cases, though she has more frequently deviated from it than hit it; but deviating from it in all directions, all her deviations come nearer to it than they ever do to each other. Thus the most beautiful in every species of creatures bears the greatest resemblance to the whole species, while monsters are so denominated because they bear the least; and thus the beautiful, though in one sense the rarest, as the *exact* medium is but seldom hit, is invariably the most common, because it is the central point from which all the deviations are the least remote. This view of the matter is adopted by Sir Joshua in its full extent, and is even carried so far by this great artist, that he does not scruple to conclude, "That if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea that is now annexed to it, and take that of beauty;—just as we approve and admire fashions in dress, for no other reason than that we are used to them."

Now, not to dwell upon the very startling conclusion to which these principles must lead, viz. that things are beautiful in proportion as they are ordinary, and that it is merely their familiarity which constitutes their beauty, we would observe, in the first place, that the whole theory seems to have

this discussion hereafter. Of Mr. Knight we have only further to observe, that we think he is not less heretical in maintaining, that we have no pleasure in sympathising with distress or suffering, but only with mental energy; and that, in contemplating the sublime, we are moved only with a sense of power and grandeur, and never with any feeling of terror or awe.—These errors, however, are less intimately connected with the subject of our present discussion.

With Mr. Stewart we have less occasion for quarrel: chiefly, perhaps, because he has made fewer positive assertions, and entered less into the matter of controversy. His *Essay* on the Beautiful is rather philological than metaphysical. The object of it is to show by what gradual and successive extensions of meaning the word, though at first appropriated to denote the pleasing effect of *colours* alone, might naturally come to signify all the other pleasing things to which it is now applied. In this investigation he makes many admirable remarks, and touches, with the hand of a master, upon many of the disputable parts of the question; but he evades the particular point at issue between us and Mr. Knight, by stating, that it is quite immaterial to his purpose, whether the beauty of colours be supposed to depend on their organic effect on the eye, or on some association between them and other agreeable emotions—it being enough for his purpose that this was probably the first sort of beauty that was observed, and that to which the name was at first exclusively applied. It is evident to us, however, that he leans to the opinion of Mr. Knight, as to this beauty being truly sensual or organic. In observing, too, that beauty is not now the name of any one thing or quality, but of very many different qualities—and that it is applied to them all, merely because they are often united in the same objects, or perceived at the same time and *by the same organs*—it appears to us that he carries his philology a little too far, and disregards other principles of reasoning of far higher authority. To give the name of beauty, for example, to every thing that interests or pleases us through the channel of sight, including in this category the mere impulse of light that is pleasant to the organ, and the presentment of objects whose whole charm consists in awakening the memory of social emotions, seems to us to be confounding things together that must always be separate in our feelings, and giving a far greater importance to the mere identity of the organ by which they are perceived, than is warranted either by the ordinary language or ordinary experience of men. Upon the same principle we should give this name of beautiful, and no other, to all acts of kindness or magnanimity, and, indeed, to every interesting occurrence which took place in our sight, or came to our knowledge by means of the eye:—nay, as the ear is also allowed to be a channel for impressions of beauty, the same name should be given to any interesting or pleasant thing that we hear—and good news read to us from the gazette should be denominated beautiful, just as much as a fine composition of music. These things, however, are never called beautiful, and are felt, indeed, to afford a gratification of quite a different nature. It is no doubt true, as Mr. Stewart has observed, that beauty is not one thing, but many—and does not produce one uniform emotion, but an infinite variety of emotions. But this, we conceive, is not merely because many pleasant things may be intimated to us by the same sense, but because the things that are called beautiful may be associated with an infinite variety of agreeable emotions of the specific character of which their beauty will consequently partake. Nor does it follow, from the fact of this great variety, that there can be no other principle of union among these agreeable emotions, but that of a *name*, extended to them all upon the very slight ground of their coming through the same organ; since, upon our theory, and indeed upon Mr. Stewart's, in a vast majority of instances, there is the remarkable circumstance of their being all *suggested* by association with some present sensation, and all modified and confounded, to our feelings, by an actual and direct perception.

It is unnecessary, however, to pursue these criticisms, or, indeed, this hasty review of the speculation of other writers, any farther. The few observations we have already made, will enable the intelligent reader, both to understand in a general way what has been already done on the subject, and in some degree prepare him to appreciate the merits of that theory, substantially the same with Mr. Alison's, which we shall now proceed to illustrate somewhat more in detail.

The basis of it is, that the beauty which we impute to outward objects, is nothing more than the reflection of our own inward emotions, and is made up entirely of certain little portions of love, pity, or other affections, which have been connected with these objects, and still adhere as it were to them, and move us anew whenever they are presented to our observation. Before proceeding to bring any proof of the truth of this proposition, there are two things that it may be proper to explain a little more distinctly. First, What are the primary affections, by the suggestion of which we think the sense of beauty is produced? And, secondly, What is the nature of the connection by which we suppose that the objects we call beautiful are enabled to suggest these affections?

With regard to the first of these points, it fortunately is not necessary either to enter into any tedious details, or to have recourse to any nice distinctions. All sensations that are not absolutely indifferent, and are, at the same time, either agreeable, when experienced by ourselves, or attractive when contemplated in others, may form the foundation of the emotions of sublimity or beauty. The love of *sensation* seems to be the ruling appetite of human nature; and many sensations, in which the painful may be thought to predominate, are consequently sought for with avidity, and recollected with interest, even in our own persons. In the persons of others, emotions

still more painful are contemplated with eagerness and delight: and therefore we must not be surprised to find, that many of the pleasing sensations of beauty or sublimity resolve themselves ultimately into recollections of feelings that may appear to have a very opposite character. The sum of the whole is, that every feeling which it is agreeable to experience, to recal, or to witness, may become the source of beauty in external objects, when it is so connected with them as that their appearance reminds us of that feeling. Now, in real life, and from daily experience and observation, we know that it is agreeable, in the first place, to recollect our own pleasurable sensations, or to be enabled to form a lively conception of the pleasures of other men, or even of sentient beings of any description. We know likewise, from the same sure authority, that there is a certain delight in the remembrance of our past, or the conception of our future emotions, even though attended with great pain, provided the pain be not forced too rudely on the mind, and be softened by the accompaniment of any milder feeling. And finally, we know, in the same manner, that the spectacle or conception of the emotions of others, even when in a high degree painful, is extremely interesting and attractive, and draws us away, not only from the consideration of indifferent objects, but even from the pursuit of light or frivolous enjoyments. All these are plain and familiar facts; of the existence of which, however they may be explained, no one can entertain the slightest doubt—and into which, therefore, we shall have made no inconsiderable progress, if we can resolve the more mysterious fact, of the emotions we receive from the contemplation of sublimity or beauty.

Our proposition then is, that these emotions are not original emotions, nor produced directly by any material qualities in the objects which excite them; but are reflections, or images, of the more radical and familiar emotions to which we have already alluded; and are occasioned, not by any inherent virtue in the objects before us, but by the accidents, if we may so express ourselves, by which these may have been enabled to suggest or recal to us our own past sensations or sympathies. We might almost venture, indeed, to lay it down as an axiom, that, except in the plain and palpable case of bodily pain or pleasure, we can never be *interested* in any thing but the fortunes of sentient beings;—and that every thing partaking of the nature of mental emotion, must have for its object *the feelings*, past, present, or possible, of something capable of sensation. Independent, therefore, of all evidence, and without the help of any explanation, we should have been apt to conclude, that the emotions of beauty and sublimity must have for their objects the sufferings or enjoyments of sentient beings;—and to reject, as intrinsically absurd and incredible, the supposition, that material objects, which obviously do neither hurt nor delight the body, should yet excite, by their mere physical qualities, the very powerful emotions which are sometimes excited by the spectacle of beauty.

Of the feelings, by their connection with which external objects become beautiful, we do not think it necessary to speak more minutely;—and, therefore, it only remains, under this preliminary view of the subject, to explain the nature of that connection by which we conceive this effect to be produced. Here, also, there is but little need for minuteness, or fulness of enumeration. Almost every tie, by which two objects can be bound together in the imagination, in such a manner as that the presentment of the one shall recal the memory of the other;—or, in other words, almost every possible relation which can subsist between such objects, may serve to connect the things we call sublime and beautiful, with feelings that are interesting or delightful. It may be useful, however, to class these bonds of association between mind and matter in a rude and general way.

It appears to us, then, that objects are sublime or beautiful, *first*, when they are the natural signs, and perpetual concomitants of pleasurable sensations, or, at any rate, of some lively feeling or emotion in ourselves or in some other sentient beings; or, *secondly*, when they are the arbitrary or accidental concomitants of such feelings; or, *thirdly*, when they bear some analogy or fanciful resemblance to things with which these emotions are necessarily connected. In endeavouring to illustrate the nature of these several relations, we shall be led to lay before our readers some proofs that appear to us satisfactory of the truth of the general theory.

The most obvious, and the strongest association that can be established between inward feelings and external objects is, where the object is necessarily and universally connected with the feeling by the law of nature, so that it is always presented to the senses when the feeling is impressed upon the mind—as the sight or the sound of laughter, with the feeling of gaiety—of weeping, with distress—of the sound of thunder, with ideas of danger and power. Let us dwell for a moment on the last instance.—Nothing, perhaps, in the whole range of nature, is more strikingly and universally sublime than the sound we have just mentioned; yet it seems obvious, that the sense of sublimity is produced, not by any quality that is perceived by the ear, but altogether by the impression of power and of danger that is necessarily made upon the mind, whenever that sound is heard. That it is not produced by any peculiarity in the sound itself, is certain, from the mistakes that are frequently made with regard to it. The noise of a cart rattling over the stones, is often mistaken for thunder; and as long as the mistake lasts, this very vulgar and insignificant noise is actually felt to be prodigiously sublime. It is so felt, however, it is perfectly plain, merely because it is then associated with ideas of prodigious power and undefined danger;—and the sublimity is accordingly destroyed, the moment the association is dissolved, though the sound itself,

and its effect on the organ, continue exactly the same. This, therefore, is an instance in which sublimity is distinctly proved to consist, not in any physical quality of the object to which it is ascribed, but in its necessary connection with that vast and uncontrolled Power which is the natural object of awe and veneration.

We may now take an example a little less plain and elementary. The most beautiful object in nature, perhaps, is the countenance of a young and beautiful woman;—and we are apt at first to imagine, that, independent of all associations, the form and colours which it displays are, in themselves, lovely and engaging; and would appear charming to all beholders, with whatever other qualities or impressions they might happen to be connected. A very little reflection, however, will probably be sufficient to convince us of the fallacy of this impression; and to satisfy us, that what we admire is not a combination of forms and colours, (which could never excite any mental emotion,) but a collection of signs and tokens of certain mental feelings and affections, which are universally recognised as the proper objects of love and sympathy. Laying aside the emotions arising from difference of sex, and supposing female beauty to be contemplated by the pure and unenvying eye of a female, it seems quite obvious, that, among its ingredients, we should trace the signs of two different sets of qualities, that are neither of them the object of sight, but of a far higher faculty;—in the first place, of youth and health; and in the second place, of innocence, gaiety, sensibility, intelligence, delicacy or vivacity. Now, without enlarging upon the natural effect of these suggestions, we shall just suppose that the appearances, which must be admitted at all events to be actually significant of the qualities we have enumerated, had been by the law of nature attached to the very opposite qualities;—that the smooth forehead, the firm cheek, and the full lip, which are now so distinctly expressive to us of the gay and vigorous periods of youth—and the clear and blooming complexion, which indicates health and activity, had been in fact the forms and colours by which old age and sickness were characterised; and that, instead of being found united to those sources and seasons of enjoyment, they had been the badges by which nature pointed out that state of suffering and decay which is now signified to us by the livid and emaciated face of sickness, or the wrinkled front, the quivering lip, and hollow cheek of age;—If this were the familiar law of our nature, can it be doubted that we should look upon these appearances, not with rapture, but with aversion—and consider it as absolutely ludicrous or disgusting, to speak of the beauty of what was interpreted by every one as the lamented sign of pain and decrepitude? Mr. Knight himself, though a firm believer in the intrinsic beauty of colours, is so much of this opinion, that he thinks it entirely owing to those associations that we prefer the tame smoothness, and comparatively poor colours of a youthful face, to the richly fretted and variegated countenance of a pimpled drunkard!

Such, we conceive, would be the inevitable effect of dissolving the subsisting connection between the animating ideas of hope and enjoyment, and those visible appearances which are now significant of those emotions, and derive their whole beauty from that signification. But the effect would be still stronger, if we could suppose the *moral* expression of those appearances to be reversed in the same manner. If the smile, which now enchants us, as the expression of innocence and affection, were the sign attached by nature to guilt and malignity—if the blush which expresses delicacy, and the glance that speaks intelligence, vivacity, and softness, had always been found united with brutal passion or idiot moodiness; is it not certain, that the whole of their beauty would be extinguished, and that our emotions from the sight of them would be exactly the reverse of what they now are?

That the beauty of a living and sentient creature should depend, in a great degree, upon qualities peculiar to such a creature, rather than upon the mere physical attributes which it may possess in common with the inert matter around it, cannot indeed appear a very improbable supposition to any one. But it may be more difficult for some persons to understand how the beauty of mere dead matter should be derived from the feelings and sympathies of sentient beings. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that we should give an instance or two of this derivation also.

It is easy enough to understand how the sight of a picture or statue should affect us nearly in the same way as the sight of the original: nor is it much more difficult to conceive, how the sight of a cottage should give us something of the same feeling as the sight of a peasant's family; and the aspect of a town raise many of the same ideas as the appearance of a multitude of persons. We may begin, therefore, with an example a little more complicated. Take, for instance, the case of a common English landscape—green meadows with grazing and ruminating cattle—canals or navigable rivers—well fenced, well cultivated fields—neat, clean, scattered cottages—humble antique churches, with church-yard elms, and crossing hedgerows—all seen under bright skies, and in good weather:—There is much beauty, as every one will acknowledge, in such a scene. But in what does the beauty consist? Not certainly in the mere mixture of colours and forms; for colours more pleasing, and lines more graceful, (according to any theory of grace that may be preferred,) might be spread upon a board, or a painter's pallet, without engaging the eye to a second glance, or raising the least emotion in the mind; but in the picture of human happiness that is presented to our imaginations and affections—in the visible and unequivocal signs of comfort, and cheerful and peaceful enjoyment—and of that se-

cure and successful industry that ensures its continuance—and of the piety by which it is exalted—and of the simplicity by which it is contrasted with the guilt and the fever of a city life;—in the images of health and temperance and plenty which it exhibits to every eye—and in the glimpses which it affords to warmer imaginations, of those primitive or fabulous times, when man was uncorrupted by luxury and ambition, and of those humble retreats in which we still delight to imagine that love and philosophy may find an unpolluted asylum. At all events, however, it is human feeling that excites our sympathy, and forms the true object of our emotions. It is man, and man alone, that we see in the beauties of the earth which he inhabits;—or, if a more sensitive and extended sympathy connect us with the lower families of animated nature, and make us rejoice with the lambs that bleat on the uplands, or the cattle that repose in the valley, or even with the *living* plants that drink the bright sun and the balmy air beside them, it is still the idea of enjoyment—of feelings that animate the existence of sentient beings—that calls forth all our emotions, and is the parent of all the beauty with which we proceed to invest the inanimate creation around us.

Instead of this quiet and tame *English* landscape, let us now take a Welch or a Highland scene; and see whether its beauties will admit of being explained on the same principle. Here, we shall have lofty mountains, and rocky and lonely recesses—tufted woods hung over precipices—lakes intersected with castled promontories—ample solitudes of unploughed and untrodden valleys—nameless and gigantic ruins—and mountain echoes repeating the scream of the eagle and the roar of the cataract. This, too, is beautiful;—and, to those who can interpret the language it speaks, far more beautiful than the prosperous scene with which we have contrasted it. Yet, lonely as it is, it is to the recollection of man and the suggestion of human feelings that its beauty also is owing. The mere forms and colours that compose its visible appearance, are no more capable of exciting any emotion in the mind, than the forms and colours of a Turkey carpet. It is sympathy with the present or the past, or the imaginary *inhabitants* of such a region, that alone gives it either interest or beauty; and the delight of those who behold it, will always be found to be in exact proportion to the force of their imaginations, and the warmth of their social affections. The leading impressions, here, are those of romantic seclusion, and primeval simplicity; lovers sequestered in these blissful solitudes, "from towns and toils remote,"—and rustic poets and philosophers communing with nature, and at a distance from the low pursuits and selfish malignity of ordinary mortals;—then there is the sublime impression of the Mighty Power which piled the massive cliffs upon each other, and rent the mountains asunder, and scattered their giant fragments at their base;—and all the images connected with the monuments of ancient magnificence and extinguished hostility—the feuds, and the combats, and the triumphs of its wild and primitive inhabitants, contrasted with the stillness and desolation of the scenes where they lie interred;—and the romantic ideas attached to their ancient traditions, and the peculiarities of the actual life of their descendants—their wild and enthusiastic poetry—their gloomy superstitions—their attachment to their chiefs—the dangers, and the hardships and enjoyments of their lonely huntings and fishings—their pastoral shielings on the mountains in summer—and the tales and the sports that amuse the little groups that are frozen into their vast and trackless valleys in the winter. Add to all this, the traces of vast and obscure antiquity that are impressed on the language and the habits of the people, and on the cliffs, and caves, and gulfy torrents of the land; and the solemn and touching reflection, perpetually recurring, of the weakness and insignificance of perishable man, whose generations thus pass away into oblivion, with all their toils and ambition; while nature holds on her unvarying course, and pours out her streams, and renews her forests, with undecaying activity, regardless of the fate of her proud and perishable sovereign.

We have said enough, we believe, to let our readers understand what we mean by external objects being the natural signs or concomitants of human sympathies or emotions. Yet we cannot refrain from adding one other illustration, and asking on what other principle we can account for the beauty of Spring? Winter has shades as deep, and colours as brilliant; and the great forms of nature are substantially the same through all the revolutions of the year. We shall seek in vain, therefore, in the accidents of mere organic matter, for the sources of that "vernal delight and joy," which subject all finer spirits to an annual intoxication, and strike home the sense of beauty even to hearts that seem proof against it under all other aspects. And it is not among the Dead but among the Living, that this beauty originates. It is the renovation of life and of joy to all animated beings, that constitutes this great jubilee of nature;—the young of animals bursting into existence—the simple and universal pleasures which are diffused by the mere temperature of the air, and the profusion of sustenance—the pairing of birds—the cheerful resumption of rustic toils—the great alleviation of all the miseries of poverty and sickness—our sympathy with the young life, and the promise and the hazards of the vegetable creation—the solemn, yet cheering, impression of the constancy of nature to her great periods of renovation—and the hopes that dart spontaneously forward into the new circle of exertions and enjoyments that is opened up by her hand and her example. Such are some of the conceptions that are forced upon us by the appearances of returning spring; and that seem to account for the emotions of delight with which these appearances are hailed, by

every mind endowed with any degree of sensibility, somewhat better than the brightness of the colours, or the agreeableness of the smells that are then presented to our senses.

They are kindred conceptions that constitute all the beauty of childhood. The forms and colours that are peculiar to that age, are not necessarily or absolutely beautiful in themselves; for, in a grown person, the same forms and colours would be either ludicrous or disgusting. It is their indestructible connection with the engaging ideas of innocence —of careless gaiety—of unsuspecting confidence;—made still more tender and attractive by the recollection of helplessness, and blameless and happy ignorance—of the anxious affection that watches over all their ways —and of the hopes and fears that seek to pierce futurity, for those who have neither fears nor cares nor anxieties for themselves.

These few illustrations will probably be sufficient to give our readers a general conception of the character and the grounds of that theory of beauty which we think affords the only true or consistent account of its nature. They are all examples, it will be observed, of the *First* and most important connection which we think may be shown to exist between external objects and the sentiments or emotions of the mind; or cases, in which the visible phenomena are the natural and universal accompaniments of the emotion, and are consequently capable of reviving that emotion, in some degree, in the breast of every beholder. If the tenor of those illustrations has been such as to make any impression in favour of the general theory, we conceive that it must be very greatly confirmed by the slightest consideration of the *Second* class of cases, or those in which the external object is not the natural and necessary, but only the occasional or accidental concomitant of the emotion which it recals. In the former instances, some conception of beauty seems to be inseparable from the appearance of the objects; and being impressed, in some degree, upon all persons to whom they are presented, there is evidently room for insinuating that it is an independent and intrinsic quality of their nature, and does not arise from association with any thing else. In the instances, however, to which we are now to allude, this perception of beauty is not universal, but entirely dependent upon the opportunities which each individual has had to associate ideas of emotion with the object to which it is ascribed:—the same thing appearing beautiful to those who have been exposed to the influence of such associations, and indifferent to those who have not. Such instances, therefore, really afford an *experimentum crucis* as to the truth of the theory in question; nor is it easy to conceive any more complete evidence, both that there is no such thing as absolute or intrinsic beauty, and that it depends altogether on those associations with which it is thus found to come and to disappear.

The accidental or arbitrary relations that may thus be established between natural sympathies or emotions, and external objects, may be either such as occur to whole classes of men, or are confined to particular individuals. Among the former, those that apply to different nations or races of men, are the most important and remarkable; and constitute the basis of those peculiarities by which *national* tastes are distinguished.—Take again, for example, the instance of female beauty—and think what different and inconsistent standards would be fixed for it in the different regions of the world;—in Africa, in Asia, and in Europe;—in Tartary and in Greece; in Lapland, Patagonia, and Circassia. If there was any thing absolutely or intrinsically beautiful, in any of the forms thus distinguished, it is inconceivable that men should differ so outrageously in their conceptions of it: if beauty were a real and independent quality, it seems impossible that it should be distinctly and clearly felt by one set of persons, where another set, altogether as sensitive, could see nothing but its opposite; and if it were actually and inseparably attached to certain forms, colours, or proportions, it must appear utterly inexplicable that it should be felt and perceived in the most opposite forms and proportion, in objects of the same description. On the other hand, if all beauty consist in reminding us of certain natural sympathies and objects of emotion, with which they have been habitually connected, it is easy to perceive how the most different forms should be felt to be equally beautiful. If female beauty, for instance, consist in the visible signs and expressions of youth and health, and of gentleness, vivacity, and kindness; then it will necessarily happen, that the forms, and colours and proportions which nature may have connected with those qualities, in the different climates or regions of the world, will all appear equally beautiful to those who have been accustomed to recognise them as the signs of such qualities; while they will be respectively indifferent to those who have not learned to interpret them in this sense, and displeasing to those whom experience has led to consider them as the signs of opposite qualities.

The case is the same, though, perhaps to a smaller degree, as to the peculiarity of national taste in other particulars. The style of dress and architecture in every nation, if not adopted from mere want of skill, or penury of materials, always appears beautiful to the natives, and somewhat monstrous and absurd to foreigners;—and the general character and aspect of their landscape, in like manner, if not associated with substantial evils and inconveniences, always appears more beautiful and enchanting than the scenery of any other region. The fact is still more striking, perhaps, in the case of music;—in the effects of those national airs, with which even the most uncultivated imaginations have connected so many interesting recollections; and in the delight with which all persons of sensibility catch the strains of their native melodies in strange or in distant lands. It is owing chiefly to the same sort of arbitrary and national association, that white is thought a gay colour in Europe, where it is used at weddings—and a dismal colour in China, where it is used for mourning;—that we think yew-trees gloomy, because they are planted in churchyards—and large masses of powdered horse-hair majestic, because we see them on the heads of judges and bishops.

Next to those curious instances of arbitrary or limited associations that are exemplified in the diversities of national taste, are those that are produced by the differences of instruction or education. If external objects were sublime and beautiful in themselves, it is plain, that they would appear equally so to those who were acquainted with their origin, and to those to whom it was unknown. Yet it is not easy, perhaps, to calculate the degree to which our notions of beauty and sublimity are now influenced, over all Europe, by the study of classical literature; or the number of impressions of this sort which the well-educated consequently receive, from objects that are utterly indifferent to uninstructed persons of the same natural sensibility. We gladly avail ourselves, upon this subject, of the beautiful expressions of Mr. Alison.

"The delight which most men of education receive from the consideration of antiquity, and the beauty that they discover in every object which is connected with ancient times, is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to the same cause. The antiquarian, in his cabinet, surrounded by the relics of former ages, seems to himself to be removed to periods that are long since past, and indulges in the imagination of living in a world, which, by a very natural kind of prejudice, we are always willing to believe was both wiser and better than the present. All that is venerable or laudable in the history of these times, present themselves to his memory. The gallantry, the heroism, the patriotism of antiquity, rise again before his view, softened by the obscurity in which they are involved, and rendered more seducing to the imagination by that obscurity itself, which, while it mingles a sentiment of regret amid his pursuits, serves at the same time to stimulate his fancy to fill up, by its own creation, those long intervals of time of which history has preserved no record.

"And what is it that constitutes that emotion of sublime delight, which every man of common sensibility feels upon the first prospect of Rome? It is not the scene of destruction which is before him. It is not the Tiber, diminished in his imagination to a paltry stream, flowing amid the ruins of that magnificence which it once adorned. It is not the triumph of superstition over the wreck of human greatness, and its monuments erected upon the very spot where the first honours of humanity have been gained. It is *ancient* Rome which fills his imagination. It is the country of Cæsar, and Cicero, and Virgil, which is before him. It is the Mistress of the world which he sees, and who seems to him to rise again from her tomb, to give laws to the universe. All that the labours of his youth, or the studies of his maturer age have acquired, with regard to the history of this great people, open at once before his imagination, and present him with a field of high and solemn imagery, which can never be exhausted. Take from him these associations—conceal from him that it is Rome that he sees, and how different would be his emotion!"

The influences of the same studies may be traced, indeed, through almost all our impressions of beauty—and especially in the feelings which we receive from the contemplation of rural scenery; where the images and recollections which have been associated with such objects, in the enchanting strains of the poets, are perpetually recalled by their appearance, and give an interest and a beauty to the prospect, of which the uninstructed cannot have the slightest perception. Upon this subject, also, Mr. Alison has expressed himself with his usual warmth and elegance. After observing, that, in childhood, the beauties of nature have scarcely any existence for those who have as yet but little general sympathy with mankind, he proceeds to state, that they are usually first recommended to notice by the poets, to whom we are introduced in the course of education; and who, in a manner, create them for us, by the associations which they enable us to form with their visible appearance.

"How different, from this period, become the sentiments with which the scenery of nature is contemplated, by those who have any imagination! The beautiful forms of ancient mythology, with which the fancy of poets peopled every element, are now ready to appear to their minds, upon the prospect of every scene. The descriptions of ancient authors, so long admired, and so deserving of admiration, occur to them at every moment, and with them, all those enthusiastic ideas of ancient genius and glory, which the study of so many years of youth so naturally leads them to form. Or, if the study of modern poetry has succeeded to that of the ancient, a thousand other beautiful associations are acquired, which, instead of destroying, serve easily to unite with the former, and to afford a new source of delight. The awful forms of Gothic superstition, the wild and romantic imagery, which the turbulence of the middle ages, the Crusades, and the institution of chivalry have spread over every country of Europe, arise to the imagination in every scene; accompanied with all those pleasing recollections of prowess, and adventure, and courteous manners, which distinguished those memorable times. With such images in their minds, it is not common nature that appears to surround them. It is nature embellished and made sacred by the memory of Theocritus and Virgil, and Milton and Tasso; their genius seems still to linger among the scenes which inspired it, and to irradiate every object where it dwells; and the creation of their fancy seem the fit inhabitants of that nature, which their descriptions have clothed with beauty."

It is needless, for the purpose of mere illustration, to pursue this subject of arbitrary or

accidental association through all the divisions of which it is susceptible; and, indeed, the task would be endless; since there is scarcely any class in society which may not be shown to have peculiar associations of interest and emotion with objects which are not so connected in the minds of any other class. The young and the old—the rich and the poor—the artist and the man of science—the inhabitant of the city and the inhabitant of the country—the man of business and the man of pleasure—the domestic and the dissipated,—nay, even the followers of almost every different study or profession, have perceptions of beauty, because they have associations with external objects, which are peculiar to themselves, and have no existence for any other persons. But, though the detail of such instances could not fail to show, in the clearest and most convincing manner, how directly the notion of beauty is derived from some more radical and familiar emotion, and how many and various are the channels by which such emotions are transmitted, enough, perhaps, has been already said, to put our readers in possession of the principles and general bearings of an argument which we must not think of exhausting.

Before entirely leaving this branch of the subject, however, let us pause for a moment on the familiar but very striking and decisive instance of our varying and contradictory judgments, as to the beauty of the successive fashions of dress that have existed within our own remembrance. All persons who still continue to find amusement in society, and are not old enough to enjoy only the recollections of their youth, think the prevailing fashions becoming and graceful, and the fashions of twenty or twenty-five years old intolerably ugly and ridiculous. The younger they are, and the more they mix in society, this impression is the stronger; and the fact is worth noticing; because there is really no one thing as to which persons judging merely from their feelings, and therefore less likely to be misled by any systems or theories, are so very positive and decided, as that established fashions are beautiful in themselves; and that exploded fashions are intrinsically and beyond all question preposterous and ugly. We have never yet met a young lady or gentleman, who spoke from their hearts and without reserve, who had the least doubt on the subject; or could conceive how any person could be so stupid as not to see the intrinsic elegance of the reigning mode, or not to be struck with the ludicrous awkwardness of the habits in which their mothers were disguised. Yet there can be no doubt, that if these ingenuous critics had been born, with the same natural sensibility to beauty, but twenty years earlier, they would have joined in admiring what they now laugh at; as certainly as those who succeed them twenty years hereafter will laugh at *them*. It is plain, then, and we think scarcely disputed, out of the circles to which we have alluded, that there is, in the general case, no intrinsic beauty or deformity in any of those fashions; and that the forms, and colours, and materials, that are, we may say, universally and very strongly felt to be beautiful while they are in fashion, are sure to lose all their beauty as soon as the fashion has passed away. Now the forms, and colours, and combinations remain exactly as they were; and, therefore, it seems indisputable, that the source of their successive beauty and ugliness must be sought in something extrinsic, and can only be found in the associations which once exalted, and ultimately degraded them in our estimation. While they were in fashion, they were the forms and colours which distinguished the rich and the noble—the eminent, the envied, the observed in society. They were the forms and the colours in which all that was beautiful, and admired, and exalted, were habitually arrayed. They were associated, therefore, with ideas of opulence, and elegance, and gaiety, and all that is captivating and bewitching, in manners, fortune, and situation—and derived the whole of their beauty from those associations. By and bye, however, they were deserted by the beautiful, the rich, and the elegant, and descended to the vulgar and dependent, or were only seen in combination with the antiquated airs of faded beauties or obsolete beaux. They thus came to be associated with ideas of vulgarity and derision, and with the images of old and decayed persons, whom it is difficult for their juniors to believe ever to have been young or attractive;—and the associations being thus reversed, in which all their beauty consisted, the beauty itself naturally disappeared.

The operation of the same causes is distinctly visible in all the other apparent irregularities of our judgments as to this description of beauty. Old people have in general but little toleration for the obsolete fashions of their later or middle years; but will generally stickle for the intrinsic elegance of those which were prevalent in the bright days of their early youth—as being still associated in their recollections, with the beauty with which they were first enchanted, and the gay spirits with which they were then inspired. In the same way, while we laugh at the fashions of which fine ladies and gentlemen were proud in the days of our childhood, because they are now associated only with images of decrepitude and decay, we look with some feelings of veneration on the habits of more remote generations, the individuals of which are only known to us as historical persons; and with unmingled respect and admiration on those still more ancient habiliments which remind us either of the heroism of the feudal chivalry, or the virtue and nobleness of classical antiquity. The iron mail of the Gothic knight, or the clumsy shield and naked arms of the Roman warrior, strike us as majestic and graceful, merely because they are associated with nothing but tales of romantic daring or patriotic prowess—while the full-bottomed periwigs that were added to the soldier's equipment in the days of Lewis XIV. and King William—and no doubt had a noble effect in the eyes of that generation—

now appear to us equally ridiculous and unbecoming; merely because such appendages are no longer to be seen, but upon the heads of sober and sedentary lawyers, or in the pictures of antiquated esquires.

We cannot afford, however, to enlarge any farther upon these considerations, and are inclined indeed to think, that what has been already said on the subject of associations, which, though not universal, are common to whole classes of persons, will make it unnecessary to enlarge on those that are peculiar to each individual. It is almost enough, indeed, to transcribe the following short passage from Mr. Alison.

"There is no man, who has not some interesting associations with particular scenes, or airs, or books; and who does not feel their beauty or sublimity enhanced to him by such connections. The view of the house where one was born, of the school where one was educated, and where the gay years of infancy were passed, is indifferent to no man. There are songs also, which we have heard in our infancy, which, when brought to our remembrance in after years, raise emotions for which we cannot well account; and which, though perhaps very indifferent in themselves, still continue from this association, and from the variety of conceptions which they kindle in our minds, to be our favourites through life. The scenes which have been distinguished by the residence of any person, whose memory we admire, produce a similar effect. *Movemur enim, nescio quo pacto, locis ipsis, in quibus eorum, quos diligimus, aut admiramur adsunt vestigia.* The scenes themselves may be little beautiful; but the delight with which we recollect the traces of their lives, blends itself insensibly with the emotions which the scenery excites; and the admiration which these recollections afford, seems to give a kind of sanctity to the place where they dwelt, and converts every thing into beauty which appears to have been connected with them."

There are similar impressions—as to the sort of scenery to which we have been long accustomed—as to the style of personal beauty by which we were first enchanted—and even as to the dialect, or the form of versification which we first began to admire, that bestow a secret and adventitious charm upon all these objects, and enable us to discover in them a beauty which is invisible, because it is non-existent to every other eye.

In all the cases we have hitherto considered, the external object is supposed to have acquired its beauty by being actually connected with the causes of our natural emotions, either as a constant sign of their existence, or as being casually present on the ordinary occasions of their excitement. There is a relation, however, of another kind, to which also it is necessary to attend, both to elucidate the general grounds of the theory, and to explain several appearances that might otherwise expose it to objections. This is the relation which external objects may bear to our internal feelings, and the power they may consequently acquire of suggesting them, in consequence of a sort of resemblance or analogy which they seem to have to their natural and appropriate objects. The language of Poetry is founded, in a great degree, upon this analogy; and *all language*, indeed, is full of it; and attests, by its structure, both the extent to which it is spontaneously pursued, and the effects that are produced by its suggestion. We take a familiar instance from the elegant writer to whom we have already referred.

"What, for instance, is the leading impression we receive from the scenery of spring? The soft and gentle green with which the earth is spread, the feeble texture of the plants and flowers, and the remains of winter yet lingering among the woods and hills—all conspire to infuse into our minds somewhat of that fearful tenderness with which *infancy* is usually beheld. With such a sentiment, how innumerable are the ideas which present themselves to our imagination! ideas, it is apparent, by no means confined to the scene before our eyes, or to the possible desolation which may yet await its infant beauty, but which almost involuntarily extend themselves *to analogies with the life of man!* and bring before us all those images of hope or fear, which, according to our peculiar situations, have the dominion of our hearts! The beauty of autumn is accompanied with a similar exercise of thought: the leaves begin then to drop from the trees; the flowers and shrubs, with which the fields were adorned in the summer months, decay; the woods and groves are silent; the sun himself seems gradually to withdraw his light, or to become enfeebled in his power. Who is there, who, at this season, does not feel his mind impressed with a sentiment of melancholy? or who is able to resist that current of thought, which, from such appearances of decay, so naturally leads him to the solemn imagination of that inevitable fate, which is to bring on *alike the decay of life, of empire, and of nature itself?*"

A thousand such analogies, indeed, are suggested to us by the most familiar aspects of nature. The morning and the evening present the same ready picture of youth and of closing life, as the various vicissitudes of the year. The withering of flowers images out to us the langour of beauty, or the sickness of childhood. The loud roar of troubled waters seems to bear some resemblance to the voice of lamentation or violence; and the softer murmur of brighter streams, to be expressive of cheerfulness and innocence. The purity and transparency of water or of air, indeed, is universally itself felt to be expressive of mental purity and gaiety; and their darkness or turbulence, of mental gloom and dejection. The genial warmth of autumn suggests to us the feeling of mild benevolence;—the sunny gleams and fitful showers of early spring, remind us of the waywardness of infancy;—flowers waving on their slender stems, impress us with the notion of flexibility and lightness of temper. All fine and delicate forms are typical of delicacy and gentleness

of character; and almost all forms, bounded by waving or flowing lines, suggest ideas of easy movement, social pliability, and elegance. Rapid and impetuous motion seems to be emblematical of violence and passion;—slow and steady motion, of deliberation, dignity, and resolution;—fluttering motion, of inconstancy or terror;—and waving motion, according as it is slow or swift, of sadness or playfulness. A lofty tower, or a massive building, gives us at once the idea of firmness and elevation of character;—a rock battered by the waves, of fortitude in adversity. Stillness and calmness, in the water or the air, seem to shadow out tenderness, indolence, and placidity;—moonlight we call pensive and gentle;—and the unclouded sun gives us an impression of exulting vigour, and domineering ambition and glory.

It is not difficult, with the assistance which language affords us, to trace the origin of all these, and a thousand other associations. In many instances, the qualities which thus suggest mental emotions, do actually resemble their constant concomitants in human nature; as is obviously the case with the forms and motions which are sublime and beautiful: and, in some, their effects and relations bear so obvious an analogy to those of human conduct or feeling, as to force itself upon the notice of the most careless beholder. But, whatever may have been their original, the very structure of language attests the vast extent to which they have been carried, and the nature of the suggestions to which they are indebted for their interest or beauty. Since we all speak familiarly of the sparkling of wit—and the darkness of melancholy—can it be any way difficult to conceive that bright light may be agreeable, because it reminds us of gaiety—and darkness oppressive, because it is felt to be emblematical of sorrow? It is very remarkable, indeed, that, while almost all the words by which the affections of the mind are expressed, seem to have been borrowed originally from the qualities of matter, the epithets by which we learn afterwards to distinguish such material objects as are felt to be sublime or beautiful, are all of them epithets that had been previously appropriated to express some quality or emotion of mind. Colours are thus familiarly said to be gay or grave—motions to be lively, or deliberate, or capricious—forms to be delicate or modest—sounds to be animated or mournful—prospects to be cheerful or melancholy—rocks to be bold—waters to be tranquil—and a thousand other phrases of the same import; all indicating, most unequivocally, the sources from which our interest in matter is derived, and proving, that it is necessary, in all cases, to confer mind and feeling upon it, before it can be conceived as either sublime or beautiful. The great charm, indeed, and the great secret of poetical diction, consists in thus lending life and emotion to all the objects it embraces; and the enchanting beauty which we sometimes recognise in descriptions of very ordinary phenomena, will be found to arise from the force of imagination, by which the poet has connected with human emotions, a variety of objects, to which common minds could not discover such a relation. What the poet does for his readers, however, by his original similes and metaphors, in these higher cases, even the dullest of those readers do, in some degree, every day, for themselves; and the beauty which is perceived, when natural objects are unexpectedly vivified by the glowing fancy of the former, is precisely of the same kind that is felt when the closeness of the analogy enables them to force human feelings upon the recollection of all mankind. As the poet sees more of beauty in nature than ordinary mortals, just because he perceives more of these analogies and relations to social emotion, in which all beauty consists; so other men see more or less of this beauty, exactly as they happen to possess that fancy, or those habits, which enable them readily to trace out these relations.

From all these sources of evidence, then, we think it is pretty well made out, that the beauty or sublimity of external objects is nothing but the reflection of emotions excited by the feelings or condition of sentient beings; and is produced altogether by certain little portions, as it were, of love, joy, pity, veneration, or terror, that adhere to the objects that were present on the occasions of such emotions.—Nor, after what we have already said, does it seem necessary to reply to more than one of the objections to which we are aware that this theory is liable.—If beauty be nothing more than a reflection of love, pity, or veneration, how comes it, it may be asked, to be distinguished from these sentiments? They are never confounded with each other, either in our feelings or our language:—Why, then, should they all be confounded under the common name of beauty? and why should beauty, in all cases, affect us in a way so different from the love or compassion of which it is said to be merely the reflection?

Now, to these questions, we are somewhat tempted to answer, after the manner of our country, by asking, in our turn, whether it be really true, that beauty always affects us in one and the same manner, and always in a different manner from the simple and elementary affections which it is its office to recal to us? In very many cases, it appear to us, that the sensations which we receive from objects that are felt to be beautiful, and that in the highest degree, do not differ at all from the direct movements of tenderness or pity towards sentient beings. If the epithet of beauty be correctly (as it is universally) applied to many of the most admired and enchanting passages in poetry, which consist entirely in the expression of affecting sentiments, the question would be speedily decided; and it is a fact, at all events, too remarkable to be omitted, that some of the most powerful and delightful emotions that are uniformly classed under this name, arise altogether from the direct influence of such pathetic emotions, without the intervention

of any material imagery. We do not wish, however, to dwell upon an argument, which certainly is not applicable to all parts of the question; and, admitting that, on many occasions, the feelings which we experience from beauty, are sensibly different from the primary emotions in which we think they originate, we shall endeavour in a very few words, to give an explanation of this difference, which seems to be perfectly consistent with the theory we have undertaken to illustrate.

In the first place, it should make some difference on the primary affections to which we have alluded, that, in the cases alluded to, they are *reflected* from material objects, and not directly excited by their natural causes. The light of the moon has a very different complexion from that of the sun;—though it is in substance the sun's light: and glimpses of interesting, or even of familiar objects, caught unexpectedly from a mirror placed at a distance from these objects, will affect us, like sudden allusions in poetry, very differently from the natural perception of those objects in their ordinary relations. In the next place, the emotion, when suggested in the shape of beauty, comes upon us, for the most part, disencumbered of all those accompaniments which frequently give it a peculiar and less satisfactory character, when it arises from direct intercourse with its living objects. The compassion, for example, that is suggested by beauty of a gentle and winning description, is not attended with any of that disgust and uneasiness which frequently accompany the spectacle of real distress; nor with that importunate suggestion of the duty of relieving it, from which it is almost inseparable. Nor does the temporary delight which we receive from beauty of a gay and animating character, call upon us for any such expenditure of spirits, or active demonstrations of sympathy, as are sometimes demanded by the turbulence of real joy. In the third place, the emotion of beauty, being partly founded upon illusion, is far more transitory in its own nature, and is both more apt to fluctuate and vary in its character, and more capable of being dismissed at pleasure, than any of the primary affections, whose shadow and representative it is. In the fourth place, the perception of beauty implies a certain exercise of the imagination that is not required in the case of direct emotion, and is sufficient, of itself, both to give a new character to every emotion that is suggested by the intervention of such an exercise, and to account for our classing all the various emotions that are so suggested under the same denomination of beauty. When we are injured, we feel indignation—when we are wounded, we feel pain—when we see suffering, we feel compassion—and when we witness any splendid act of heroism or generosity, we feel admiration—without any effort of the imagination, or the intervention of any picture or vision in the mind. But when we feel indignation or pity, or admiration, in consequence of seeing some piece of inanimate matter that merely suggests or recals to us the ordinary causes or proper objects of these emotions, it is evident that our fancy is kindled by a sudden flash of recollection; and that the effect is produced by means of a certain poetical creation that is instantly conjured up in the mind. It is this active and heated state of the imagination, and this divided and busy occupation of the mind, that constitute the great peculiarity of the emotions we experience from the perception of beauty.

Finally, and this is perhaps the most important consideration of the whole, it should be recollected, that, along with the shadow or suggestion of associated emotions, there is always present a real and direct perception, which not only gives a force and liveliness to all the images which it suggests, but seems to impart to them some share of its own reality. That there is an illusion of this kind in the case, is sufficiently demonstrated by the fact, that we invariably ascribe the interest, which we think has been proved to arise wholly from these associations, to the object itself, as one of its actual and inherent qualities; and consider *its* beauty as no less a property belonging to it, than any of its physical attributes. The associated interest, therefore, is beyond all doubt confounded with the present perception of the object itself; and a livelier and more instant impression is accordingly made upon the mind, than if the interesting conceptions had been merely excited in the memory by the usual operation of reflection or voluntary meditation. Something analogous to this is familiarly known to occur in other cases. When we merely think of an absent friend, our emotions are incomparably less lively than when the recollection of him is suddenly suggested by the unexpected sight of his picture, of the house where he dwelt, or the spot on which we last parted from him—and all these objects seem for the moment to wear the colours of our own associated affections. When Captain Cook's companions found, in the remotest corner of the habitable globe, a broken spoon with the word *London* stamped upon it—and burst into tears at the sight!—they proved how differently we may be moved by emotions thus connected with the real presence of an actual perception, than by the mere recollection of the objects on which those emotions depend. Every one of them had probably thought of London every day since he left it; and many of them might have been talking of it with tranquillity, but a moment before this more effectual appeal was made to their sensibility.

If we add to all this, that there is necessarily something of vagueness and variableness in the emotions most generally excited by the perception of beauty, and that the mind wanders with the eye, over the different objects which may supply these emotions, with a degree of unsteadiness, and half voluntary half involuntary fluctuation, we may come to understand how the effect not only should be essentially different from that of the simple presentment of any one interesting conception, but should acquire a peculiarity which

entitles it to a different denomination. Most of the associations of which we have been last speaking, as being founded on the analogies or fanciful resemblances that are felt to exist between physical objects and qualities, and the interesting affections of mind, are intrinsically of this vague and wavering description—and when we look at a fine landscape, or any other scene of complicated beauty, a great variety of such images are suddenly presented to the fancy, and as suddenly succeeded by others, as the eye ranges over the different features of which it is composed, and feeds upon the charms which it discloses. Now, the direct perception, in all such cases, not only perpetually accompanies the associated emotions, but is inextricably confounded with them in our feelings, and is even recognised upon reflection as the cause, not merely of their unusual strength, but of the several peculiarities by which we have shown that they are distinguished. It is not wonderful, therefore, either that emotions so circumstanced should not be classed along with similar affections, excited under different circumstances, or that the perception of present existence, thus mixed up, and indissolubly confounded with interesting conceptions, should between them produce a sensation of so distinct a nature as naturally to be distinguished by a peculiar name—or that the *beauty* which results from this combination should, in ordinary language, be ascribed to the objects themselves—the presence and perception of which is a necessary condition of its existence.

What we have now said is enough, we believe, to give an attentive reader that general conception of the theory before us, which is all that we can hope to give in the narrow limits to which we are confined. It may be observed, however, that we have spoken only of those sorts of beauty which we think capable of being resolved into some passion, or emotion, or pretty lively sentiment of our nature; and though these are undoubtedly the highest and most decided kinds of beauty, it is certain that there are many things called beautiful which cannot claim so lofty a connection. It is necessary, therefore, to observe, that, though every thing that excites any feeling worthy to be called an *emotion*, by its beauty or sublimity, will be found to be related to the natural objects of human passions or affections, there are many things which are pleasing or agreeable enough to be called beautiful, in consequence of their relation merely to human convenience and comfort;—many others that please by suggesting ideas of human skill and ingenuity;—and many that obtain the name of beautiful, by being associated with human fortune, vanity, or splendour. After what has been already said, it will not be necessary either to exemplify or explain these subordinate phenomena. It is enough merely to suggest, that they all please upon the same great principle of *sympathy with human feelings;* and are explained by the simple and indisputable fact, that we are pleased with the direct contemplation of human comfort, ingenuity, and fortune. All these, indeed, obviously resolve themselves into the great object of sympathy—human enjoyment. Convenience and comfort is but another name for a lower, but very indispensable ingredient of that emotion. Skill and ingenuity readily present themselves as means by which enjoyment may be promoted; and high fortune, and opulence, and splendour, pass, at least at a distance, for its certain causes and attendants. The beauty of fitness and adaptation of parts, even in the works of nature, is derived from the same fountain—partly by means of its obvious analogy to works of human skill, and partly by suggestions of that Creative power and wisdom, to which all human destiny is subjected. The feelings, therefore, associated with all those qualities, though scarcely rising to the height of emotion, are obviously in a certain degree pleasing or interesting; and when several of them happen to be united in one object, may accumulate to a very great degree of beauty. It is needless, we think, to pursue these general propositions through all the details to which they so obviously lead. We shall confine ourselves, therefore, to a very few remarks upon the beauty of architecture—and chiefly as an illustration of our general position.

There are few things, about which men of *virtù* are more apt to rave, than the merits of the Grecian architecture; and most of those who affect an uncommon purity and delicacy of taste, talk of the intrinsic beauty of its proportions as a thing not to be disputed, except by barbarian ignorance and stupidity. Mr. Alison, we think, was the first who gave a full and convincing refutation of this mysterious dogma; and, while he admits, in the most ample terms, the actual beauty of the objects in question, has shown, we think, in the clearest manner, that it arises entirely from the combination of the following associations:—1st, The association of utility, convenience, or fitness for the purposes of the building; 2d, Of security and stability, with a view to the nature of the materials; 3d, Of the skill and power requisite to mould such materials into forms so commodious; 4th, Of magnificence, and splendour, and expense; 5th, Of antiquity; and, 6thly, Of Roman and Grecian greatness. His observations are summed up in the following short sentence.

"The proportions," he observes, "of these orders, it is to be remembered, are distinct subjects of beauty, from the ornaments with which they are embellished, from the magnificence with which they are executed, from the purposes of elegance they are intended to serve, or the scenes of grandeur they are destined to adorn. It is in such scenes, however, and with such additions, that we are accustomed to observe them; and, while we feel the effect of all these accidental associations, we are seldom willing to examine what are the causes of the complex emotion we feel, and readily attribute to the nature of the architecture itself, the whole pleasure which we enjoy. But, besides these, there are other associations we have with these forms, that

still more powerfully serve to command our admiration; for they are the GRECIAN orders; they derive their origin from those times, and were the ornament of those countries which are most hallowed in our imaginations; and it is difficult for us to see them, even in their modern copies, without feeling them operate upon our minds as relics of those polished nations where they first arose, and of that greater people by whom they were afterwards borrowed."

This analysis is to us perfectly satisfactory. But, indeed, we cannot conceive any more complete refutation of the notion of an intrinsic and inherent beauty in the proportions of the Grecian architecture, than the fact of the admitted beauty of such very opposite proportions in the Gothic. Opposite as they are, however, the great elements of beauty are the same in this style as in the other—the impressions of religious awe and of chivalrous recollections, coming here in place of the classical associations which constitute so great a share of the interest of the former. It is well observed too by Mr. Alison, that the great durability and costliness of the productions of this art, have had the effect, in almost all regions of the world, of rendering their *Fashion* permanent, after it had once attained such a degree of perfection as to fulfil its substantial purposes.

"Buildings," he observes, "may last, and are intended to last for centuries. The life of man is very inadequate to the duration of such productions; and the present period of the world, though old with respect to those arts which are employed upon perishable subjects, is yet young in relation to an art, which is employed upon so durable materials as those of architecture. Instead of a few years, therefore, centuries must probably pass before such productions demand to be renewed; and, long before that period is elapsed, the sacredness of antiquity is acquired by the subject itself, and a new motive given for the preservation of similar forms. In every country, accordingly, the same effect has taken place: and the same causes which have thus served to produce among us, for so many years, an uniformity of taste with regard to the style of Grecian architecture, have produced also among the nations of the East, for a much longer course of time, a similar uniformity of taste with regard to their ornamental style of architecture; and have perpetuated among them the same forms which were in use among their forefathers, before the Grecian orders were invented."

It is not necessary, we think, to carry these illustrations any farther: as the theory they are intended to explain, is now, we believe, universally adopted, though with some limitations, which we see no reason to retain. Those suggested by Mr. Alison, we have already endeavoured to dispose of in the few remarks we have made upon his publication; and it only remains to say a word or two more upon Mr. Knight's doctrine as to the primitive and independent beauty of colours, upon which we have already hazarded some remarks.

Agreeing as he does with Mr. Alison, and all modern inquirers, that the whole beauty of objects consists, in the far greater number of instances, in the associations to which we have alluded, he still maintains, that some few visible objects affect us with a sense of beauty in consequence of the pleasurable impression they make upon the sense—and that our perception of beauty is, in these instances, a mere organic sensation. Now, we have already stated, that it would be something quite unexampled in the history either of mind or of language, if certain physical and bodily sensations should thus be confounded with moral and social feelings with which they had no connection, and pass familiarly under one and the same name. Beauty consists confessedly, in almost all cases, in *the suggestion* of moral or social emotions, mixed up and modified by a present sensation or perception; and it is this suggestion, and this identification with a present object, that constitutes its essence, and gives a common character to the whole class of feelings it produces, sufficient to justify their being designated by a common appellation. If the word beauty, in short, must mean something, and if *this* be very clearly what it means, in all the remarkable instances of its occurrence, it is difficult to conceive, that it should occasionally mean something quite different, and denote a mere sensual or physical gratification, unaccompanied by the suggestion of any moral emotion whatever. According to Mr. Knight, however, and, indeed, to many other writers, this is the case with regard to the beauty of colours; which depends altogether, they say, upon the delight which the eye naturally takes in their contemplation—this delight being just as primitive and sensual as that which the palate receives from the contact of agreeable flavours.

It must be admitted, we think, in the first place, that such an allegation is in itself extremely improbable, and contrary to all analogy, and all experience of the structure of language, or of the laws of thought. It is farther to be considered, too, that if the pleasures of the senses are ever to be considered as beautiful, those pleasures which are the most lively and important would be the most likely to usurp this denomination, and to take rank with the higher gratifications that result from the perception of beauty. Now, it admits of no dispute, that the mere organic pleasures of the eye (if indeed they have any existence) are far inferior to those of the palate, the touch, and indeed almost all the other senses—none of which, however, are in any case confounded with the sense of beauty. In the next place, it should follow, that if what affords organic pleasure to the eye be properly called beautiful, what offends or gives pain to it, should be called ugly. Now, excessive or dazzling light is offensive to the eye—but, considered by itself, it is never called ugly, but only painful or disagreeable. The moderate excitement of light, on the other hand, or the soothing of certain bright but temperate colours, when considered in

this primary aspect, are not called beautiful, but only agreeable or refreshing. So far as the direct offence or comfort of the organ, in short, is referred to, the language which we use relates strictly to physical or bodily sensation, and is not confounded with that which relates to mental emotion; and we really see no ground for supposing that there is any exception to this rule.

It is very remarkable, indeed, that the sense whose organic gratification is here supposed to constitute the primary feeling of beauty, should be one, in the first place, whose direct organic gratifications are of very little force or intensity;—and, in the next place, one whose office it is, almost exclusively, to make us acquainted with the existence and properties of those external objects which are naturally interesting to our inward feelings and affections. This peculiarity makes it (at the very least) extremely probable, that ideas of emotion should be *associated* with the perceptions of this sense; but extremely improbable, that its naked and *unassociated* sensations should in any case be classed with such emotions. If the name of beauty were given to what directly gratifies any sense, such as that of tasting or smelling, which does *not* make us acquainted with the nature or relations of outward objects, there would be less room for such an explanation. But when it is the business of a particular sense or organ to introduce to our knowledge those objects which are naturally connected with ideas of emotion, it is easy to understand how *its* perceptions should be associated with these emotions, and an interest and importance thus extended to them, that belong to the intimations of no other bodily organ. But, for those very reasons, we should be prepared to suspect, that all the interest they possess is derived from this association; and to distrust the accuracy of any observations that might lead us to conclude that its mere organic impulses ever produced any thing akin to those associated emotions, or entitled to pass under their name. This caution will appear still more reasonable, when it is considered, that all the other qualities of visible objects, except only their colours, are now admitted to be perfectly indifferent in themselves, and to possess no other beauty than they may derive from their associations with our ordinary affections. There are no *forms*, for example, even in Mr. Knight's opinion, that have any intrinsic beauty, or any power of pleasing or affecting us, except through their associations, or affinities to mental affections, either as expressive of fitness and utility, or as types and symbols of certain moral or intellectual qualities, in which the sources of our interest are obvious. Yet the form of an object is as conspicuous an ingredient of its beauty as its colour; and a property, too, which seems at first view to be as intrinsically and independently pleasing. Why, then, should we persist in holding that colours, or combinations of colours, please from being *naturally* agreeable to the organ of sight, when it is admitted that other visible qualities, which *seem* to possess the same power of pleasing, are found, upon examination, to owe it entirely to the principle of association?

The only reason that can be assigned, or that actually exists for this distinction, is, that it has been supposed more difficult to account for the beauty of colours, upon the principles which have accounted for other beauties, or to specify the particular associations by virtue of which they could acquire this quality. Now, it appears to us that there is no such difficulty; and that there is no reason whatever for holding that one colour, or combination of colours, is more pleasing than another, except upon the same grounds of association which recommend particular forms, motions, or proportions. It appears to us, that the organic pleasures of the eye are extremely few and insignificant. It is hurt, no doubt, by an excessive glare of light; and it is in some degree gratified, perhaps, by a moderate degree of it. But it is only by the quantity or intensity of the light, we think, that it is so affected. The colour of it, we take it, is, in all cases, absolutely indifferent. But it is the colour only that is called beautiful or otherwise; and these qualities we think it very plainly derives from the common fountain of association.

In the first place, we would ask, whether there is any colour that is beautiful in all situations? and, in the next place, whether there is any colour that is not beautiful in some situation? With regard to the first, take the colours that are most commonly referred to as intrinsically beautiful—bright and soft green—clear blue—bright pink, or vermilion. The first is unquestionably beautiful in vernal woods and summer meadows;—and, we humbly conceive, is beautiful, because it is the natural sign and concomitant of those scenes and seasons of enjoyment. Blue, again, is beautiful in the vernal sky;—and, as we believe, for the sake of the pleasures of which such skies are prolific; and pink is beautiful on the cheeks of a young woman or the leaves of a rose, for reasons too obvious to be stated. We have associations enough, therefore, to recommend all those colours, in the situations in which they are beautiful: But, strong as these associations are, they are unable to make them universally beautiful—or beautiful, indeed, in any other situations. Green would not be beautiful in the sky—nor blue on the cheek—nor vermilion on the grass. It may be said, indeed, that, though they are always recognised as beautiful in themselves, their obvious unfitness in such situations counteracts the effect of their beauty, and make an opposite impression, as of something monstrous and unnatural; and that, accordingly, they are all beautiful in indifferent situations, where there is no such antagonist principle—in furniture, dress, and ornaments. Now the fact, in the first place, is not so;—these bright colours being but seldom and sparingly admitted in ornaments or works of art; and no man, for example, choosing to have a blue house, or a green ceiling, or a pink coat. But, in the second place, if the facts were admitted

we think it obvious, that the *general* beauty of those colours would be sufficiently accounted for by the very interesting and powerful associations under which all of them are so frequently presented by the hand of Nature. The interest we take in female beauty,—in vernal delights,—in unclouded skies,—is far too lively and too constantly recurring, not to stamp a kindred interest upon the colours that are naturally associated with such objects; and to make us regard with some affection and delight those hues that remind us of them, although we should only meet them upon a fan, or a dressing-box, the lining of a curtain, or the back of a screen. Finally, we beg leave to observe, that all bright and clear colours are naturally typical of cheerfulness and purity of mind, and are hailed as emblems of moral qualities, to which no one can be indifferent.

With regard to ugly colours again, we really are not aware of any to which that epithet can be safely applied. Dull and dingy hues are usually mentioned as in themselves the least pleasing. Yet these are the prevailing tints in many beautiful landscapes, and many admired pictures. They are also the most common colours that are chosen for dress (male dress at least),—for building,—for furniture,—where the consideration of beauty is the only motive for the choice. In fact, the *shaded* parts of all coloured objects pass into tints of this description:—nor can we at present recollect any one colour, which we could specify as in itself disagreeable, without running counter to the feelings and the practice of the great mass of mankind. If the fact, however, were otherwise, and if certain muddy and dull colours were universally allowed to be disagreeable, we should think there could be no difficulty in referring these, too, to natural associations. Darkness, and all that approaches it, is naturally associated with ideas of melancholy,—of helplessness, and danger;—and the gloomy hues that remind us of it, or seem to draw upon it, must share in the same associations. Lurid skies, too, it should be observed, and turbid waters, and unfruitful swamps, and dreary morasses, are the natural and most common wearers of these dismal liveries. It is from these that we first become acquainted with them; and it is needless, therefore, to say, that such objects are necessarily associated with ideas of discomfort, and sadness, and danger; and that the colours that remind us of them, can scarcely fail to recal some of the same disagreeable sensations.

Enough, however, and more than enough, has been said about the supposed primitive and independant beauty of separate colours. It is chiefly upon the intrinsic beauty of their mixture or combinations that Mr. Knight and his adherents have insisted;—and it is no doubt quite true, that, among painters and connoisseurs, we hear a great deal about the harmony and composition of tints, and the charms and difficulties of a judicious colouring. In all this, however, we cannot help suspecting that there is no little pedantry, and no little jargon; and that these phrases, when used without reference to the practical difficulties of the art, which must go for nothing in the present question, really mean little more than the true and natural appearance of coloured objects, seen through the same tinted or partially obscure medium that commonly constitutes the atmosphere: and for the actual optical effects of which but few artists know how to make the proper allowance. In nature, we know of no discordant or offensive colouring, except what may be referred to some accident or disaster that spoils the moral or sentimental expression of the scene, and disturbs the associations upon which all its beauty, whether of forms or of hues, seems to us very plainly dependent. We are perfectly aware, that ingenious persons have been disposed to dogmatize and to speculate very confidently upon these subjects; and have had the benefit of seeing various learned treatises upon the natural *gamut* of colours, and the inherent congruity of those that are called complementary, with reference to the prismatic *spectrum*. But we confess we have no faith in any of those fancies; and believe, that, if all these colours were fairly arranged on a plain board, according to the most rigid rules of this supposed harmony, nobody, but the author of the theory, would perceive the smallest beauty in the exhibition, or be the least offended by reversing their collocation.

We do not mean, however, to dispute, that the laws of colouring, insisted on by learned artists, will produce a more pleasing effect *upon trained judges of the art*, than a neglect of these laws; because we have little doubt that these combinations of colour are recommended by certain associations, which render them generally pleasing to persons so trained and educated;—all that we maintain is, that there are no combinations that are originally and universally pleasing or displeasing to the eye, independent of such associations; and it seems to us an irresistible proof of this, that these laws of harmonious colouring are perpetually and deliberately violated by great multitudes of persons, who not only have the perfect use of their sight, but are actually bestowing great pains and expense in providing for its gratification, in the very act of this violation. The Dutch trader, who paints over the outside of his country-house with as many bright colours as are to be found in his tulip-bed, and garnishes his green shutters with blue facings, and his purple roof with lilac ridges, not only *sees* as well as the studied colourist, who shudders at the exhibition, but actually receives as much pleasure, and as strong an impression of beauty, from the finished *lusthaus*, as the artist does from one of his best pictures. It is impossible, then, that these combinations of colours can be *naturally* or intrinsicaliy offensive to the organ of sight; and their beauty or ugliness *must* depend upon the associations which different individuals may have happened to form with regard to them. We contend, however, for nothing more; and are quite willing to allow that the associations which recommend his staring tawdriness to the burgomaster, are such as

could not easily have been formed in the mind of a diligent and extensive observer of nature, and that they would probably be reversed by habits of reflection and study. But the same thing, it is obvious, may be said of the notions of beauty of any other description that prevail among the rude, the inexperienced, and uninstructed;—though, in all other instances, we take it for granted, that the beauty which *is* perceived depends altogether upon association, and in no degree on its power of giving a pleasurable impulse to the organ to which it addresses itself. If any considerable number of persons, with the perfect use of sight, actually take pleasure in certain combinations of colours—*that* is complete proof that such combinations are not naturally offensive to the organ of sight, and that the pleasure of such persons, exactly like that of those who disagree with them, is derived not from the sense, but from associations with its perceptions.

With regard, again, to the effect of broken masses of light and shadow, it is proper, in the first place, to remember, that by the eye we see *colour only;* and that lights and shadows, as far as the mere organ is concerned, mean nothing but variations of tint. It is very true, no doubt, that we soon learn to refer many of those variations to light and shade, and that they thus become *signs* to us of depth, and distance, and relief. But, is not this, of itself, sufficient to refute the idea of their affording any primitive or organic pleasure? In so far as they are mere variations of tints, they may be imitated by unmeaning daubs of paint on a pallet;—in so far as they are *signs*, it is to the mind that they address themselves, and not to the organ. They are signs, too, it should be recollected, and the only signs we have, by which we can receive any correct knowledge of the existence and condition of all external objects at a distance from us, whether interesting or not interesting. Without the assistance of variety of tint, and of lights and shadows, we could never distinguish one object from another, except by the touch. These appearances, therefore, are the perpetual vehicles of almost all our interesting perceptions; and are consequently associated with all the emotions we receive from visible objects. It is pleasant to see *many* things in one prospect, because some of them are probably agreeable; and it is pleasant to know the relations of those things, because the qualities or associations, by means of which they interest us, generally depend upon that knowledge. The mixture of colours and shades, however, is necessary to this enjoyment, and consequently is a sign of it, and a source of associated interest or beauty.

Mr. Knight, however, goes much farther than this; and maintains, that the beauty which is so distinctly felt in many pictures of objects in themselves disagreeable, is to be ascribed entirely to the effect of the brilliant and harmonious tints, and the masses of light and shadow that may be employed in the representation. The filthy and tattered rags of a beggar, he observes, and the putrifying contents of a dunghill, may form beautiful objects in a picture; because, considered as mere objects of sight, they may often present beautiful effects of colouring and shadow; and these are preserved or heightened in the imitation, disjointed from all their offensive accompaniments. Now, if the tints and shades were the exclusive sources of our gratification, and if this gratification was diminished, instead of being heightened, by the suggestion which, however transiently, *must* still intrude itself, that they appeared in an imitation of disgusting objects, it must certainly follow, that the pleasure and the beauty would be much enhanced if there was *no imitation of any thing whatever*, and if the canvas merely presented the tints and shades, unaccompanied with the representation of any particular object. It is perfectly obvious, however, that it would be absurd to call such a collection of coloured spots a beautiful picture; and that a man would be laughed at who should hang up such a piece of stained canvas among the works of the great artists. Again, if it were really possible for any one, but a student of art, to confine the attention to the mere colouring and shadowing of any picture, there is nothing so disgusting but what might form the subject of a beautiful imitation. A piece of putrid veal, or a cancerous ulcer, or the rags that are taken from it, may display the most brilliant tints, and the finest distribution of light and shadow. Does Mr. Knight, however, seriously think, that either of these experiments would succeed? Or are there, in reality, no other qualities in the pictures in question, to which their beauty can be ascribed, but the organic effect of their colours? We humbly conceive that there are; and that far less ingenuity than his might have been able to detect them.

There is, in the first place, the pleasing association of the skill and power of the artist—a skill and power which we know *may* be employed to produce unmingled delight; whatever may be the character of the particular effort before us: and with the pride of whose possessors we sympathise. But, in the second place, we do humbly conceive that there are many interesting associations connected with the subjects which have been represented as purely disgusting. The aspect of human wretchedness and decay is not, at all events, an *indifferent* spectacle; and, if presented to us without actual offence to our senses, or any call on our active beneficence, may excite a sympathetic emotion, which is known to be far from undelightful. Many an attractive poem has been written on the mise ries of beggars; and why should painting be supposed more fastidious? Besides, it will be observed, that the beggars of the painter are generally among the most interesting of that interesting order;—either young and lovely children, whose health and gaiety, and sweet expression, form an affecting contrast with their squalid garments, and the neglect and misery to which they seem to be destined—or old and venerable persons, mingling something of the dignity and reverence of age with the broken spirit of their condition, and

seeming to reproach mankind for exposing heads so old and white to the pelting of the pitiless storm. While such pictures suggest images so pathetic, it looks almost like a wilful perversity, to ascribe their beauty entirely to the mixture of colours which they display, and to the forgetfulness of these images. Even for the dunghill, we think it is possible to say something,—though, we confess, we have never happened to see any picture, of which that useful compound formed the peculiar subject. There is the display of the painter's art and power here also; and the dunghill is not only useful, but is associated with many pleasing images of rustic toil and occupation, and of the simplicity, and comfort, and innocence of agricultural life. We do not know that a dunghill is at all a disagreeable object to look at, even in plain reality—provided it be so far off as not to annoy us with its odour, or to soil us with its effusions. In a picture, however, we are safe from any of these disasters; and, considering that it is usually combined, in such delineations, with other more pleasing and touching remembrancers of humble happiness and contentment, we really do not see that it was at all necessary to impute any mysterious or intrinsic beauty to its complexion, in order to account for the satisfaction with which we can then bear to behold it.

Having said so much with a view to reduce to its just value, as an ingredient of beauty, the mere organical delight which the eye is supposed to derive from colours, we really have not patience to apply the same considerations to the alleged beauty of *Sounds* that are supposed to be insignificant. Beautiful sounds, in general, we think, are beautiful from association only,—from their resembling the natural tones of various passions and affections,—or from their being originally and most frequently presented to us in scenes or on occasions of natural interest or emotion. With regard, again, to successive or coexistent sounds, we do not, of course, mean to dispute, that there are such things as melody and harmony; and that most men are offended or gratified by the violation or observance of those laws upon which they depend. This, however, it should be observed, is a faculty quite *unique*, and unlike anything else in our constitution; by no means universal, as the sense of beauty is, even in cultivated societies; and apparently withheld from whole communities of quick-eared savages and barbarians. Whether the kind of gratification, which results from the mere musical arrangement of sounds, would be felt to be beautiful, or would pass under that name, if it could be presented entirely detached from any associated emotions, appears to us to be exceedingly doubtful. Even with the benefit of such combinations, we do not find, that every arrangement which merely preserves inviolate the rules of composition, is considered as beautiful; and we do not think that it would be consonant, either with the common feeling or common language of mankind, to bestow this epithet upon pieces that had no other merit. At all events, and whatever may be thought of the proper name of this singular gratification, of a musical ear, it seems to be quite certain, that all that rises to the dignity of an *emotion* in the pleasure we receive from sounds, is as clearly the gift of association, as in the case of visible beauty,—of association with the passionate tones and modulations of the human voice,—with the scenes to which the interesting sounds are native,—with the poetry to which they have been married,—or even with the skill and genius of the artist by whom they have been arranged.

Hitherto we have spoken of the beauty of external objects only. But the whole difficulty of the theory consists in its application to them. If that be once adjusted, the beauty of immaterial objects can occasion no perplexity. Poems and other compositions in words, are beautiful in proportion as they are conversant with beautiful objects—or as they suggest to us, in a more direct way, the moral and social emotions on which the beauty of all objects depends. Theorems and demonstrations again are beautiful, according as they excite in us emotions of admiration for the genius and intellectual power of their inventors, and images of the magnificent and beneficial ends to which such discoveries may be applied;—and mechanical contrivances are beautiful when they remind us of similar talents and ingenuity, and at the same time impress us with a more direct sense of their vast utility to mankind, and of the great additional conveniences with which life is consequently adorned. In all cases, therefore, there is the suggestion of some interesting conception or emotion associated with a present perception, in which it is apparently confounded and embodied—and this, according to the whole of the preceding deduction, is the distinguishing characteristic of beauty.

Having now explained, as fully as we think necessary, the grounds of that opinion as to the nature of beauty which appears to be most conformable to the truth—we have only to add a word or two as to the necessary consequences of its adoption upon several other controversies of a kindred description.

In the first place, then, we conceive that it establishes the substantial identity of the Sublime, the Beautiful, and the Picturesque; and, consequently, puts an end to all controversy that is not purely verbal, as to the difference of those several qualities. Every material object that interests us, without actually hurting or gratifying our bodily feelings, must do so, according to this theory, in one and the same manner,—that is, by suggesting or recalling some emotion or affection of ourselves, or some other sentient being, and presenting, to our imagination at least, some natural object of love, pity, admiration, or awe. The interest of material objects, therefore, is always *the same;* and arises, in every case, not from any physical qualities they may possess, but from their association with some idea of emotion. But, though material objects have but one means of exciting emotion, the emotions they do excite are infinite. They

are mirrors that may reflect all shades and all colours; and, in point of fact, do seldom reflect the same hues twice. No two interesting objects, perhaps, whether known by the name of Beautiful, Sublime, or Picturesque, ever produced exactly the same emotion in the beholder; and no one object, it is most probable, ever moved any two persons to the very same conceptions. As they may be associated with all the feelings and affections of which the human mind is susceptible, so they may suggest those feelings in all their variety, and, in fact, do daily excite all sorts of emotions—running through every gradation, from extreme gaiety and elevation, to the borders of horror and disgust.

Now, it is certainly true, that all the variety of emotions raised in this way, on the single basis of association, may be classed, in a rude way, under the denominations of sublime, beautiful, and picturesque, according as they partake of awe, tenderness, or admiration: and we have no other objection to this nomenclature, except its extreme imperfection, and the delusions to which we know that it has given occasion. If objects that interest by their association with ideas of power, and danger, and terror, are to be distinguished by the peculiar name of sublime. why should there not be a separate name also for objects that interest by associations of mirth and gaiety—another for those that please by suggestions of softness and melancholy—another for such as are connected with impressions of comfort and tranquillity—and another for those that are related to pity, and admiration, and love, and regret, and all the other distinct emotions and affections of our nature? These are not in reality less distinguishable from each other, than from the emotions of awe and veneration that confer the title of sublime on *their* representatives; and while all the former are confounded under the comprehensive appellation of beauty, this partial attempt at distinction is only apt to mislead us into an erroneous opinion of our accuracy, and to make us believe, both that there is a greater conformity among the things that pass under the same name, and a greater difference between those that pass under different names, than is really the case. We have seen already, that the radical error of almost all preceding inquirers, has lain in supposing that every thing that passed under the name of beautiful, must have some real and inherent quality in common with every thing else that obtained that name: And it is scarcely necessary for us to observe, that it has been almost as general an opinion, that sublimity was not only something radically different from beauty, but actually opposite to it; whereas the fact is, that it is far more nearly related to some sorts of beauty, than many sorts of beauty are to each other; and that both are founded exactly upon the same principle of suggesting some past or possible emotion of some sentient being.

Upon this important point, we are happy to find our opinions confirmed by the authority of Mr. Stewart, who, in his Essay on the Beautiful, already referred to, has observed, not only that there appears to him to be no inconsistency or impropriety in such expressions as the *sublime beauties* of nature, or of the sacred Scriptures;—but has added, in express terms, that, "to oppose the beautiful to the sublime, or to the picturesque, strikes him as something analogous to a contrast between the beautiful and the comic—the beautiful and the tragic—the beautiful and the pathetic—or the beautiful and the romantic."

The only other advantage which we shall specify as likely to result from the general adoption of the theory we have been endeavouring to illustrate is, that it seems calculated to put an end to all these perplexing and vexatious questions about the standard of taste, which have given occasion to so much impertinent and so much elaborate discussion. If things are not beautiful in themselves, but only as they serve to suggest interesting conceptions to the mind, then every thing which does in point of fact suggest such a conception to any individual, *is beautiful* to that individual; and it is not only quite true that there is no room for disputing about tastes, but that all tastes are equally just and correct, in so far as each individual speaks only of his own emotions. When a man calls a thing beautiful, however, he may indeed mean to make two very different assertions;—he may mean that it gives *him* pleasure by suggesting to him some interesting emotion; and, in this sense, there can be no doubt that, if he merely speak truth, the thing is beautiful; and that it pleases him precisely in the same way that all other things please those to whom they appear beautiful. But if he mean farther to say that the thing possesses some quality which should make it appear beautiful to every other person, and that it is owing to some prejudice or defect in them if it appear otherwise, then he is as unreasonable and absurd as he would think those who should attempt to convince him that he felt no emotion of beauty.

All tastes, then, are equally just and true, in so far as concerns the individual whose taste is in question; and what a man feels distinctly to be beautiful, *is beautiful* to him, whatever other people may think of it. All this follows clearly from the theory now in question: but it does not follow, from it, that all tastes are equally good or desirable, or that there is any difficulty in describing that which is really the best, and the most to be envied. The only use of the faculty of taste, is to afford an innocent delight, and to assist in the cultivation of a finer morality; and that man certainly will have the most delight from this faculty, who has the most numerous and the most powerful perceptions of beauty. But, if beauty consist in the reflection of our affections and sympathies, it is plain that *he* will always see the most beauty whose affections are the warmest and most exercised—whose imagination is the most powerful, and who has most accustomed himself to attend to the objects by which he is surrounded. In so far as mere feeling and enjoyment are concerned, therefore, it seems evident, that the best taste must be that which belongs to the best affections, the most active fancy, and the most attentive habits of observation. It will follow pretty exactly too, that all men's perceptions of beauty will be nearly in proportion to the degree of their sensibility and social sympathies; and that those who have no affections towards sentient beings, will be as certainly insensible to beauty in external objects, as he, who cannot hear the sound of his friend's voice, must be deaf to its echo.

In so far as the sense of beauty is regarded as a mere source of enjoyment, this seems to be the only distinction that deserves to be attended to; and the only cultivation that taste should ever receive, with a view to the gratification of the individual, should be through the indirect channel of cultivating the affections and powers of observation. If we aspire, however, to be *creators*, as well as observers of beauty, and place any part of our happiness in ministering to the gratification of others—as artists, or poets, or authors of any sort—then, indeed, a new distinction of tastes, and a far more laborious system of cultivation, will be necessary. A man who pursues only his own delight, will be as much charmed with objects that suggest powerful emotions in consequence of personal and accidental associations, as with those that introduce similar emotions by means of associations that are universal and indestructible. To him, all objects of the former class are really as beautiful as those of the latter—and for his own gratification, the creation of that sort of beauty is just as important an occupation: but if he conceive the ambition of creating beauties for the admiration of others, he must be cautious to employ only such objects as are the *natural* signs, or the *inseparable* concomitants of emotions, of which the greater part of mankind are susceptible; and his taste will *then* deserve to be called bad and false, if he obtrude upon the public, as beautiful, objects that are not likely to be associated in common minds with any interesting impressions.

For a man himself, then, there is no taste that is either bad or false; and the only difference worthy of being attended to, is that between a great deal and a very little. Some who have cold affections, sluggish imaginations, and no habits of observation, can with difficulty discern beauty in any thing; while others, who are full of kindness and sensibility, and who have been accustomed to attend to all the objects around them, feel it almost in every thing. It is no matter what other people may think of the objects of their admiration; nor ought it to be any concern of theirs that the public would be astonished or offended, if they were called upon to join in that admiration. So long as no such call is made, this anticipated discrepancy of feeling need give *them* no uneasiness; and the suspicion of it should produce no contempt in any other persons. It is a strange aberration indeed of vanity that makes us despise persons for being happy—for having sources of enjoyment in which we cannot share:—and yet this is the true source of the ridicule, which is so generally poured upon individuals who seek only to enjoy their peculiar tastes unmolested:—for, if there be any truth in the theory we have been expounding, no taste is bad for any other reason than because it is peculiar—as the objects in which it delights must actually serve to suggest to the individual those common emotions and universal affections upon which the sense of beauty is every where founded. The misfortune is, however, that we are apt to consider all persons who make known their peculiar relishes, and especially all who create any objects for their gratification, as in some measure dictating to the public, and setting up an idol for general adoration; and hence this intolerant interference with almost all peculiar perceptions of beauty, and the unsparing derision that pursues all deviations from acknowledged standards. This intolerance, we admit, is often provoked by something of a spirit of *proselytism* and arrogance, in those who mistake their own casual associations for natural or universal relations; and the consequence is, that mortified vanity ultimately dries up, even for them, the fountain of their peculiar enjoyment; and disenchants, by a new association of general contempt or ridicule, the scenes that had been consecrated by some innocent but accidental emotion.

As all men must have some peculiar associations, all men must have some peculiar notions of beauty, and, of course, to a certain extent, a taste that the public would be entitled to consider as false or vitiated. For those who make no demands on public admiration, however, it is hard to be obliged to sacrifice this source of enjoyment; and, even for those who labour for applause, the wisest course, perhaps, if it were only practicable, would be, to have *two* tastes—one to enjoy, and one to work by—one founded upon universal associations, according to which they finished those performances for which they challenged universal praise—and another guided by all casual and individual associations, through which they might still look fondly upon nature, and upon the objects of their secret admiration.

(November, 1812.)

De la Littérature considérée dans ses Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales. Par MAD. LE STAËL-HOLSTEIN. Avec un Précis de la Vie et les Ecrits de l'Auteur. 2 tomes. 12mo. pp. 600. London: 1812.*

WHEN we say that Madame de Staël is decidedly the most eminent literary female of her age, we do not mean to deny that there may be others whose writings are of more direct and indisputable utility—who are distinguished by greater justness and sobriety of thinking, and may pretend to have conferred more practical benefits on the existing generation. But it is impossible, we think, to deny, that she has pursued a more lofty as well as a more dangerous career;—that she has treated of subjects of far greater difficulty, and far more extensive interest; and, even in her failures, has frequently given indication of greater powers, than have sufficed for the success of her more prudent contemporaries.

While other female writers have contented themselves, for the most part, with embellishing or explaining the truths which the more robust intellect of the other sex had previously established—in making knowledge more familiar, or virtue more engaging—or, at most, in multiplying the finer distinctions which may be detected about the boundaries of taste or of morality—and in illustrating the importance of the minor virtues to the general happiness of life—this distinguished person has not only aimed at extending the boundaries of knowledge, and rectifying the errors of received opinions upon subjects of the greatest importance, but has vigorously applied herself to trace out the operation of general causes, and, by combining the past with the present, and pointing out the connection and reciprocal action of all coexistent phenomena, to develope the harmonious system which actually prevails in the apparent chaos of human affairs; and to gain something like an assurance as to the complexion of that futurity towards which our thoughts are so anxiously driven, by the selfish as well as the generous principles of our nature.

We are not acquainted, indeed, with any writer who has made such bold and vigorous attempts to carry the generalizing spirit of true philosophy into the history of literature and manners; or who has thrown so strong a light upon the capricious and apparently unaccountable diversities of national taste, genius, and morality—by connecting them with the political structure of society, the accidents of climate and external relation, and the variety of creeds and superstitions. In her lighter works, this spirit is indicated chiefly by the force and comprehensiveness of those general observations with which they abound; and which strike at once, by their justness and novelty, and by the great extent of their application. They prove also in how remarkable a degree she possesses the rare talent of embodying in one luminous proposition those sentiments and impressions which float unquestioned and undefined over many an understanding, and give a colour to the character, and a bias to the conduct, of multitudes, who are not so much as aware of their existence. Besides all this, her novels bear testimony to the extraordinary accuracy and minuteness of her observation of human character, and to her thorough knowledge of those dark and secret workings of the heart, by which misery is so often elaborated from the pure element of the affections. Her knowledge, however, we must say, seems to be more of evil than of good: For the predominating sentiment in her fictions is, despair of human happiness and human virtue; and their interest is founded almost entirely on the inherent and almost inevitable heartlessness of polished man. The impression which they leave upon the mind, therefore, though powerfully pathetic, is both painful and humiliating; at the same time that it proceeds, we are inclined to believe, upon the double error of supposing that the bulk of intelligent people are as selfish as those splendid victims of fashion and philosophy from whom her characters are selected; and that a sensibility to unkindness can long survive the extinction of all kindly emotions. The work before us, however, exhibits the fairest specimen which we have yet seen of the systematizing spirit of the author, as well as of the moral enthusiasm by which she seems to be possessed.

The professed object of this work is to show that all the peculiarities in the literature of different ages and countries, may be explained by a reference to the condition of society, and the political and religious institutions of each;—and at the same time, to point out in what way the progress of letters has in its turn modified and affected the government and religion of those nations among whom they have flourished. All this, however, is bottomed upon the more fundamental and favourite proposition, that *there is a progress*, to produce these effects—that letters and intelligence are in a state of constant, universal, and irresistible advancement—in other words, that human nature is tending, by a slow and interminable progression, to a state of perfection. This fascinating idea seems to have been kept constantly in view by Madame de Staël, from the beginning to the end of the work before us;—and though we conceive it to have been pursued with far too sanguine and assured a spirit, and to have led in this way to most of what is rash and questionable in her conclusions, it is impossible to doubt that it has also helped her to many explanations that are equally solid and ingenious, and thrown a light upon many phenomena that would otherwise have appeared very dark and unaccountable.

In the range which she here takes, indeed, she has need of all the lights and all the aids that can present themselves;—for her work contains a critique and a theory of all the literature and philosophy in the world, from the days of Homer to the tenth year of the French revolution. She begins with the early learning and philosophy of Greece; and after characterizing the national taste and genius of that illustrious people, in all its departments, and in the different stages of their progress, she proceeds to a similar investigation of the literature and science of the Romans; and then, after a hasty sketch of the decline of arts and letters in the later days of the empire, and of the actual progress of the human mind during the dark ages, when it is supposed to have slumbered in complete inactivity, she enters upon a more detailed examination of the peculiarities, and the causes of the peculiarities, of all the different aspects of national taste and genius that characterize the literature of Italy, Spain, England, Germany, and France—entering, as to each, into a pretty minute exposition of its general merits and defects—and not only of the circumstances in the situation of the country that have produced those characteristics, but even of the authors and productions, in which they are chiefly exemplified. To go through all this with tolerable success, and without committing any very gross or ridiculous blunders, evidently required, in the first place, a greater allowance of learning than has often fallen to the lot of persons of the learned gender, who lay a pretty bold claim to distinction upon the ground of their learning alone; and, in the next place, an extent of general knowledge, and a power and comprehensiveness of thinking, that has still more rarely been the ornament of great scholars. Madame de Staël may be surpassed, perhaps, in scholarship (so far as relates to accuracy at least, if not extent,) by some—and in sound philosophy by others. But there are few indeed who can boast of having so much of both; and no one, so far as we know, who has applied the one to the elucidation of the other with so much boldness and success. But it is time to give a little more particular account of her lucubrations.

There is a very eloquent and high-toned Introduction, illustrating, in a general way, the influence of literature on the morals, the glory, the freedom, and the enjoyments of the people among whom it flourishes. It is full of brilliant thoughts and profound observations; but we are most struck with those sentiments of mingled triumph and mortification by which she connects these magnificent speculations with the tumultuous aspect of the times in which they were nourished.

"Que ne puis-je rappeler tous les esprits éclairés à la jouissance des méditations philosophiques! Les contemporains d'une Révolution perdent souvent tout intérêt à la recherche de la vérité. Tant d'événemens décidés par la force, tant de crimes absous par le succès, tant de vertus flétries par le blâme, tant d'infortunes insultées par le pouvoir, tant de sentimens généreux devenus l'objet de la moquerie, tant de vils calculs philosophiquement commentés; tout lasse de l'espérance les hommes les plus fidèles au culte de la raison. Néanmoins ils doivent se ranimer en observant, dans l'histoire de l'esprit humain, qu'il n'a existé ni une pensée utile, ni une vérité profonde qui n'ait trouvé son siècle et ses admirateurs. C'est sans doute un triste effort que de transporter son intérêt, de reposer son attente, à travers l'avenir, sur nos successeurs, sur les étrangers bien loin de nous, sur les inconnus, sur tous les hommes enfin dont le souvenir et l'image ne peuvent se retracer à notre esprit. Mais, hélas! si l'on en excepte quelques amis inaltérables, la plupart de ceux qu'on se rappelle après dix années de révolution, contristent votre cœur, étouffent vos mouvemens, en imposent à votre talent même, non par leur supériorité, mais par cette malveillance qui ne cause de la douleur qu'aux ames douces, et ne fait souffrir que ceux qui ne la méritent pas."—Tom. i. p. 27, 28.

The connection between good morals and that improved state of intelligence which Madame de Staël considers as synonymous with the cultivation of literature, is too obvious to require any great exertion of her talents for its elucidation. She observes, with great truth, that much of the guilt and the misery which are vulgarly imputed to great talents, really arise from not having talent enough—and that the only certain cure for the errors which are produced by superficial thinking, is to be found in thinking more deeply:—At the same time it ought not to be forgotten, that all men have not the capacity of thinking deeply—and that the most general cultivation of literature will not invest every one with talents of the first order. If there be a degree of intelligence, therefore, that is more unfavourable to the interests of morality and just opinion, than an utter want of intelligence, it may be presumed, that, in very enlightened times, this will be the portion of the greater multitude—or at least that nations and individuals will have to pass through this troubled and dangerous sphere, in their way to the loftier and purer regions of perfect understanding. The better answer therefore probably is, that it is not intelligence that does the mischief in any case whatsoever, but the presumption that sometimes accompanies the lower degrees of it; and which is best disjoined from them, by making the higher degrees more attainable. It is quite true, as Madame de Staël observes, that the

* I reprint this paper as containing a more comprehensive view of the progress of Literature, especially in the ancient world, than any other from which I could make the selection; and also, in some degree, for the sake of the general discussion on Perfectibility, which I still think satisfactorily conducted. I regret that, in the body of the article, the portions that are taken from Madame de Staël are not better discriminated from those for which I only am responsible. The reader, however, will not go far wrong, if he attribute to that distinguished person the greater part of what may strike him as bold, imaginative, and original; and leave to me the humbler province of the sober, corrective, and distrustful.

power of public opinion, which is the only sure and ultimate guardian either of freedom or of virtue, is greater or less exactly as the public is more or less enlightened; and that this public can never be trained to the habit of just and commanding sentiments, except under the influence of a sound and progressive literature. The abuse of power, and the abuse of the means of enjoyment, are the great sources of misery and depravity in an advanced stage of society. Both originate with those who stand on the highest stages of human fortune; and the cure is to be found, in both cases, only in the enlightened opinion of those who stand a little lower.

Liberty, it will not be disputed, is still more clearly dependent on intelligence than morality itself. When the governors are ignorant, they are naturally tyrannical. Force is the obvious resource of those who are incapable of convincing; and the more unworthy any one is of the power with which he is invested, the more rigorously will he exercise that power. But it is in the intelligence of the people themselves that the chief bulwark of their freedom will be found to consist, and all the principles of political amelioration to originate. This is true, however, as Madame de Staël observes, only of what she terms "*la haute littérature*;" or the general cultivation of philosophy, eloquence, history, and those other departments of learning which refer chiefly to the heart and the understanding, and depend upon a knowledge of human nature, and an attentive study of all that contributes to its actual enjoyments. What is merely for delight, again, and addresses itself exclusively to the imagination, has neither so noble a genealogy, nor half so illustrious a progeny. Poetry and works of gaiety and amusement, together with music and the sister arts of painting and sculpture, have a much slighter connection either with virtue or with freedom. Though among *their* most graceful ornaments, they may yet flourish under tyrants, and be relished in the midst of the greatest and most debasing corruption of manners. It is a fine and a just remark too, of Madame de Staël, that the pursuits which minister to mere delight, and give to life its charm and voluptuousness, generally produce a great indifference about dying. They supersede and displace all the stronger passions and affections, by which alone we are bound very closely to existence; and, while they habituate the mind to transitory and passive impressions, seem naturally connected with those images of indolence and intoxication and slumber, to which the idea of death is so readily assimilated, in characters of this description. When life, in short, is considered as nothing more than an amusement, its termination is contemplated with far less emotion, and its course, upon the whole, is overshadowed with deeper clouds of *ennui*, than when it is presented as a scene of high duties and honourable labours, and holds out to us at every turn—not the perishable pastimes of the passing hour, but the fixed and distant objects of those serious and lofty aims which connect us with a long futurity.

The introduction ends with an eloquent profession of the author's unshaken faith in the philosophical creed of Perfectibility:—upon which, as it does not happen to be our creed, and is very frequently brought into notice in the course of the work, we must here be indulged with a few preliminary observations.

This splendid illusion, which seems to have succeeded that of Optimism in the favour of philosophical enthusiasts, and rests, like it, upon the notion that the whole scheme of a beneficent Providence is to be developed *in this world*, is supported by Madame de Staël upon a variety of grounds: and as, like most other illusions, it has a considerable admixture of truth, it is supported, in many points, upon grounds that are both solid and ingenious. She relies chiefly, of course, upon the experience of the past; and, in particular, upon the marked and decided superiority of the moderns in respect of thought and reflection—their more profound knowledge of human feelings, and more comprehensive views of human affairs. She ascribes less importance than is usually done to our attainments in mere science, and the arts that relate to matter; and augurs less confidently as to the future fortune of the species, from the exploits of Newton, Watt, and Davy, than from those of Bacon, Bossuet, Locke, Hume, and Voltaire. In eloquence, too, and in taste and fancy, she admits that there has been a less conspicuous advancement; because, in these things, there is a natural limit or point of perfection, which has been already attained: But there are no boundaries to the increase of human knowledge, or to the discovery of the means of human happiness; and every step that is gained in those higher walks, is gained, she conceives, for posterity, and for ever.

The great objection derived from the signal check which the arts and civility of life received from the inroads of the northern barbarians on the decline of the Roman power, and the long period of darkness and degradation which ensued, she endeavours to obviate, by a very bold and ingenious speculation. It is her object here to show that the invasion of the northern tribes not only promoted their own civilization more effectually than any thing else could have done, but actually imparted to the genius of the vanquished, a character of energy, solidity, and seriousness, which could never have sprung up of itself in the volatile regions of the South. The amalgamation of the two races, she thinks, has produced a mighty improvement on both; and the vivacity, the elegance and versatility of the warmer latitudes, been mingled, infinitely to their mutual advantage, with the majestic melancholy, the profound thought, and the sterner morality of the North. This combination, again, she conceives, could have been effected in no way so happily as by the successful invasion of the ruder people; and the conciliating influence of that common faith, which at once repressed the frivolous,

and mollified the ferocious tendencies of our nature. The temporary disappearance therefore of literature and politeness, upon the first shock of this mighty collision, was but the subsidence of the sacred flame under the heaps of fuel which were thus profusely provided for its increase; and the seeming waste and sterility that ensued, was but the first aspect of the fertilizing flood and accumulated manure under which vegetation was buried for a while, that it might break out at last with a richer and more indestructible luxuriance. The human intellect was neither dead nor inactive, she contends, during that long slumber, in which it was collecting vigour for unprecedented exertions; and the occupations to which it was devoted, though not of the most brilliant or attractive description, were perhaps the best fitted for its ultimate and substantial improvement. The subtle distinctions, the refined casuistry, and ingenious logic of the school divines, were all favourable to habits of careful and accurate thinking; and led insensibly to a far more thorough and profound knowledge of human nature—the limits of its faculties and the grounds of its duties—than had been attained by the more careless inquirers of antiquity. When men, therefore, began again to reason upon human affairs, they were found to have made an immense progress during the period when all appeared to be either retrograde or stationary; and Shakspeare, Bacon, Machiavel, Montaigne, and Galileo, who appeared almost at the same time, in the most distant countries of Europe, each displayed a reach of thought and a power of reasoning which we should look for in vain in the eloquent dissertaions of the classical ages. To them succeeded such men as Jeremy Taylor, Molière, Pascal, Locke, and La Bruyère—all of them observers of a character, to which there is nothing at all parallel in antiquity; and yet only preparing the way, in the succeeding age, for Montesquieu, Hume, Voltaire, Smith, Burke, Bentham, Malthus, and so many others; who have made the world familiar with truths, which, however important and demonstrable at all times, certainly never entered into the conception of the earlier inhabitants of the world. Those truths, and others still more important, of which they are destined to be the parents, have already, according to Madame de Staël, produced a prodigious alteration, and an incalculable improvement on the condition of human nature. Through their influence, assisted no doubt by that of the Gospel, slavery has been abolished, trade and industry set free from restriction, and war disarmed of half its horrors; while, in private life, women have been restored to their just rank in society; sentiments of justice and humanity have been universally cultivated, and public opinion been armed with a power which renders every other both safe and salutary.

Many of these truths, which were once the doubtful or derided discoveries of men of original genius, are now admitted as elementary principles in the reasonings of ordinary people; and are every day extending their empire, and multiplying their progeny. Madame de Staël sees no reason to doubt, therefore, that they will one day inherit the whole earth; and, under their reign, she takes it to be clear, that war, and poverty, and all the misery that arises from vice and ignorance, will disappear from the face of society; and that men, universally convinced that justice and benevolence are the true sources of enjoyment, will seek their own happiness in a constant endeavour to promote that of their neighbours.

It would be very agreeable to believe all this—in spite of the grudging which would necessarily arise, from the reflection that we ourselves were born so much too soon for virtue and enjoyment in this world. But it is really impossible to overlook the manifold imperfections of the reasoning on which this splendid anticipation is founded;—though it may be worth while to ascertain, if possible, in what degree it is founded in truth.

The first thing that occurs to a sober-minded listener to this dream of perfectibility, is the extreme narrowness of the induction from which these sweeping conclusions are so confidently deduced. A progress that is in its own nature infinite and irresistible, must necessarily have been both universal and unremitting; and yet the evidence of its existence is founded, if we do not deceive ourselves, upon the history of a very small portion of the human race, for a very small number of generations. The proposition is, that the human species is advancing, and has always been advancing, to a state of perfection, by a law of their nature, of the existence of which their past history and present state leave no room to doubt. But when we cast a glance upon this high destined species, we find this necessary and eternal progress scarcely begun, even now, in the old inhabited continent of Africa—stationary, as far back as our information reaches, in China—and retrograde, for a period of at least twelve centuries, and up to this day, in Egypt, India, Persia, and Greece. Even in our own Europe, which contains probably less than one tenth part of our kind, it is admitted, that, for upwards of a thousand years, this great work of moral nature not only stood still, but went visibly backwards, over its fairest regions; and though there has been a prodigious progress in England and France and Germany during the last two hundred years, it may be doubted whether any thing of this sort can be said of Spain or Italy; or various other portions, even of this favoured quarter of the world. It may be very natural for Madame de Staël, or for us, looking only to what has happened in our own world, and in our own times, to indulge in those dazzling views of the unbounded and universal improvement of the whole human race; but such speculations would appear rather wild, we suspect, to those whose lot it is to philosophize among the unchanging nations of Asia; and would probably carry even something of ridicule with them, if propounded upon the ruins of

Thebes or Babylon, or even among the profaned relics of Athens or Rome.

We are not inclined, however, to push this very far. The world *is* certainly something the wiser for its past experience;—and there is an accumulation of useful knowledge, which we think likely to increase. The invention of printing and fire-arms, and the perfect communication that is established over all Europe, insures us, we think, against any considerable falling back in respect of the sciences; or the arts and attainments that minister to the conveniences of ordinary life. We have no idea that any of the important discoveries of modern times will ever again be lost or forgotten; or that any future generation will be put to the trouble of inventing, for a second time, the art of making gunpowder or telescopes—the astronomy of Newton, or the mechanics of Watt. All knowledge which admits of demonstration will advance, we have no doubt, and extend itself; and all processes will be improved, that do not interfere with the passions of human nature, or the apparent interests of its ruling classes. But with regard to every thing depending on probable reasoning, or susceptible of debate, and especially with regard to every thing touching morality and enjoyment, we really are not sanguine enough to reckon on any considerable improvement; and suspect that men will go on blundering in speculation, and transgressing in practice, pretty nearly as they do at present, to the latest period of their history.

In the nature of things, indeed, there can be no end to disputes upon probable, or what is called moral evidence; nor to the contradictory conduct and consequent hostility and oppression, which must result from the opposite views that are taken of such subjects;—and this, partly, because the elements that enter into the calculation are so vast and numerous, that many of the most material must always be overlooked by persons of ordinary talent and information; and partly because there not only is no standard by which the value of those elements can be ascertained and made manifest, but that they actually have a different value for almost every different individual. With regard to all nice, and indeed all debateable questions of happiness or morals, therefore, there never can be any agreement among men; because, in reality, there is no truth in which they can agree. All questions of this kind turn upon a comparison of the opposite advantages and disadvantages of any particuliar course of conduct or habit of mind: but these are really of very different magnitude and importance to different persons; and their decision, therefore, even if they all saw the whole consequences, or even the same set of consequences, must be irreconcileably diverse. If the matter in deliberation, for example, be, whether it is better to live without toil or exertion, but, at the same time, without wealth or glory, or to venture for both upon a scene of labour and hazard—it is easy to see, that the determination which would be wise and expedient for one individual, might be just the reverse for another. Ease and obscurity are the *summum bonum* of one description of men; while others have an irresistible vocation to strenuous enterprise, and a positive delight in contention and danger. Nor is the magnitude of our virtues and vices referable to a more invariable standard. Intemperance is less a vice in the robust, and dishonesty less foolish in those who care but little for the scorn of society. Some men find their chief happiness in relieving sorrow—some in sympathizing with mirth. Some, again, derive most of their enjoyment from the exercise of their reasoning faculties—others from that of their imagination;—while a third sort attend to little but the gratification of their senses, and a fourth to that of their vanity. One delights in crowds, and another in solitude;—one thinks of nothing but glory, and another of comfort;—and so on, through all the infinite variety, and infinite combinations, of human tastes, temperaments, and habits. Now, it is plain, that each of those persons not only will, but plainly ought to pursue a different road to the common object of happiness; and that they must clash and consequently often jostle with each other, even if each were fully aware of the peculiarity of his own notions, and of the consequences of all that he did in obedience to their impulses. It is altogether impossible, therefore, we humbly conceive, that men should ever settle the point as to what is, on the whole, the wisest course of conduct, or the best disposition of mind; or consequently take even the first step towards that perfection of moral science, or that cordial concert and co-operation in their common pursuit of happiness, which is the only alternative to their fatal opposition.

This impossibility will become more apparent when it is considered, that the only instrument by which it is pretended that this moral perfection is to be attained, is such a general illumination of the intellect as to make all men fully aware of the consequences of their actions; while the fact is, that it is not, in general, through ignorance of their consequences, that actions producing misery are actually performed. When the misery is inflicted upon others, the actors most frequently disregard it, upon a fair enough comparison of its amount with the pain they should inflict on themselves by forbearance; and even when it falls on their own heads, they will generally be found rather to have been unlucky in the game, than to have been truly unacquainted with its hazards; and to have ventured with as full a knowledge of the risks, as the fortunes of others can ever impress on the enterprizing. There are many men, it should always be recollected, to whom the happiness of others gives very little satisfaction, and their sufferings very little pain,—and who would rather eat a luxurious meal by themselves, than scatter plenty and gratitude over twenty famishing cottages. No enlightening of the understanding will make such men the instruments of general happiness: and wherever there is a competition—wherever the question is stirred as to whose claims shall be renounced or asserted, we are all such men, we fear, in a greater or a less degree. There are others, again, who presume upon their own good fortune, with a degree of confidence that no exposition of the chances of failure can ever repress; and in all cases where failure is possible, there must be a risk of suffering from its occurrence, however prudent the venture might have appeared. These, however, are the chief sources of all the unhappiness which results from the conduct of man;—and they are sources which we do not see that the improved intellect, or added experience of the species, is likely to close or diminish.

Take the case, for example, of War—by far the most prolific and extensive pest of the human race, whether we consider the sufferings it inflicts, or the happiness it prevents—and see whether it is likely to be arrested by the progress of intelligence and civilization. In the first place, it is manifest, that instead of becoming less frequent or destructive, in proportion to the rapidity of that progress, our European wars have, in point of fact, been incomparably more constant, and more sanguinary, since Europe became signally enlightened and humanized—and that they have uniformly been most obstinate and most popular, in its most polished countries. The brutish Laplanders, and bigoted and profligate Italians, have had long intervals of repose; but France and England are now pretty regularly at war, for about fourscore years out of every century. In the second place, the lovers and conductors of war are by no means the most ferocious or stupid of their species—but for the most part the very contrary;—and their delight in it, notwithstanding their compassion for human suffering, and their complete knowledge of its tendency to produce suffering, seems to us sufficient almost of itself to discredit the confident prediction of those who assure us, that when men have attained to a certain degree of intelligence, war must necessarily cease among all the nations of the earth. There can be no better illustration indeed, than this, of the utter futility of all those dreams of perfectibility; which are founded on a radical ignorance of what it is that constitutes the real enjoyment of human nature, and upon the play of how many principles and opposite *stimuli* that happiness depends, which, it is absurdly imagined, would be found in the mere negation of suffering, or in a state of Quakerish placidity, dulness, and uniformity. Men delight in war, in spite of the pains and miseries which they know it entails upon them and their fellows, because it exercises all the talents, and calls out all the energies of their nature—because it holds them out conspicuously as objects of public sentiment and general sympathy—because it gratifies their pride of art, and gives them a lofty sentiment of their own power, worth and courage—but principally because it sets the game of existence upon a higher stake, and dispels, by its powerful interest, those feelings of *ennui* which steal upon every condition from which hazard and anxiety are excluded, and drive us into danger and suffering as a relief. While human nature continues to be distinguished by those attributes, we do not see any chance of war being superseded by the increase of wisdom and morality.

We should be pretty well advanced in the career of perfectibility, if all the inhabitants of Europe were as intelligent, and upright, and considerate, as Sir John Moore, or Lord Nelson, or Lord Collingwood, or Lord Wellington—but we should not have the less war, we take it, with all its attendant miseries. The more wealth and intelligence, and liberty, there is in a country indeed, the greater love we fear there will always be for war;—for a gentleman is uniformly a more pugnacious animal than a plebeian, and a free man than a slave. The case is the same, with the minor contentions that agitate civil life, and shed abroad the bitter waters of political animosity, and grow up into the rancours and atrocities of faction and cabal. The leading actors in those scenes are not the lowest or most debased characters in the country—but, almost without exception, of the very opposite description. It would be too romantic to suppose, that the whole population of any country should ever be raised to the level of our Fox and Pitt, Burke, Windham, or Grattan; and yet if that miraculous improvement were to take place, we know that they would be at least as far from agreeing, as they are at present; and may fairly conclude, that they would contend with far greater warmth and animosity.

For that great class of evils, therefore, which arise from contention, emulation, and diversity of opinion upon points which admit of no demonstrative solution, it is evident that the general increase of intelligence would afford no remedy; and there even seems to be reason for thinking that it would increase their amount. If we turn to the other great source of human suffering, the abuse of power and wealth, and the other means of enjoyment, we suspect we shall not find any ground for indulging in more sanguine expectations. Take the common case of youthful excess and imprudence, for example, in which the evil commonly rests on the head of the transgressor—the injury done to fortune, by thoughtless expense—to health and character, by sensual indulgence, and to the whole felicity of after life, by rash and unsorted marriages. The whole mischief and hazard of such practices, we are persuaded, is just as thoroughly known and understood at present, as it will be when the world is five thousand years older; and as much pains are now taken to impress the ardent spirits of youth with the belief of those hazards, as can well be taken by the monitors who may discharge that office in the most remote futurity. But the truth is, that the offenders do not offend so much in ignorance, as in presumption. They know very well, that men are oftener ruined than enriched at the gaming table;

and that love marriages, clapt up under age, are frequently followed by divorces: But they know too, that this is not always the case; and they flatter themselves that their good luck, and good judgment, will class them among the exceptions, and not among the ordinary examples of the rule. They are told well enough, for the most part, of the excessive folly of acting upon such a presumption, in matters of such importance:—But it is the nature of youth, to despise much of the wisdom that is thus pressed upon them; and to think well of their fortune and sagacity, till they have actually had experience of their slipperiness. We really have no idea that their future teachers will be able to change this nature: or to destroy the eternal distinction between the character of early and mature life; and therefore it is, that we despair of the cure of the manifold evils that spring from this source; and remain persuaded, that young men will be nearly as foolish, and as incapable of profiting by the experience of their seniors, ten thousand years hence, as they are at this moment.

With regard to the other glittering curses of life—the heartless dissipations—the cruel seductions—the selfish extravagance—the rejection of all interesting occupation or serious affection, which blast the splendid summit of human fortune with perpetual barrenness and discomfort—we can only say, that as they are miseries which now exist almost exclusively among the most polished and intelligent of the species, we do not think it very probable, at least, that they will be eradicated by rendering the species in general more polished and intelligent. They are not occasioned, we think, by ignorance or improper education; but by that eagerness for strong emotion and engrossing occupation, which still proclaim it to be the irreversible destiny of man to earn his bread by the sweat of his brows. It is a fact indeed rather perplexing and humiliating to the advocates of perfectibility, that as soon as a man is delivered from the necessity of subsisting himself, and providing for his family, he generally falls into a state of considerable unhappiness; and if some fortunate anxiety, or necessity for exertion, does not come to his relief, is commonly obliged to seek for a slight and precarious distraction in vicious and unsatisfactory pursuits. It is not for want of knowing that they are unsatisfactory that he persists in them, nor for want of being told of their folly and criminality;—for moralists and divines have been occupied with little else for the best part of a century; and writers of all descriptions, indeed, have charitably expended a good part of their own *ennui* in copious directions for the innocent and effectual reduction of that common enemy. In spite of all this, however, the malady has increased with our wealth and refinement; and has brought along with it the increase of all those vices and follies in which its victims still find themselves constrained to seek a temporary relief. The truth is, that military and senatorial glory is neither within the reach, nor suited to the taste, of any very great proportion of the sufferers; and that the cultivation of waste lands, and the superintendence of tippling-houses and charity schools, have not always been found such effectual and delightful remedies as the inditers of godly romances have sometimes represented. So that those whom fortune has cruelly exempted from the necessity of doing any thing, have been led very generally to do evil of their own accord; and have fancied that they rather diminished than added to the sum of human misery, by engaging in intrigues and gaming-clubs, and establishing coteries for detraction or sensuality.

The real and radical difficulty is to find some laudable pursuit that will permanently interest—some worthy object that will continue to captivate and engross the faculties: and this, instead of becoming easier in proportion as our intelligence increases, obviously becomes more difficult. It is knowledge that destroys enthusiasm, and dispels all those prejudices of admiration which people simpler minds with so many idols of enchantment. It is knowledge that distracts by its variety, and satiates by its abundance, and generates, by its communication, that dark and cold spirit of fastidiousness and derision which revenges on those whom it possesses, the pangs which it inflicts on those on whom it is exerted. Yet it is to the increase of knowledge and talents alone, that the prophets of perfectibility look forward for the cure of all our vices and all our unhappiness!

Even as to intellect, and the pleasures that are to be derived from the exercise of a vigorous understanding, we doubt greatly whether we ought to look forward to posterity with any very lively feelings of envy or humiliation. More knowledge they probably will have—as we have undoubtedly more knowledge than our ancestors had two hundred years ago; but for vigour of understanding, or pleasure in the exercise of it, we must beg leave to demur. The more there is already known, the less there remains to be discovered; and the more time a man is obliged to spend in ascertaining what his predecessors have already established, the less he will have to bestow in adding to its amount.—The time, however, is of less consequence; but the habits of mind that are formed by walking patiently, humbly, and passively in the paths that have been traced by others, are the very habits that disqualify us for vigorous and independent excursions of our own. There is a certain degree of knowledge to be sure, that is but wholesome aliment to the understanding—materials for it to work upon—or instruments to facilitate its labours:—but a larger quantity is apt to oppress and encumber it; and as industry, which is excited by the importation of the raw material, may be superseded and extinguished by the introduction of the finished manufacture, so the minds which are stimulated to activity by a certain measure of instruction may, unquestionably, be reduced to a state of passive and languid acquiescence, by a more profuse and redundant supply.

Madame de Staël, and the other advocates of her system, talk a great deal of the prodigious advantage of having the results of the laborious discoveries of one generation made matters of familiar and elementary knowledge in another; and for practical utility, it may be so: but nothing, we conceive, can be so completely destructive of all intellectual enterprise, and all force and originality of thinking, as this very process, of the reduction of knowledge to its results, or the multiplication of those summary and accessible pieces of information in which the student is saved the whole trouble of investigation, and put in possession of the prize, without either the toils or the excitement of the contest. This, in the first place, necessarily makes the prize much less a subject of exultation or delight to him; for the chief pleasure is in the chase itself, and not in the object which it pursues; and he who sits at home, and has the dead game brought to the side of his chair, will be very apt, we believe, to regard it as nothing better than an unfragrant vermin. But, in the next place, it does him no good; for he misses altogether the invigorating exercise, and the invaluable training to habits of emulation and sagacity and courage, for the sake of which alone the pursuit is deserving of applause. And, in the last place, he not only fails in this way to acquire the qualities that may enable him to run down knowledge for himself, but necessarily finds himself without taste or inducement for such exertions. He thinks, and in one sense he thinks justly, that if the proper object of study be to acquire knowledge, he can employ his time much more profitably in implicitly listening to the discoveries of others, than in a laborious attempt to discover something for himself. It is infinitely more fatiguing to think, than to remember; and incomparably shorter to be led to an object, than to explore our own way to it. It is inconceivable what an obstruction this furnishes to the original exercise of the understanding in a certain state of information; and how effectually the general diffusion of easily accessible knowledge operates as a bounty upon indolence and mental imbecility.—Where the quantity of approved and collected knowledge is already very great in any country, it is naturally required of all well educated persons to possess a considerable share of it; and where it has also been made very accessible, by being reduced to its summary and ultimate results, an astonishing variety of those abstracts may be stowed away in the memory, with scarcely any fatigue or exercise to the other faculties. The whole mass of attainable intelligence, however, must still be beyond the reach of any individual; and he may go on, therefore, to the end of a long and industrious life, constantly acquiring knowledge in this cheap and expeditious manner. But if, in the course of these passive and humble researches, he should be tempted to inquire a little for himself, he cannot fail to be struck with the prodigious waste of time, and of labour, that is necessary for the attainment of a very inconsiderable portion of original knowledge. His progress is as slow as that of a man who is making a road, compared with that of those who afterwards travel over it; and he feels, that in order to make a very small advance in one department of study, he must consent to sacrifice very great attainments in others. He is disheartened, too, by the extreme insignificance of any thing that he can expect to contribute, when compared with the great store that is already in possession of the public; and is extremely apt to conclude, that it is not only safer, but more profitable to follow, than to lead; and that it is fortunate for the lovers of wisdom, that our ancestors have accumulated enough of it for our use, as well as for their own.

But while the general diffusion of knowledge tends thus powerfully to repress all original and independent speculation in individuals, it operates still more powerfully in rendering the public indifferent and unjust to their exertions. The treasures they have inherited from their predecessors are so ample, as not only to take away all disposition to labour for their farther increase, but to lead them to undervalue and overlook any little addition that may be made to them by the voluntary offerings of individuals. The works of the best models are perpetually before their eyes, and their accumulated glory in their remembrance; the very variety of the sorts of excellence which are constantly obtruded on their notice, renders excellence itself cheap and vulgar in their estimation. As the mere possessors or judges of such things, they are apt to ascribe to themselves a character of superiority, which renders any moderate performance unworthy of their regard; and their cold and languid familiarity with what is best, ultimately produces no other effect than to render them insensible to its beauties, and at the same time intolerant of all that appears to fall short of it.

In such a condition of society, it is obvious that men must be peculiarly disinclined from indulging in those bold and original speculations, for which their whole training had previously disqualified them; and we appeal to our readers, whether there are not, at this day, apparent symptoms of such a condition of society. A childish love of novelty may indeed give a transient popularity to works of mere amusement; but the age of original genius, and of comprehensive and independent reasoning, seems to be over. Instead of such works as those of Bacon, and Shakspeare, and Taylor, and Hooker, we have Encyclopædias, and geographical compilations, and county histories, and new editions of black letter authors—and trashy biographies and posthumous letters—and disputations upon prosody—and ravings about orthodoxy and methodism. Men of general information and curiosity seldom think of adding to the knowledge that is already in the world; and the inferior persons upon whom that task is consequently devolved,

carry it on, for the most part, by means of that minute subdivision of labour which is the great secret of the mechanical arts, but can never be introduced into literature without depriving its higher branches of all force, dignity, or importance. One man spends his life in improving a method of dyeing cotton red;—another in adding a few insects to a catalogue which nobody reads;—a third in settling the metres of a few Greek Choruses;—a fourth in decyphering illegible romances, or old grants of farms;—a fifth in picking rotten bones out of the earth;—a sixth in describing all the old walls and hillocks in his parish;—and five hundred others in occupations equally liberal and important: each of them being, for the most part, profoundly ignorant of every thing out of his own narrow department, and very generally and deservedly despised, by his competitors for the favour of that public—which despises and supports them all.

Such, however, it appears to us, is the state of mind that is naturally produced by the great accumulation and general diffusion of various sorts of knowledge. Men learn, instead of reasoning. Instead of meditating, they remember; and, in place of the glow of inventive genius, or the warmth of a generous admiration, nothing is to be met with, in society, but timidity on the one hand, and fastidiousness on the other—a paltry accuracy, and a more paltry derision—a sensibility to small faults, and an incapacity of great merits—a disposition to exaggerate the value of knowledge that is not to be used, and to underrate the importance of powers which have ceased to exist. If these, however, are the consequences of accumulated and diffused knowledge, it may well be questioned whether the human intellect will gain in point of dignity and energy by the only certain acquisitions to which we are entitled to look forward. For our own part, we will confess we have no such expectations. There will be improvements, we make no doubt, in all the mechanical and domestic arts;—better methods of working metal, and preparing cloth;—more commodious vehicles, and more efficient implements of war. Geography will be made more complete, and astronomy more precise;—natural history will be enlarged and digested;—and perhaps some little improvement suggested in the forms of administering law. But as to any general enlargement of the understanding, or more prevailing vigour of judgment, we will own, that the tendency seems to be all the other way; and that we think strong sense, and extended views of human affairs, are more likely to be found, and to be listened to at this moment, than two or three hundred years hereafter. The truth is, we suspect, that the vast and enduring products of the virgin soil can no longer be reared in that factitious mould to which cultivation has since given existence; and that its forced and deciduous progeny will go on degenerating, till some new deluge shall restore the vigour of the glebe by a temporary destruction of all its generations.

Hitherto we have spoken only of the higher and more instructed classes of society,—to whom it is reasonable to suppose that the perfection of wisdom and happiness will come first, in their progress through the whole race of men; and we have seen what reason there is to doubt of their near approach. The lower orders, however, we think, have still less good fortune to reckon on. In the whole history of the species, there has been nothing at all comparable to the improvement of England within the last century; never anywhere was there such an increase of wealth and luxury—so many admirable inventions in the arts—so many works of learning and ingenuity—such a progress in cultivation—such an enlargement of commerce:—and yet, in that century, the number of paupers in England has increased fourfold, and is now rated at one tenth of her whole population; and, notwithstanding the enormous sums that are levied and given privately for their relief, and the multitudes that are drained off by the waste of war, the peace of the country is perpetually threatened by the outrages of famishing multitudes. This fact of itself is decisive, we think, as to the effect of general refinement and intelligence on the condition of the lower orders; but it is not difficult to trace the steps of its operation.

Increasing refinement and ingenuity lead naturally to the establishment of manufactures; and not only enable society to spare a great proportion of its agricultural labourers for this purpose, but actually encourage the breeding of an additional population, to be maintained out of the profits of this new occupation. For a time, too, this answers; and the artisan shares in the conveniences to which his labours have contributed to give birth; but it is in the very nature of the manufacturing system, to be liable to great fluctuation, occasional check, and possible destruction; and at all events, it has a tendency to produce a greater population than it can permanently support in comfort or prosperity. The average rate of wages, for the last forty years, has been insufficient to maintain a labourer with a tolerably large family;—and yet such have been the occasional fluctuations, and such the sanguine calculations of persons incapable of taking a comprehensive view of the whole, that the manufacturing population has been prodigiously increased in the same period. It is the interest of the manufacturer to keep this population in excess, as the only sure means of keeping wages low; and wherever the means of subsistence are uncertain, and liable to variation, it seems to be the general law of our nature, that the population should be adapted to the highest, and not to the average rate of supply. In India, where a dry season used to produce a failure of the crop, once in every ten or twelve years, the population was always up to the measure of the greatest abundance; and in manufacturing countries, the miscalculation is still more sanguine and erroneous. Such countries, therefore, are always overpeopled; and it seems to be the necessary effect of increasing talent and refinement, to convert all countries into this

denomination. China, the oldest manufacturing nation in the world, and by far the greatest that ever existed with the use of little machinery, has always suffered from a redundant population, and has always kept the largest part of its inhabitants in a state of the greatest poverty.

The effect then which is produced on the lower orders of society, by that increase of industry and refinement, and that multiplication of conveniences which are commonly looked upon as the surest tests of increasing prosperity, is to convert the peasants into manufacturers, and the manufacturers into paupers; while the chance of their ever emerging from this condition becomes constantly less, the more complete and mature the system is which had originally produced it. When manufactures are long established, and thoroughly understood, it will always be found, that persons possessed of a large capital, can carry them on upon lower profits than persons of any other description; and the natural tendency of this system, therefore, is to throw the whole business into the hands of great capitalists; and thus not only to render it next to impossible for a common workman to advance himself into the condition of a master, but to drive from the competition the greater part of those moderate dealers, by whose prosperity alone the general happiness of the nation can be promoted. The state of the operative manufacturers, therefore, seems every day more hopelessly stationary; and that great body of the people, it appears to us, is likely to grow into a fixed and degraded *caste*, out of which no person can hope to escape, who has once been enrolled among its members. They cannot look up to the rank of master manufacturers; because, without considerable capital, it will every day be more impossible to engage in that occupation—and back they cannot go to the labours of agriculture, because there is no demand for their services. The improved system of farming, furnishes an increased produce with many fewer hands than were formerly employed in procuring a much smaller return; and besides all this, the lower population has actually increased to a far greater amount than ever was at any time employed in the cultivation of the ground.

To remedy all these evils, which are likely, as we conceive, to be aggravated, rather than relieved, by the *general* progress of refinement and intelligence, we have little to look to but the beneficial effects of this increasing intelligence upon the lower orders themselves;—and we are far from undervaluing this influence. By the universal adoption of a good system of education, habits of foresight and self-control, and rigid economy, may in time no doubt be pretty generally introduced, instead of the improvidence and profligacy which too commonly characterize the larger assemblages of our manufacturing population; and if these lead, as they are likely to do, to the general institution of Friendly Societies and banks for savings among the workmen, a great palliative will have been provided for the disadvantages of a situation, which must always be considered as one of the least fortunate which Providence has assigned to any of the human race.

There is no end, however, we find, to these speculations; and we must here close our remarks on perfectibility, without touching upon the *Political* changes which are likely to be produced by a long course of progressive refinements and scientific improvement—though we are afraid that an enlightened anticipation would not be much more cheering in this view, than in any of those we have hitherto considered. Luxury and refinement have a tendency, we fear, to make men sensual and selfish; and, in that state, increased talent and intelligence is apt only to render them more mercenary and servile. Among the prejudices which this kind of philosophy roots out, that of patriotism, we fear, is generally among the first to be surmounted;—and then, a dangerous opposition to power, and a sacrifice of interest to affection, speedily come to be considered as romantic. Arts are discovered to palliate the encroachments of arbitrary power; and a luxurious, patronizing, and vicious monarchy is firmly established amidst the adulations of a corrupt nation. But we must proceed at last to Madame de Staël's History of Literature.

Not knowing any thing of the Egyptians and Phœnicians, she takes the Greeks for the first inventors of literature—and explains many of their peculiarities by that supposition. The first development of talent, she says, is in Poetry; and the first poetry consists in the rapturous description of striking objects in nature, or of the actions and exploits that are then thought of the greatest importance. There is little reflection—no nice development of feeling or character—and no sustained strain of tenderness or moral emotion in this primitive poetry; which charms almost entirely by the freshness and brilliancy of its colouring—the spirit and naturalness of its representations—and the air of freedom and facility with which every thing is executed. This, was the age of Homer. After that, though at a long interval, came the age of Pericles:—When human nature was a little more studied and regarded, and poetry received accordingly a certain cast of thoughtfulness, and an air of labour—eloquence began to be artful, and the rights and duties of men to be subjects of meditation and inquiry. This, therefore, was the era of the tragedians, the orators, and the first ethical philosophers. Last came the age of Alexander, when science had superseded fancy, and all the talent of the country was turned to the pursuits of philosophy. This, Madame de Staël thinks, is the natural progress of literature in all countries; and that of the Greeks is only distinguished by their having been the first that pursued it, and by the peculiarities of their mythology, and their political relations. It is not quite clear indeed that they were the first; but Madame de Staël is very eloquent upon that supposition.

The state of society, however, in those early times, was certainly such as to impress very

strongly on the mind those objects and occurrences which formed the first materials of poetry. The intercourse with distant countries being difficult and dangerous, the legends of the traveller were naturally invested with more than the modern allowance of the marvellous. The smallness of the civilized states connected every individual in them with its leaders, and made him personally a debtor for the protection which their prowess afforded from the robbers and wild beasts which then infested the unsubdued earth. Gratitude and terror, therefore, combined to excite the spirit of enthusiasm; and the same ignorance which imputed to the direct agency of the gods, the more rare and dreadful phenomena of nature, gave a character of supernatural greatness to the reported exploits of their heroes. Philosophy, which has led to the exact investigation of causes, has robbed the world of much of its sublimity; and by preventing us from believing much, and from wondering at any thing, has taken away half our enthusiasm, and more than half our admiration.

The purity of taste which characterizes the very earliest poetry of the Greeks, seems to us more difficult to be accounted for. Madame de Staël ascribes it chiefly to the influence of their copious mythology; and the eternal presence of those Gods—which, though always about men, were always above them, and gave a tone of dignity or elegance to the whole scheme of their existence. Their tragedies were acted in temples—in the supposed presence of the Gods, the fate of whose descendants they commemorated, and as a part of the religious solemnities instituted in their honour. Their legends, in like manner, related to the progeny of the immortals: and their feasts—their dwellings—their farming—their battles—and every incident and occupation of their daily life being under the immediate sanction of some presiding deity, it was scarcely possible to speak of them in a vulgar or inelegant manner; and the nobleness of their style therefore appeared to result naturally from the elegance of their mythology.

Now, even if we could pass over the obvious objection, that this mythology was itself a creature of the same poetical imagination which it is here supposed to have modified, it is impossible not to observe, that though the circumstances now alluded to may account for the raised and lofty tone of the Grecian poetry, and for the exclusion of low or familiar life from their dramatic representations, it will not explain the far more substantial indications of pure taste afforded by the absence of all that gross exaggeration, violent incongruity, and tedious and childish extravagance which are found to deform the primitive poetry of most other nations. The Hindoos, for example, have a mythology at least as copious, and still more closely interwoven with every action of their lives: But their legends are the very models of bad taste; and unite all the detestable attributes of obscurity, puerility, insufferable tediousness, and the most revolting and abominable absurdity. The poetry of the northern bards is not much more commendable: But the Greeks are wonderfully rational and moderate in all their works of imagination; and speak, for the most part, with a degree of justness and brevity, which is only the more marvellous, when it is considered how much religion had to do in the business. A better explanation, perhaps, of their superiority, may be derived from recollecting that the sins of affectation, and injudicious effort, really cannot be committed where there are no models to be at once copied and avoided. The first writers naturally took possession of what was most striking, and most capable of producing effect, in nature and in incident. Their successors consequently found these occupied; and were obliged, for the credit of their originality, to produce something which should be different, at least, if not better, than their originals. They had not only to adhere to nature, therefore, but to avoid representing her exactly as she had been represented by their predecessors; and when they could not accomplish both these objects, they contrived, at least, to make sure of the last. The early Greeks had but one task to perform: they were in no danger of comparisons, or imputations of plagiarism; and wrote down whatever struck them as just and impressive, without fear of finding that they had been stealing from a predecessor. The wide world, in short, was before them, unappropriated and unmarked by any preceding footstep; and they took their way, without hesitation, by the most airy heights and sunny valleys; while those who came after, found it so seamed and crossed with tracks in which they were forbidden to tread, that they were frequently driven to make the most fantastic circuits and abrupt descents to avoid them.

The characteristic defects of the early Greek poetry are all to be traced to the same general causes,—the peculiar state of society, and that newness to which they were indebted for its principal beauties. They describe every thing, because nothing had been previously described; and incumber their whole diction with epithets that convey no information. There is no reach of thought, or fineness of sensibility, because reflection had not yet awakened the deeper sympathies of their nature; and we are perpetually shocked with the imperfections of their morality, and the indelicacy of their affections, because society had not subsisted long enough in peace and security to develop those finer sources of emotion. These defects are most conspicuous in every thing that relates to women. They had absolutely no idea of that mixture of friendship, veneration, and desire, which is indicated by the word Love, in the modern languages of Europe. The love of the Greek tragedians, is a species of insanity or frenzy,—a blind and ungovernable impulse inflicted by the Gods in their vengeance, and leading its humiliated victim to the commission of all sorts of enormities. Racine, in his *Phædre*, has ventured to exhibit a love of this description on a modern stage; but the softenings of delicate feeling—the tenderness and profound

affliction which he has been forced to add to the fatal impulse of the original character, show, more strongly than any thing else, the radical difference between the ancient and the modern conception of the passion.

The Political institutions of Greece had also a remarkable effect on their literature; and nothing can show this so strongly as the striking contrast between Athens and Sparta—placed under the same sky—with the same language and religion—and yet so opposite in their government and in their literary pursuits. The ruling passion of the Athenians was that of amusement; for, though the emulation of glory was more lively among them than among any other people, it was still subordinate to their rapturous admiration of successful talent. Their law of ostracism is a proof, how much they were afraid of their own propensity to idolize. They could not trust themselves in the presence of one who had become too popular. This propensity also has had a sensible effect upon their poetry; and it should never be forgotten, that it was not composed to be read and studied and criticized in the solitude of the closet, like the works that have been produced since the invention of printing; but to be recited to music, before multitudes assembled at feasts and high solemnities, where every thing favoured the kindling and diffusion of that enthusiasm, of which the history now seems to us so incredible.

There is a separate chapter on the Greek drama—which is full of brilliant and original observations;—though we have already anticipated the substance of many of them. The great basis of its peculiarity, was the constant interposition of the Gods. Almost all the violent passions are represented as the irresistible inspirations of a superior power;—almost all their extraordinary actions as the fulfilment of an oracle—the accomplishment of an unrelenting destiny. This probably added to the awfulness and terror of the representation, in an audience which believed implicitly in the reality of those dispensations. But it has impaired their dramatic excellence, by dispensing them too much from the necessity of preparing their catastrophes by a gradation of natural events,—the exact delineation of character,—and the touching representation of those preparatory struggles which precede a resolution of horror. Orestes kills his mother, and Electra encourages him to the deed,—without the least indication, in either, of that poignant remorse which afterwards avenges the parricide. No modern dramatist could possibly have omitted so important and natural a part of the exhibition;—but the explanation of it is found at once in the ruling superstition of the age. Apollo had commanded the murder—and Orestes could not hesitate to obey. When it is committed, the Furies are commissioned to pursue him; and the audience shudders with reverential awe at the torments they inflict on their victim. Human sentiments, and human motives, have but little to do in bringing about these catastrophes. They are sometimes suggested by the Chorus;—but the heroes themselves act always by the order of the Gods. Accordingly, the authors of the most atrocious actions are seldom represented in the Greek tragedies as properly guilty, but only as piacular;—and their general moral is rather, that the Gods are omnipotent, than that crimes should give rise to punishment and detestation.

A great part of the effect of these representations must have depended on the exclusive nationality of their subjects, and the extreme nationality of their auditors; though it is a striking remark of Madame de Staël, that the Greeks, after all, were more national than republican,—and were never actuated with that profound hatred and scorn of tyranny which afterwards exalted the Roman character. Almost all their tragic subjects, accordingly, are taken from the misfortunes of kings;—of kings descended from the Gods, and upon whose genealogy the nation still continued to pride itself. The fate of the Tarquins could never have been regarded at Rome as a worthy occasion either of pity or horror. Republican sentiments are occasionally introduced into the Greek Choruses;—though we cannot agree with Madame de Staël in considering these musical bodies as intended to represent the people.

It is in their comedy, that the defects of the Greek literature are most conspicuous. The world was then too young to supply its materials. Society had not existed long enough, either to develop the finer shades of character in real life, or to generate the talent of observing, generalizing, and representing them. The national genius, and the form of government, led them to delight in detraction and popular abuse; for though they admired and applauded their great men, they had not in their hearts any great respect for them; and the degradation or seclusion in which they kept their women, took away almost all interest or elegance from the intercourse of private life, and reduced its scenes of gaiety to those of coarse debauch, or broad and humourous derision. The extreme coarseness and vulgarity of Aristophanes, is apt to excite our wonder, when we first consider him as the contemporary of Euripides, and Socrates, and Plato;—but the truth is, that the Athenians, after all, were but an ordinary populace as to moral delicacy and social refinement. Enthusiasm, and especially the enthusiasm of superstition and nationality, is as much a passion of the vulgar, as a delight in ribaldry and low buffoonery. The one was gratified by their tragedy;—and the comedy of Aristophanes was exactly calculated to give delight to the other. In the end, however, their love of buffoonery and detraction unfortunately proved too strong for their nationality. When Philip was at their gates, all the eloquence of Demosthenes could not rouse them from their theatrical dissipations. The great danger which they always apprehended to their liberties, was from the excessive power and popularity of one of their own great men; and, by a singular fatality, they perished, from a profligate indifference and insensibility to the charms of patriotism and greatness.

In philosophy, Madame de Staël does not rank the Greeks very high. The greater part of them, indeed, were orators and poets, rather than profound thinkers, or exact inquirers. They discoursed rhetorically upon vague and abstract ideas; and, up to the time of Aristotle, proceeded upon the radical error of substituting hypothesis for observation. That eminent person first showed the use and the necessity of analysis; and did infinitely more for posterity than all the mystics that went before him. As their states were small, and their domestic life inelegant, men seem to have been considered almost exclusively in their relations to the public. There is, accordingly, a noble air of patriotism and devotedness to the common weal in all the morality of the ancients; and though Socrates set the example of fixing the principles of virtue for private life, the ethics of Plato, and Xenophon, and Zeno, and most of the other philosophers, are little else than treatises of political duties. In modern times, from the prevalence of monarchical government, and the great extent of societies, men are very generally loosened from their relations with the public, and are but too much engrossed with their private interests and affections. This may be venial, when they merely forget the state,—by which they are forgotten; but it is base and fatal, when they are guided by those interests in the few public functions they have still to perform. After all, the morality of the Greeks was very clumsy and imperfect. In political science, the variety of their governments, and the perpetual play of war and negotiation, had made them more expert. Their historians narrate with spirit and simplicity; and this is their merit. They make scarcely any reflections; and are marvellously indifferent as to vice or virtue. They record the most atrocious and most heroic actions—the most disgusting crimes and most exemplary generosity—with the same tranquil accuracy with which they would describe the succession of storms and sunshine. Thucydides is somewhat of a higher pitch; but the immense difference between him and Tacitus proves, better perhaps than any general reasoning, the progress which had been made in the interim in the powers of reflection and observation; and how near the Greeks, with all their boasted attainments, should be placed to the intellectual infancy of the species. In all their productions, indeed, the fewness of their ideas is remarkable; and their most impressive writings may be compared to the music of certain rude nations, which produces the most astonishing effects by the combination of not more than four or five simple notes.

Madame de Staël now proceeds to the Romans—who will not detain us by any means so long. Their literature was confessedly borrowed from that of Greece; for little is ever invented, where borrowing will serve the purpose: But it was marked with several distinctions, to which alone it is now necessary to attend. In the first place—and this is very remarkable—the Romans, contrary to the custom of all other nations, began their career of letters with philosophy; and the cause of this peculiarity is very characteristic of the nation. They had subsisted longer, and effected more, without literature, than any other people on record. They had become a great state, wisely constituted and skilfully administered, long before any one of their citizens had ever appeared as an author. The love of their country was the passion of each individual—the greatness of the Roman name the object of their pride and enthusiasm. Studies which had no reference to political objects, therefore, could find no favour in their eyes; and it was from their subserviency to popular and senatorial oratory, and the aid which they promised to afford in the management of factions and national concerns, that they were first led to listen to the lessons of the Greek philosophers. Nothing else could have induced Cato to enter upon such a study at such an advanced period of life. Though the Romans borrowed their philosophy from the Greeks, however, they made much more use of it than their masters. They carried into their practice much of what the others contented themselves with setting down in their books; and thus came to attain much more precise notions of practical duty, than could ever be invented by mere discoursers. The philosophical writings of Cicero, though incumbered with the subtleties of his Athenian preceptors, contain a much more complete code of morality than is to be found in all the volumes of the Greeks—though it may be doubted, whether his political information and acuteness can be compared with that of Aristotle. It was the philosophy of the Stoics, however, that gained the hearts of the Romans; for it was that which fell in with their national habits and dispositions.

The same character and the same national institutions that led them to adopt the Greek philosophy instead of their poetry, restrained them from the imitation of their theatrical excesses. As their free government was strictly aristocratical, it could never permit its legitimate chiefs to be held up to mockery on the stage, as the democratical licence of the Athenians held up the pretenders to their favour. But, independently of this, the severer dignity of the Roman character, and the deeper respect and prouder affection they entertained for all that exalted the glory of their country, would at all events have interdicted such indecorous and humiliating exhibitions. The comedy of Aristophanes never could have been tolerated at Rome; and though Plautus and Terence were allowed to imitate, or rather to translate, the more inoffensive dramas of a later age, it is remarkable, that they seldom ventured to subject even to that mitigated and more general ridicule any one invested with the dignity of a Roman citizen. The manners represented are almost entirely Greek manners; and the ridiculous parts are almost without any exception assigned to foreigners, and to persons of a servile condition. Women were, from the beginning, of more account in the estimation of the Romans than of the Greeks—though their province was still strictly domestic, and did not extend to what, in modern times, is denominated society. With all the severity of their character, the Romans had much more real tenderness than the Greeks,—though they repressed its external indications, as among those marks of weakness which were unbecoming men intrusted with the interests and the honour of their country. Madame de Staël has drawn a pretty picture of the parting of Brutus and Portia; and contrasted it, as a specimen of national character, with the Grecian group of Pericles pleading for Aspasia. The general observation, we are persuaded, is just; but the examples are not quite fairly chosen. Brutus is a little too good for an average of Roman virtue. If she had chosen Mark Antony, or Lepidus, the contrast would have been less brilliant. The self-control which their principles required of them—the law which they had imposed on themselves, to have no indulgence for suffering in themselves or in others, excluded tragedy from the range of their literature. Pity was never to be recognized by a Roman, but when it came in the shape of a noble clemency to a vanquished foe;—and wailings and complaints were never to disgust the ears of men, who knew how to act and to suffer in tranquillity. The very frequency of suicide in Rome, belonged to this characteristic. There was no other alternative, but to endure firmly, or to die;—nor were importunate lamentations to be endured from one who was free to quit life whenever he could not bear it without murmuring.

What has been said relates to the literature of republican Rome. The usurpation of Augustus gave a new character to her genius; and brought it back to those poetical studies with which most other nations have begun. The cause of this, too, is obvious. While liberty survived, the study of philosophy and oratory and history was but as an instrument in the hands of a liberal and patriotic ambition, and naturally attracted the attention of all whose talents entitled them to aspire to the first dignities of the state. After an absolute government was established, those high prizes were taken out of the lottery of life; and the primitive uses of those noble instruments expired. There was no longer any safe or worthy end to be gained, by influencing the conduct, or fixing the principles of men. But it was still permitted to seek their applause by ministering to their delight; and talent and ambition, when excluded from the nobler career of political activity, naturally sought for a humbler harvest of glory in the cultivation of poetry, and the arts of imagination. The poetry of the Romans, however, derived this advantage from the lateness of its origin, that it was enriched by all that knowledge of the human heart, and those habits of reflection, which had been generated by the previous study of philosophy. There is uniformly more thought, therefore, and more development, both of reason and of moral feeling, in the poets of the Augustan age, than in any of their Greek predecessors; and though repressed in a good degree by the remains of their national austerity, there is also a great deal more tenderness of affection. In spite of the pathos of some scenes in Euripides, and the melancholy passion of some fragments of Simonides and Sappho, there is nothing at all like the fourth book of Virgil, the Alcmene, and Baucis and Philemon of Ovid, and some of the elegies of Tibullus, in the whole range of Greek literature. The memory of their departed freedom, too, conspired to give an air of sadness to much of the Roman poetry, and their feeling of the lateness of the age in which they were born. The Greeks thought only of the present and the future; but the Romans had begun already to live in the past, and to make pensive reflections on the faded glory of mankind. The historians of this classic age, though they have more of a moral character than those of Greece, are still but superficial teachers of wisdom. Their narration is more animated, and more pleasingly dramatised, by the orations with which it is interspersed;—but they have neither the profound reflection of Tacitus, nor the power of explaining great events by general causes, which distinguishes the writers of modern times.

The atrocious tyranny that darkened the earlier ages of the empire, gave rise to the third school of Roman literature. The sufferings to which men were subjected, turned their thoughts inward on their own hearts; and that philosophy which had first been courted as the handmaid of a generous ambition, was now sought as a shelter and consolation in misery. The maxims of the Stoics were again revived,—not, indeed, to stimulate to noble exertion, but to harden against misfortune. Their lofty lessons of virtue were again repeated—but with a bitter accent of despair and reproach; and that indulgence, or indifference towards vice, which had characterised the first philosophers, was now converted, by the terrible experience of its evils, into vehement and gloomy invective. Seneca, Tacitus, Epictetus, all fall under this description; and the same spirit is discernible in Juvenal and Lucan. Much more profound views of human nature, and a far greater moral sensibility characterise this age,—and show that even the unspeakable degradation to which the abuse of power had then sunk the mistress of the world, could not arrest altogether that intellectual progress which gathers its treasures from all the varieties of human fortune. Quintilian and the two Plinys afford further evidence of this progress;—for they are, in point of thought and accuracy, and profound sense, conspicuously superior to any writers upon similar subjects in the days of Augustus. Poetry and the fine arts languished, indeed, under the rigours of this blasting despotism;—and it is honourable, on the whole, to the memory of their former greatness, that so few Roman poets should have sullied their pens by any traces of adulation towards the monsters who then sat in the place of power.

We pass over Madame de Staël's view of

the middle ages, and of the manner in which the mixture of the northern and southern races ameliorated the intellect and the morality of both. One great cause of their mutual improvement, however, she truly states to have been the general prevalence of Christianity; which, by the abolition of domestic slavery, removed the chief cause, both of the corruption and the ferocity of ancient manners. By investing the conjugal union, too, with a sacred character of equality, it at once redressed the long injustice to which the female sex had been subjected, and blessed and gladdened private life with a new progeny of joys, and a new fund of knowledge of the most interesting description. Upon a subject of this kind, we naturally expect a woman to express herself with peculiar animation; and Madame de Staël has done it ample justice in the following, and in other passages.

"C'est donc alors que les femmes commencèrent à être de moitié dans l'association humaine. C'est alors aussi que l'on connut véritablement le bonheur domestique. Trop de puissance déprave la bonté, altère toutes les jouissances de la délicatesse; les vertus et les sentimens ne peuvent résister d'une part à l'exercice du pouvoir, de l'autre à l'habitude de la crainte. La félicité de l'homme s'accrut de toute l'indépendance qu'obtint l'objet de sa tendresse; il put se croire aimé; un être libre le choisit; un être libre obéit à ses desirs. Les apperçus de l'esprit, les nuances senties par le cœur se multiplièrent avec les idées et les impressions de ces ames nouvelles, qui s'essayoient à l'existence morale, après avoir long-temps langui dans la vie. Les femmes n'ont point composé d'ouvrages véritablement supérieurs; mais elles n'en ont pas moins éminemment servi les progres de la littérature, par la foule de pensées qu'ont inspirées aux hommes les relations entretenues avec ces êtres mobiles et delicats. Tous les rapports se sont doublés, pour ainsi dire, depuis que les objets ont été considérés sous un point de vue tout-à-fait nouveau. La confiance d'un lien intime en a plus appris sur la nature morale, que tous les traités et tous les systêmes qui peignoient l'homme tel qu'il se montre à l'homme, et non tel qu'il est réellement."—pp. 197, 198.

"Les femmes ont découvert dans les caractères une foule de nuances, que le besoin de dominer ou la crainte d'être asservies leur a fait appercevoir: elles ont fourni au talent dramatique de nouveaux secrets pour émouvoir. Tous les sentimens auxquels il leur est permis de se livrer, la crainte de la mort, le regret de la vie, le dévouement sans bornes, l'indignation sans mesure, enrichissent la littérature d'expressions nouvelles. De-là vient que les moralistes modernes ont en général beaucoup plus de finesse et de sagacité dans la connoissance des hommes, que les moralistes de l'antiquité. Quiconque, chez les anciens, ne pouvoit atteindre à la renommée, n'avoit aucun motif de développement. Depuis qu'on est deux dans la vie domestique, les communications de l'esprit et l'exercice de la morale existent toujours, au moins dans un petit cercle; les enfans sont devenus plus chers à leur parens, par la tendresse réciproque qui forme le lien conjugal; et toutes les affections ont pris l'empreinte de cette divine alliance de l'amour et de l'amitié, de l'estime et de l'attrait, de la confiance méritée et de la séduction involontaire.

"Un âge aride, que la gloire et la vertu pouvoient honorer, mais qui ne devoit plus être ranimé par les émotions du cœur, la vieillesse s'est enrichie de toutes les pensées de la mélancolie; il lui a été donné de se ressouvenir, de regretter, d'aimer encore ce qu'elle avoit aimé. Les affections morales, unies, dès la jeunesse, aux passions brûlantes, peuvent se prolonger par de nobles traces jusqu'à la fin de l'existence, et laisser voir encore le même tableau sous le crêpe funèbre du temps.

"Une sensibilité rêveuse et profonde est un des plus grands charmes de quelques ouvrages modernes; et ce sont les femmes qui, ne connoissant de la vie que la faculté d'aimer, ont fait passer la douceur de leurs impressions dans le style de quelques écrivains. En lisant les livres composés depuis la renaissance des lettres, l'on pourroit marquer à chaque page, qu'elles sont les idées qu'on n'avoit pas, avant qu'on eût accordé aux femmes une sorte d'égalité civile. La générosité, la valeur, l'humanité, ont pris à quelques égards une acception différente. Toutes les vertus des anciens étoient fondées sur l'amour de la patrie; les femmes exercent leurs qualités d'une manière indépendante. La pitié pour la foiblesse, la sympathie pour le malheur, une élévation d'ame, sans autre but que la jouissance même de cette élévation, sont beaucoup plus dans leur nature que les vertus politiques. Les modernes, influencés par les femmes, ont facilement cédé aux liens de la philanthropie; et l'esprit est devenue plus philosophiquement libre, en se livrant moins à l'empire des associations exclusives."—pp. 212—215.

It is principally to this cause that she ascribes the improved morality of modern times. The improvement of their intellect she refers more generally to the accumulation of knowledge, and the experience of which they have had the benefit. Instead of the eager spirit of emulation, and the unweighed and rash enthusiasm which kindled the genius of antiquity into a sort of youthful or instinctive animation, we have a spirit of deep reflection, and a feeling of mingled melancholy and philanthropy, inspired by a more intimate knowledge of the sufferings, the affections, and the frailties of human nature. There is a certain touching and pathetic tone, therefore, diffused over almost all modern writings of the higher order; and in the art of agitating the soul, and moving the gentler affections of the heart, there is nothing in all antiquity that can be considered as belonging to the same class with the writings of Bossuet or Rousseau—many passages in the English poets—and some few in those of Germany. The sciences, of course, have made prodigious advances; for in these nothing once gained can be lost,—and the mere elapse of ages supposes a vast accumulation. In morals, the progress has been greatest in the private virtues—in the sacred regard for life—in compassion, sympathy, and beneficence. Nothing, indeed, can illustrate the difference of the two systems more strikingly, than the opposite views they take of the relation of parent and child. Filial obedience and submission was enjoined by the ancient code with a rigour from which reason and justice equally revolt. According to our present notions, parental love is a duty of at least mutual obligation; and as nature has placed the power of showing kindness almost exclusively in the hands of the father, it seems but reasonable that the exercise of it should at last be enjoined as a duty.

Madame de Staël begins her review of modern literature with that of Italy. It was there that the manuscripts—the monuments—the works of art of the imperial nation, were lost;—and it was there, of course, that

tney were ultimately recovered. The researches necessary for this, required authority and money; and they were begun, accordingly, under the patronage of princes and academies:—circumstances favourable to the accumulation of knowledge, and the formation of mere scholars—but adverse to the development of original genius. The Italians, accordingly, have been scholars, and have furnished the rest of Europe with the implements of liberal study; but they have achieved little for themselves in the high philosophy of politics and morals—though they have to boast of Galileo, Cassini, and a long list of celebrated names in the physical sciences. In treating of subjects of a large and commanding interest, they are almost always bombastic and shallow. Nothing, indeed, can be more just or acute than the following delineation of this part of their character.

"Les Italiens, accoutumés souvent à ne rien croire et à tout professer, se sont bien plus exercés dans la plaisanterie que dans le raisonnement. Ils se moquent de leur propre maniére d'être. Quand ils veulent renoncer à leur talent naturel, à l'esprit comique, pour essayer de l'éloquence oratoire, ils ont presque toujours de l'affectation. Les souvenirs d'une grandeur passée, sans aucun sentiment de grandeur présente, produisent le gigantesque. Les Italiens auroient de la dignité, si la plus sombre tristesse formoit leur caractère; mais quand les successeurs des Romains, privés de tout éclat national, de toute liberté politique, sont encore un des peuples les plus gais de la terre, ils ne peuvent avoir aucun élévation naturelle.

"Les Italiens se moquent dans leur contes, et souvent même sur le théâtre, des prêtres, auxquels ils sont d'ailleurs entièrement asservis. Mais ce n'est point sous un point de vue philosophique qu'ils attaquent les abus de la religion. Ils n'ont pas, comme quelques-uns de nos écrivains, le but de réformer les défauts dont ils plaisantent; ce qu'ils veulent seulement, c'est s'amuser d'autant plus que le sujet est plus sérieux. Leurs opinions sont, dans le fond, assez opposées à tous les genres d'autorité auxquels ils sont soumis; mais cet esprit d'opposition n'a de force que ce qu'il faut pour pouvoir mépriser ceux qui les commandent. C'est la ruse des enfans envers leurs pédagogues; ils leur obéissent, à condition qu'il leur soit permis de s'en moquer."—p. 248.

In poetry, however, the brilliant imagination of the South was sure to re-assert its claims to admiration; and the first great poets of modern Italy had the advantage of opening up a new career for their talents. Poetical fiction, as it is now known in Europe, seems to have had two distinct sources. Among the fierce and illiterate nations of the North, nothing had any chance of being listened to, that did not relate to the feats of war in which it was their sole ambition to excel; and poetical invention was forced to display itself in those legends of chivalry, which contain merely an exaggerated picture of scenes that were familiar to all their auditors. In Asia, again, the terrors of a sanguinary despotism had driven men to express their emotions, and to insinuate their moral admonitions, in the form of apologues and fables; and as these necessarily took a very wild and improbable course, their fictions assumed a much more extravagant and varied form than those of the northern romancers. The two styles however were brought together, partly by the effect of the crusades, and partly by the Moorish settlement in Spain; and Ariosto had the merit of first combining them into one, in that miraculous poem, which contains more painting, more variety, and more imagination, than any other poem in existence. The fictions of Boyardo are more purely in the taste of the Orientals; and Tasso is imbued far more deeply with the spirit and manner of the Augustan classics.

The false refinements, the *concetti*, the ingenious turns and misplaced subtlety, which have so long been the reproach of the Italian literature, Madame de Staël ascribes to their early study of the Greek Theologians, and later Platonists, who were so much in favour at the first revival of learning. The nice distinctions and sparkling sophistries which these gentlemen applied, with considerable success, in argument, were unluckily transferred, by Petrarch, to subjects of love and gallantry; and the fashion was set of a most unnatural alliance between wit and passion—ingenuity and profound emotion,—which has turned out, as might have been expected, to the discredit of both the contracting parties. We admit the fact, and its consequences: but we do not agree as to the causes which are here supposed to have produced it. We really do not think that the polemics of Constantinople are answerable for this extravagance; and have little doubt that it originated in that desire to impress upon their productions the visible marks of labour and art, which is felt by almost all artists in the infancy of the study. As all men can speak, and set words together in a natural order, it was likely to occur to those who first made *an art* of composition, and challenged general admiration for an arrangement of words, that it was necessary to make a very strong and conspicuous distinction between their compositions and ordinary and casual discourse; and to proclaim to the most careless reader or hearer, that a great difficulty had been surmounted, and something effected which every one was not in a condition to accomplish. This feeling, we have no doubt, first gave occasion to versification in all languages; and will serve to account, in a good degree, for the priority of metrical to prose compositions: but where versification was remarkably easy, or already familiar, some visible badge of artifice would also be required in the thought; and, accordingly, there seems to have been a certain stage in the progress of almost all literature, in which this excess has been committed. In Italy, it occurred so early as the time of Petrarch. In France, it became conspicuous in the writings of Voiture, Balsac, and all that coterie; and in England, in Cowley, Donne, and the whole tribe of metaphysical poets. Simplicity, in short, is the last attainment of progressive literature; and men are very long afraid of being natural, from the dread of being taken for ordinary. There is a simplicity, indeed, that is antecedent to the existence of anything like literary

ambition or critical taste in a nation,—the simplicity of the primitive ballads and legends of all rude nations; but after a certain degree of taste has been created, and composition has become an object of pretty general attention, simplicity is sure to be despised for a considerable period; and indeed, to be pretty uniformly violated in practice, even after it is restored to nominal honour and veneration.

We do not, however, agree the less cordially with Madame de Staël in her remarks upon the irreparable injury which affectation does to taste and to character. The following is marked with all her spirit and sagacity.

"L'affectation est de tous les défauts des caractères et des écrits, celui qui tarit de la manière la plus irréparable la source de tout bien; car elle blase sur la vérité même, dont elle imite l'accent. Dans quelque genre que ce soit, tous les mots qui ont servi à des idées fausses, à de froides exagérations, sont pendant long-temps frappés d'aridité; et telle langue même peut perdre entièrement la puissance d'émouvoir sur tel sujet, si elle a été trop souvent prodiguée à ce sujet même. Ainsi peut-être l'Italien est-il de toutes les langues de l'Europe la moins propre à l'éloquence passionnée de l'amour, comme la nôtre est maintenant usée pour l'éloquence de la liberté."—pp. 241, 242.

Their superstition and tyranny—their inquisition and arbitrary governments have arrested the progress of the Italians—as they have in a great degree prevented that of the Spaniards in the career of letters and philosophy. But for this, the Spanish genius would probably have gone far. Their early romances show a grandeur of conception, and a genuine enthusiasm; and their dramas, though irregular, are full of spirit and invention. Though bombastic and unnatural in most of their serious compositions, their extravagance is not so cold and artificial as that of the Italians; but seems rather to proceed from a natural exaggeration of the fancy, and an inconsiderate straining after a magnificence which they had not skill or patience to attain.

We come now to the literature of the North,—by which name Madame de Staël designates the literature of England and Germany, and on which she passes an encomium which we scarcely expected from a native of the South. She startles us a little, indeed, when she sets off with a dashing parallel between Homer and Ossian; and proceeds to say, that the peculiar character of the northern literature has all been derived from that Patriarch of the Celts, in the same way as that of the south of Europe may be ultimately traced back to the genius of Homer. It is certainly rather against this hypothesis, that the said Ossian has only been known to the readers and writers of the North for about forty years from the present day, and has not been held in especial reverence by those who have most distinguished themselves in that short period. However, we shall suppose that Madame de Staël means only, that the style of Ossian reunites the peculiarities that distinguish the northern school of letters, and may be supposed to exhibit them such as they were before the introduction of the classical and southern models. We rather think she is right in saying, that there is a radical difference in the taste and genius of the two regions; and that there is more melancholy, more tenderness, more deep feeling and fixed and lofty passion, engendered among the clouds and mountains of the North, than upon the summer seas or beneath the perfumed groves of the South. The causes of the difference are not perhaps so satisfactorily stated. Madame de Staël gives the first place to the climate.

Another characteristic is the hereditary independence of the northern tribes—arising partly from their scattered population and inaccessible retreats, and partly from the physical force and hardihood which their way of life, and the exertions requisite to procure subsistence in those regions, necessarily produced. Their religious creed, too, even before their conversion to Christianity, was less fantastic, and more capable of leading to heroic emotions than that of the southern nations. The respect and tenderness with which they always regarded their women, is another cause (or effect) of the peculiarity of their national character; and, in later times, their general adoption of the Protestant faith has tended to confirm that character. For our own part, we are inclined to ascribe more weight to the last circumstance, than to all the others that have been mentioned; and that not merely from the better education which it is the genius of Protestantism to bestow on the lower orders, but from the necessary effect of the universal study of the Scriptures which it enjoins. A very great proportion of the Protestant population of Europe is familiarly acquainted with the Bible; and there are many who are acquainted with scarcely any other book. Now, the Bible is not only full of lessons of patience and humility and compassion, but abounds with a gloomy and awful poetry, which cannot fail to make a powerful impression on minds that are not exposed to any other, and receive this under the persuasion of its divine origin. The peculiar character, therefore, which Madame de Staël has ascribed to the people of the North in general, will now be found, we believe, to belong only to such of them as profess the reformed religion; and to be discernible in all the communities that maintain that profession, without much regard to the degree of latitude which they inhabit—though at the same time it is undeniable, that its general adoption in the North must be explained by some of the more general causes which we have shortly indicated above.

The great fault which the French impute to the writers of the North, is want of taste and politeness. They generally admit that they have genius; but contend that they do not know how to use it; while their partisans maintain, that what is called want of taste is merely excess of genius, and independence of pedantic rules and authorities. Madame de Staël, though admitting the transcendent merits of some of the English writers, takes part, upon the whole, against them in this

controversy; and, after professing her unqualified preference of a piece compounded of great blemishes and great beauties, compared with one free of faults, but distinguished by little excellence, proceeds very wisely to remark, that it would be still better if the great faults were corrected—and that it is but a bad species of independence which manifests itself by being occasionally offensive: and then she attacks Shakespeare, as usual, for interspersing so many puerilities and absurdities and *grossiéretés* with his sublime and pathetic passages.

Now, there is no denying, that a poem would be better without faults; and that judicious painters use shades only to set off their pictures, and not blots. But there are two little remarks to be made. In the *first* place, if it be true that an extreme horror at faults is usually found to exclude a variety of beauties, and that a poet can scarcely ever attain the higher excellencies of his art, without some degree of that rash and headlong confidence which naturally gives rise to blemishes and excesses, it may not be quite so absurd to hold, that this temperament and disposition, with all its hazards, deserves encouragement, and to speak with indulgence of faults that are symptomatic of great beauties. There is a primitive fertility of soil that naturally throws out weeds along with the matchless crops which it alone can bear; and we might reasonably grudge to reduce its rigour for the sake of purifying its produce. There are certain savage virtues that can scarcely exist in perfection in a state of complete civilization; and, as specimens at least, we may wish to preserve, and be allowed to admire them, with all their exceptionable accompaniments. It is easy to say, that there is no necessary connection between the faults and the beauties of our great dramatist; but *the fact* is, that since men have become afraid of falling into his faults, no one has approached to his beauties; and we have already endeavoured, on more than one occasion, to explain the grounds of this connection.

But our *second* remark is, hat it is not quite fair to represent the controversy as arising altogether from the excessive and undue indulgence of the English for the admitted faults of their favourite authors, and their persisting to idolize Shakespeare in spite of his buffooneries, extravagancies, and bombast. We admit that he has those faults; and, as they are faults, that he would be better without them: but there are many more things which the French call faults, but which we deliberately consider as beauties. And here, we suspect, the dispute does not admit of any settlement: Because both parties, if they are really sincere in their opinion, and understand the subject of discussion, may very well be right, and for that very reason incapable of coming to any agreement. We consider taste to mean merely the faculty of receiving pleasure from beauty; and, so far as relates to the person *receiving* that pleasure, we apprehend it to admit of little doubt, that the best taste is that which enables him to receive the greatest quantity of pleasure from the greatest number of things. With regard to the author again, or artist of any other description, who pretends to *bestow* the pleasure, his object of course should be, to give as much, and to as many persons as possible; and especially to those who, from their rank and education, are likely to regulate the judgment of the remainder. It is his business therefore to ascertain what does please the greater part of such persons; and to fashion his productions according to the rules of taste which may be deduced from that discovery. Now, we humbly conceive it to be a complete and final justification for the whole body of the English nation, who understand French as well as English and yet prefer Shakespeare to Racine, just to state, modestly and firmly, the fact of that preference; and to declare, that their habits and tempers, and studies and occupations, have been such as to make them receive far greater pleasure from the more varied imagery—the more flexible tone—the closer imitation of nature—the more rapid succession of incident, and vehement bursts of passion of the English author, than from the unvarying majesty—the elaborate argument —and epigrammatic poetry of the French dramatist. For the taste of the nation at large, we really cannot conceive that any other apology can be necessary: and though it might be very desirable that they should agree with their neighbours upon this point, as well as upon many others, we can scarcely imagine any upon which their disagreement could be attended with less inconvenience. For the authors, again, that have the misfortune not to be so much admired by the adjoining nations as by their own countrymen, we can only suggest, that this is a very common misfortune; and that, as they wrote in the language of their country, and will probably be always most read within its limits, it was not perhaps altogether unwise or unpardonable in them to accommodate themselves to the taste which was there established.

Madame de Staël has a separate chapter upon Shakespeare; in which she gives him full credit for originality, and for having been the first, and perhaps the only considerable author, who did not copy from preceding models, but drew all his greater conceptions directly from his own feelings and observations. His representations of human passions, therefore, are incomparably more true and touching, than those of any other writer; and are presented, moreover, in a far more elementary and simple state, and without any of those circumstances of dignity or contrast with which feebler artists seem to have held it indispensable that they should be set off. She considers him as the first writer who has ventured upon the picture of overwhelming sorrow and hopeless wretchedness;—that desolation of the heart, which arises from the long contemplation of ruined hopes and irreparable privation;—that inward anguish and bitterness of soul which the public life of the ancients prevented them from feeling, and

their stoical precepts interdicted them from disclosing. The German poets, and some succeeding English authors, have produced a prodigious effect by the use of this powerful instrument; but nothing can exceed the original sketches of it exhibited in Lear, in Hamlet, in Timon of Athens, and in some parts of Richard and of Othello. He has likewise drawn, with the hand of a master, the struggles of nature under the immediate contemplation of approaching death; and that without those supports of conscious dignity or exertion with which all other writers have thought it necessary to blend or to contrast their pictures of this emotion. But it is in the excitement of the two proper tragic passions of pity and terror, that the force and originality of his genius are most conspicuous; pity not only for youth and innocence, and nobleness and virtue, as in Imogen and Desdemona, Brutus and Cariolanus—but for insignificant persons like the Duke of Clarence, or profligate and worthless ones like Cardinal Wolsey; —terror, in all its forms, from the madness of Lear, and the ghost of Hamlet, up to the dreams of Richard and Lady Macbeth. In comparing the effects of such delineations with the superstitious horror excited by the mythological persons of the Greek drama, the vast superiority of the English author cannot fail to be apparent. Instead of supernatural beings interfering with their cold and impassive natures, in the agitations and sufferings of men, Shakespeare employs only the magic of powerful passion, and of the illusions to which it gives birth. The phantoms and apparitions which he occasionally conjures up to add to the terror of the scene, are in truth but a bolder personification of those troubled dreams, and thick coming fancies, which harrow up the souls of guilt and agony: and even his sorcery and incantation are but traits of the credulity and superstition which so frequently accompany the exaltation of the greater passions. But perhaps the most miraculous of all his representations, are those in which he has pourtrayed the wanderings of a disordered intellect, and especially of that species of distraction which arises from excess of sorrow. Instead of being purely terrible, those scenes are, in his hands, in the highest degree touching and pathetic; and the wildness of fancy, and richness of imagery which they display, are even less admirable than the constant, though incoherent expression of that one sentiment of agonizing grief which had overborne all the faculties of the soul.

Such are the chief beauties which Madame de Staël discovers in Shakespeare; and though they are not perhaps exactly what an English reader would think of bringing most into notice, it is interesting to know what strikes an intelligent foreigner, in pieces with which we ourselves have always been familiar. The chief fault she imputes to him, besides the mixture of low buffoonery with tragic passion, are occasional tediousness and repetition—too much visible horror and bloodshed—and the personal deformity of Caliban and Richard III.; for all which we shall leave it to our readers to make the best apology they can.

Madame de Staël thinks very poorly of our talent for pleasantry; and is not very successful in her delineation of what we call humour. The greater part of the nation, she says, lives either in the serious occupations of business and politics, or in the tranquil circle of family affection. What is called society, therefore, has scarcely any existence among them; and yet it is in that sphere of idleness and frivolity, that taste is matured, and gaiety made elegant. They are not at all trained, therefore, to observe the finer shades of character and of ridicule in real life; and consequently neither think of delineating them in their compositions, nor are aware of their merit when delineated by others. We are unwilling to think this perfectly just; and are encouraged to suspect, that the judgment of the ingenious author may not be altogether without appeal on such a subject, by observing, that she represents the paltry flippancy and disgusting affectation of Sterne, as the purest specimen of true English humour; and classes the character of Falstaff along with that of *Pistol*, as parallel instances of that vulgar caricature from which the English still condescend to receive amusement. It is more just, however, to observe, that the humour, and in general the pleasantry, of our nation, has very frequently a sarcastic and even misanthropic character, which distinguishes it from the mere playfulness and constitutional gaiety of our French neighbours; and that we have not, for the most part, succeeded in our attempts to imitate the graceful pleasantry and agreeable trifling of that ingenious people. We develope every thing, she maintains, a great deal too laboriously; and give a harsh and painful colouring to those parts which the very nature of their style requires to be but lightly touched and delicately shaded. We never think we are heard, unless we cry out; —nor understood, if we leave any thing untold:—an excess of diffuseness and labour which could never be endured out of our own island. It is curious enough, indeed, to observe, that men who have nothing to do with their time but to get rid of it in amusement, are always much more impatient of any kind of tediousness in their entertainers, than those who have but little leisure for entertainment. The reason is, we suppose, that familiarity with business makes the latter habitually tolerant of tediousness; while the less engrossing pursuits of the former, in order to retain any degree of interest, require a very rapid succession and constant variety. On the whole, we do not think Madame de Staël very correct in her notions of English gaiety; and cannot help suspecting, that she must have been in some respects unfortunate in her society, during her visit to this country.

Her estimate of our poetry, and of our works of fiction, is more unexceptionable. She does not allow us much invention, in the strictest sense of that word; and still less grace and sprightliness in works of a light and playful character: But, for glowing descriptions of

nature—for the pure language of the affections—for profound thought and lofty sentiment, she admits, that the greater poets of England are superior to any thing else that the world has yet exhibited. Milton, Young, Thomson, Goldsmith, and Gray, seem to be her chief favourites. We do not find that Cowper, or any later author, had come to her knowledge. The best of them, however, she says, are chargeable with the national faults of exaggeration, and '*des longueurs.*' She overrates the merit, we think, of our novels, when she says, that with the exception of La Nouvelle Heloise, which belongs exclusively to the genius of the singular individual who produced it, and has no relation to the character of his nation, all the novels that have succeeded in France have been undisguised imitations of the English, to whom she ascribes, without qualification, the honour of that meritorious invention.

The last chapter upon English literature relates to their philosophy and eloquence; and here, though the learned author seems aware of the transcendent merit of Bacon, we rather think she proves herself to be unacquainted with that of his illustrious contemporaries or immediate successors, Hooker, Taylor, and Barrow—for she places Bacon as the only luminary of our sphere in the period preceding the Usurpation, and considers the true era of British philosophy as commencing with the reign of King William. We cannot admit the accuracy of this intellectual chronology. The character of the English philosophy is to be patient, profound, and always guided by a view to utility. They have done wonders in the metaphysic of the understanding; but have not equalled De Retz, La Bruyère, or even Montaigne, in their analysis of the passions and dispositions. The following short passage is full of sagacity and talent.

"Les Anglais ont avancé dans les sciences philosophiques comme dans l'industrie commerciale, à l'aide de la patience et du temps. Le penchant de leurs philosophes pour les abstractions sembloit devoir les entraîner dans des systêmes qui pouvoient être contraires à la raison; mais l'esprit de calcul, qui régularise, dans leur application, les combinaisons abstraites, la moralité, qui est la plus expérimentale de toutes les idées humaines, l'intérêt du commerce, l'amour de la liberté, ont toujours ramené les philosophes Anglais à des résultats pratiques. Que d'ouvrages entrepris pour servir utilement les hommes, pour l'éducation des enfans, pour le soulagement des malheureux, pour l'économie politique, la législation criminelle, les sciences, la morale, la métaphysique! Quelle philosophie dans les conceptions! quel respect pour l'expérience dans le choix des moyens!

"C'est à la liberté qu'il faut attribuer cette émulation et cette sagesse. On pouvoit si rarement se flatter en France d'influer par ses écrits sur les institutions de son pays, qu'on ne songeoit qu'à montrer de l'esprit dans les discussions même les plus sérieuses. On poussoit jusqu'au paradoxe un systême vrai dans une certaine mesure; la raison ne pouvant avoir une effet utile, on vouloit au moins que le paradoxe fût brillant. D'ailleurs sous une monarchie absolue, on pouvoit sans danger vanter, comme dans le Contrat Social, la démocratie pure; mais on n'auroit point osé approcher des idées possibles. Tout étoit jeu d'esprit en France, hors les arrêts du conseil du roi: tandis qu'en Angleterre, chacun pouvant agir d'une manière quelconque sur les résolutions de ses représentans, l'on prend l'habitude de comparer la pensée avec l'action, et l'on s'accoutume à l'amour du bien public par l'espoir d'y contribuer."—Vol. ii. pp. 5—7.

She returns again, however, to her former imputation of "*longueurs*," and repetitions, and excessive development; and maintains, that the greater part of English books are obscure, in consequence of their prolixity, and of the author's extreme anxiety to be perfectly understood. We suspect a part of the confusion is owing to her want of familiarity with the language. In point of fact, we know of no French writer on similar subjects so concise as Hume or Smith; and believe we might retort the charge of *longueurs*, in the name of the whole English nation, upon one half of the French classic authors—upon their Rollin and their Masillon—their D'Alembert—their Buffon—their Helvetius—and the whole tribe of their dramatic writers:—while as to repetitions, we are quite certain that there is no one English author who has repeated the same ideas half so often as Voltaire himself—certainly not the most tedious of the fraternity. She complains also of a want of warmth and animation in our prose writers. And it is true that Addison and Shaftesbury are cold; but the imputation only convinces us the more, that she is unacquainted with the writings of Jeremy Taylor, and that illustrious train of successors which has terminated, we fear, in the person of Burke. Our debates in parliament, she says, are more remarkable for their logic than their rhetoric; and have more in them of sarcasm, than of poetical figure and ornament. And no doubt it is so—and *must* be so—in all the discussions of permanent assemblies, occupied from day to day, and from month to month, with great questions of internal legislation or foreign policy. If she had heard Fox or Pitt, however, or Burke or Windham, or Grattan, we cannot conceive that she should complain of our want of animation; and, warm as she is in her encomiums on the eloquence of Mirabeau, and some of the orators of the first revolution, she is forced to confess, that our system of eloquence is better calculated for the detection of sophistry, and the effectual enforcement of all salutary truth. We really are not aware of any other purposes which eloquence can serve in a great national assembly.

Here end her remarks on our English literature—and here we must contrive also to close this desultory account of her lucubrations—though we have accompanied her through little more than one half of the work before us. It is impossible, however, that we can now find room to say any thing of her exposition of German or of French literature—and still less of her anticipations of the change which the establishment of a Republican government in the last of those countries is likely to produce,—or of the hints and cautions with which, in contemplation of that event, she thinks it necessary to provide her countrymen. These are perhaps the most curious parts of the work:—but we cannot enter upon them

at present;—and indeed, in what we have already said, we have so far exceeded the limits to which we always wish to confine ourselves, that we do not very well know what apology to make to our readers—except merely, that we are not without hope, that the miscellaneous nature of the subject, by which we have been insensibly drawn into this great prolixity, may have carried them also along, with as moderate a share of fatigue as we have ourselves experienced. If it be otherwise—we must have the candour and the gallantry to say, that we are persuaded the fault is to be imputed to us, and not to the ingenious author upon whose work we have been employed; and that, if we had confined ourselves to a mere abstract of her lucubrations, or interspersed fewer of our own remarks with the account we have attempted to give of their substance, we might have extended this article to a still greater length, without provoking the impatience even of the more fastidious of our readers. As it is, we feel that we have done but scanty justice, either to our author or her subject—though we can now make no other amends, than by earnestly entreating our readers to study both of them for themselves.

(July, 1806.)

The Complete Works, in Philosophy, Politics, and Morals, of the late Dr. Benjamin Franklin. *Now first collected and arranged. With Memoirs of his Early Life, written by himself.*—3 vols. 8vo. pp. 1450. Johnson, London: 1806.

Nothing, we think, can show more clearly the singular want of literary enterprise or activity, in the United States of America, than that no one has yet been found in that flourishing republic, to collect and publish the works of their only philosopher. It is not even very creditable to the liberal curiosity of the English public, that there should have been no complete edition of the writings of Dr. Franklin, till the year 1806: and we should have been altogether unable to account for the imperfect and unsatisfactory manner in which the task has now been performed, if it had not been for a statement in the prefatory advertisement, which removes all blame from the editor, to attach it to a higher quarter. It is there stated, that recently after the death of the author, his grandson, to whom the whole of his papers had been bequeathed, made a voyage to London, for the purpose of preparing and disposing of a complete collection of all his published and unpublished writings, with memoirs of his life, brought down by himself to the year 1757, and continued to his death by his descendant. It was settled, that the work should be published in three quarto volumes, in England, Germany, and France; and a negotiation was commenced with the booksellers, as to the terms of the purchase and publication. At this stage of the business, however, the proposals were suddenly withdrawn; and nothing more has been heard of the work, in this its fair and natural market. "The proprietor, it seems, had found a bidder of a different description, in *some emissary of Government*, whose object was to *withhold* the manuscripts from the world,—not to benefit it by their publication; and they thus either passed into other hands, or the person to whom they were bequeathed, received a remuneration for *suppressing* them."

If this statement be correct, we have no hesitation in saying, that no emissary of Government was ever employed on a more miserable and unworthy service. It is ludicrous to talk of the danger of disclosing in 1795, any secrets of state, with regard to the war of American independence; and as to any anecdotes or observations that might give offence to individuals, we think it should always be remembered, that public functionaries are the property of the public; that their character belongs to history and to posterity; and that it is equally absurd and discreditable to think of *suppressing* any part of the evidence by which their merits must be ultimately determined. But the whole of the works that have been suppressed, certainly did not relate to republican politics. The history of the author's life, down to 1757, could not well contain any matter of offence; and a variety of general remarks and speculations which he is understood to have left behind him, might have been permitted to see the light, though his diplomatic revelations had been forbidden. The emissary of Government, however, probably took no care of those things. He was resolved, we suppose, "to leave no rubs nor botches in his work;" and, to stifle the dreaded revelation, he thought the best way was to strangle all the innocents in the vicinage.

Imperfect as the work now before us necessarily is, we think the public is very much indebted to its editor. It is presented in a cheap and unostentatious form; and though it contains little that has not been already printed as the composition of the author, and does not often settle any point of disputed authenticity in a satisfactory manner, it seems, on the whole, to have been compiled with sufficient diligence, and arranged with considerable judgment. Few writings, indeed, require the aid of a commentator less than those of Dr. Franklin; and though this editor is rather too sparing of his presence, we are infinitely better satisfied to be left now and then to our conjectures, than to be incumbered with the explanations, and overpowered

with the loquacity, of a more officious attendant.

We do not propose to give any thing like a regular account of the papers contained in these volumes. The best of them have long been familiar to the public; and there are many which it was proper to preserve, that cannot now be made interesting to the general reader. Dr. Franklin, however, is too great a man to be allowed to walk past, without some observation; and our readers, we are persuaded, will easily forgive us, if we yield to the temptation of making a few remarks on his character.

This self-taught American is the most rational, perhaps, of all philosophers. He never loses sight of common sense in any of his speculations; and when his philosophy does not consist entirely in its fair and vigorous application, it is always regulated and controlled by it in its application and result. No individual, perhaps, ever possessed a juster understanding; or was so seldom obstructed in the use of it, by indolence, enthusiasm, or authority.

Dr. Franklin received no regular education; and he spent the greater part of his life in a society where there was no relish and no encouragement for literature. On an ordinary mind, these circumstances would have produced their usual effects, of repressing all sorts of intellectual ambition or activity, and perpetuating a generation of incurious mechanics: but to an understanding like Franklin's, we cannot help considering them as peculiarly propitious; and imagine that we can trace back to them, distinctly, almost all the peculiarities of his intellectual character.

Regular education, we think, is unfavourable to vigour or originality of understanding. Like civilization, it makes society more intelligent and agreeable; but it levels the distinctions of nature. It strengthens and assists the feeble; but it deprives the strong of his triumph, and casts down the hopes of the aspiring. It accomplishes this, not only by training up the mind in an habitual veneration for authorities, but, by leading us to bestow a disproportionate degree of attention upon studies that are only valuable as keys or instruments for the understanding, they come at last to be regarded as ultimate objects of pursuit; and the means of education are absurdly mistaken for its end. How many powerful understandings have been lost in the Dialectics of Aristotle! And of how much good philosophy are we daily defrauded, by the preposterous error of taking a knowledge of prosody for useful learning! The mind of a man, who has escaped this training, will at least have fair play. Whatever other errors he may fall into, he will be safe at least from these infatuations: And if he thinks proper, after he grows up, to study Greek, it will probably be for some better purpose than to become critically acquainted with its dialects. His prejudices will be those of a man, and not of a schoolboy; and his speculations and conclusions will be independent of the maxims of tutors, and the oracles of literary patrons.

The consequences of living in a refined and literary community, are nearly of the same kind with those of a regular education. There are so many critics to be satisfied—so many qualifications to be established—so many rivals to encounter, and so much derision to be hazarded, that a young man is apt to be deterred from so perilous an enterprise, and led to seek for distinction in some safer line of exertion. He is discouraged by the fame and the perfection of certain models and favourites, who are always in the mouths of his judges, and, "under them, his genius is rebuked," and his originality repressed, till he sinks into a paltry copyist, or aims at distinction, by extravagance and affectation. In such a state of society, he feels that mediocrity has no chance of distinction: and what beginner can expect to rise at once into excellence? He imagines that mere good sense will attract no attention; and that the manner is of much more importance than the matter, in a candidate for public admiration. In his attention to the manner, the matter is apt to be neglected; and, in his solicitude to please those who require elegance of diction, brilliancy of wit, or harmony of periods, he is in some danger of forgetting that strength of reason, and accuracy of observation, by which he first proposed to recommend himself. His attention, when extended to so many collateral objects, is no longer vigorous or collected;—the stream, divided into so many channels, ceases to flow either deep or strong;—he becomes an unsuccessful pretender to fine writing, or is satisfied with the frivolous praise of elegance or vivacity.

We are disposed to ascribe so much power to these obstructions to intellectual originality, that we cannot help fancying, that if Franklin had been bred in a college, he would have contented himself with expounding the metres of Pindar, and mixing argument with his port in the common room; and that if Boston had abounded with men of letters, he would never have ventured to come forth from his printing-house; or been driven back to it, at any rate, by the sneers of the critics, after the first publication of his Essays in the Busy Body.

This will probably be thought exaggerated; but it cannot be denied, we think, that the contrary circumstances in his history had a powerful effect in determining the character of his understanding, and in producing those peculiar habits of reasoning and investigation by which his writings are distinguished. He was encouraged to publish, because there was scarcely any one around him whom he could not easily excel. He wrote with great brevity, because he had not leisure for more voluminious compositions, and because he knew that the readers to whom he addressed himself were, for the most part, as busy as himself. For the same reason, he studied great perspicuity and simplicity of statement. His countrymen had then no relish for fine writing, and could not easily be made to under-

stand a deduction depending on a long or elaborate process of reasoning. He was forced, therefore, to concentrate what he had to say; and since he had no chance of being admired for the beauty of his composition, it was natural for him to aim at making an impression by the force and the clearness of his statements.

His conclusions were often rash and inaccurate, from the same circumstances which rendered his productions concise. Philosophy and speculation did not form the business of his life; nor did he dedicate himself to any particular study, with a view to exhaust and complete the investigation of it in all its parts, and under all its relations. He engaged in every interesting inquiry that suggested itself to him, rather as the necessary exercise of a powerful and active mind, than as a task which he had bound himself to perform. He cast a quick and penetrating glance over the facts and the *data* that were presented to him; and drew his conclusions with a rapidity and precision that have not often been equalled. But he did not generally stop to examine the completeness of the *data* upon which he proceeded, nor to consider the ultimate effect or application of the principles to which he had been conducted. In all questions, therefore, where the facts upon which he was to determine, and the materials from which his judgment was to be formed, were either few in number, or of such a nature as not to be overlooked, his reasonings are, for the most part, perfectly just and conclusive, and his decisions unexceptionably sound; but where the elements of the calculation were more numerous and widely scattered, it appears to us that he has often been precipitate, and that he has either been misled by a partial apprehension of the conditions of the problem, or has discovered only a portion of the truth which lay before him. In all physical inquiries; in almost all questions of particular and immediate policy; and in much of what relates to the practical wisdom and happiness of private life, his views will be found to be admirable, and the reasoning by which they are supported most masterly and convincing. But upon subjects of general politics, of abstract morality, and political economy, his notions appear to be more unsatisfactory and incomplete. He seems to have wanted leisure, and perhaps inclination also, to spread out before him the whole vast premises of those extensive sciences, and scarcely to have had patience to hunt for his conclusions through so wide and intricate a region as that upon which they invited him to enter. He has been satisfied, therefore, on many occasions, with reasoning from a very limited view of the facts, and often from a particular instance; and he has done all that sagacity and sound sense could do with such materials: but it cannot excite wonder, if he has sometimes overlooked an essential part of the argument, and often advanced a particular truth into the place of a general principle. He seldom reasoned upon those subjects at all, we believe, without having some practical application of them immediately in view; and as he began the investigation rather to determine a particular case, than to establish a general maxim, so he probably desisted as soon as he had relieved himself of the present difficulty.

There are not many among the thoroughbred scholars and philosophers of Europe, who can lay claim to distinction in more than one or two departments of science or literature. The uneducated tradesman of America has left writings that call for our respectful attention, in natural philosophy,—in politics,—in political economy,—and in general literature and morality.

Of his labours in the department of *Physics*, we do not propose to say much. They were almost all suggested by views of utility in the beginning, and were, without exception, applied, we believe, to promote such views in the end. His letters upon *Electricity* have been more extensively circulated than any of his other writings of this kind; and are entitled to more praise and popularity than they seem ever to have met with in this country. Nothing can be more admirable than the luminous and graphical precision with which the experiments are narrated; the ingenuity with which they are projected; and the sagacity with which the conclusion is inferred, limited, and confirmed.

The most remarkable thing, however, in these, and indeed in the whole of his physical speculations, is the unparalleled simplicity and facility with which the reader is conducted from one stage of the inquiry to another. The author never appears for a moment to labour or to be at a loss. The most ingenious and profound explanations are suggested, as if they were the most natural and obvious way of accounting for the phenomena; and the author seems to value himself so little on his most important discoveries, that it is necessary to compare him with others, before we can form a just notion of his merits. As he seems to be conscious of no exertion, he feels no partiality for any part of his speculations, and never seeks to raise the reader's idea of their importance, by any arts of declamation or eloquence. Indeed, the habitual precision of his conceptions, and his invariable practice of referring to specific facts and observations, secured him, in a great measure, both from those extravagant conjectures in which so many naturalists have indulged, and from the zeal and enthusiasm which seems so naturally to be engendered in their defence. He was by no means averse to give scope to his imagination, in suggesting a variety of explanations of obscure and unmanageable phenomena; but he never allowed himself to confound these vague and conjectural theories with the solid results of experience and observation. In his Meteorological papers, and in his Observations upon Heat and Light, there is a great deal of such bold and original suggestions: but he evidently sets but little value upon them; and has no sooner disburdened his mind of the impressions from which they proceeded, than he seems to dismiss them entirely from his consideration, and turns to the legitimate philosophy of experiment with unabated diligence and humility. As an instance of this disposition, we may quote part of a letter to the Abbé Soulaive, upon a new Theory of the Earth, which he proposes and dismisses, without concern or anxiety, in the course of a few sentences; though, if the idea had fallen upon the brain of an European philosopher, it might have germinated into a volume of eloquence, like Buffon's, or an infinite array of paragraphs and observations, like those of Parkinson and Dr. Hutton.

After remarking, that there are manifold indications of some of the highest parts of the land having been formerly covered by sea, Dr. Franklin observes—

"Such changes in the superficial parts of the globe, seemed to me unlikely to happen, if the earth were solid in the centre. I therefore imagined, that the internal parts might be a fluid more dense, and of greater specific gravity than any of the solids we are acquainted with, which therefore might swim in or upon that fluid. Thus the surface of the globe would be a shell, capable of being broken and disordered by the violent movements of the fluid on which it rested. And as air has been compressed by art so as to be twice as dense as water, and as we know not yet the degree of density to which air may be compressed, and M. Amontons calculated that its density increasing as it approached the centre in the same proportion as above the surface, it would, at the depth of leagues, be heavier than gold, and possibly the dense fluid occupying the internal parts of the globe might therefore be air compressed. And as the force of expansion in dense air, when heated, is in proportion to its density, this central air might afford another agent to move the surface, as well as be of use in keeping alive the subterraneous fires; though, as you observe, the sudden rarefaction of water coming into contact with those fires, may also be an agent sufficiently strong for that purpose, when acting between the incumbent earth and the fluid on which it rests.

"If one might indulge imagination in supposing how such a globe was formed, I should conceive, that all the elements in separate particles being originally mixed in confusion, and occupying a great space, they would (as soon as the Almighty fiat ordained gravity, or the mutual attraction of certain parts, and the mutual repulsion of others to exist) all move to their common centre: that the air being a fluid whose parts repel each other, though drawn to the common centre by their gravity, would be densest towards the centre, and rarer as more remote; consequently, all matters lighter than the central parts of that air, and immersed in it, would recede from the centre, and rise till they arrived at that region of the air which was of the same specific gravity with themselves, where they would rest; while other matter, mixed with the lighter air, would descend, and the two, meeting, would form the shell of the first earth, leaving the upper atmosphere nearly clear. The original movement of the parts towards their common centre, would naturally form a whirl there; which would continue, upon the turning of the new-formed globe upon its axis: and the greatest diameter of the shell would be in its equator. If, by any accident afterwards, the axis should be changed, the dense internal fluid, by altering its form, must burst the shell, and throw all its substance into the confusion in which we find it. I will not trouble you at present with my fancies concerning the manner of forming the rest of our system. Superior beings smile at our theories, and at our presumption in making them."—vol. ii. pp. 117—119.

He afterwards makes his theory much finer and more extravagant, by combining with it a very wild speculation upon magnetism; and, notwithstanding the additional temptation of this new piece of ingenuity, he abandons it in the end with as much unconcern, as if he had had no share in the making of it. We shall add the whole passage.

"It has long been a supposition of mine, that the iron contained in the surface of the globe has made it capable of becoming, as it is, a great magnet; that the fluid of magnetism perhaps exists in all space; so that there is a magnetical north and south of the Universe, as well as of this globe, so that if it were possible for a man to fly from star to star, he might govern his course by the compass; that it was by the power of this general magnetism this globe became a particular magnet. In soft or hot iron the fluid of magnetism is naturally diffused equally: But when within the influence of the magnet, it is drawn to one end of the iron; made denser there, and rarer at the other. While the iron continues soft and hot, it is only a temporary magnet: if it cools or grows hard in that situation, it becomes a permanent one, the magnetic fluid not easily resuming its equilibrium. Perhaps it may be owing to the permanent magnetism of this globe, which it had not at first, that its axis is at present kept parallel to itself and not liable to the changes it formerly suffered, which occasioned the rupture of its shell, the submersions and emersions of its lands, and the confusion of its seasons. The present polar and equatorial diameters differing from each other near ten leagues, it is easy to conceive, in case some power should shift the axis gradually, and place it in the present equator, and make the new equator pass through the present poles, what a sinking of the waters would happen in the present equatorial regions, and what a rising in the present polar regions; so that vast tracts would be discovered, that now are under water, and others covered, that are now dry, the water rising and sinking in the different extremes near five leagues. Such an operation as this possibly occasioned much of Europe, and among the rest this Mountain of Passy on which I live, and which is composed of limestone rock and sea-shells, to be abandoned by the sea, and to change its ancient climate, which seems to have been a hot one. The globe being now become a perfect magnet, we are, perhaps, safe from any change of its axis. But we are still subject to the accidents on the surface, which are occasioned by a wave in the internal ponderous fluid; and such a wave is producible by the sudden violent explosion you mention, happening from the junction of water and fire under the earth, which not only lifts the incumbent earth that is over the explosion, but impressing with the same force the fluid under it, creates a wave, that may run a thousand leagues, lifting, and thereby shaking, successively, all the countries under which it passes. I know not whether I have expressed myself so clearly, as not to get out of your sight in these reveries. If they occasion any new inquiries, and produce a better hypothesis, they will not be quite useless. You see I have given a loose to imagination; but I approve much more your method of philosophizing, which proceeds upon actual observation, makes a collection of facts, and concludes no further than those facts will warrant. In my present circumstances, that mode of studying the nature of the globe is out of my power, and therefore I have permitted myself to wander a little in the wilds of fancy."—vol. ii. p. 119—121.

Our limits will not permit us to make any analysis of the other physical papers contained in this collection. They are all admirable for the clearness of the description, the felicity and familiarity of the illustrations, and the singular sagacity of the remarks with which they are interspersed. The theory of whirl

winds and waterspouts, as well as the observations on the course of the winds and on cold, seem to be excellent. The paper called Maritime Observations is full of ingenuity and practical good sense; and the remarks on Evaporation, and on the Tides, most of which are contained in a series of letters to a young lady, are admirable, not merely for their perspicuity, but for the interest and amusement they are calculated to communicate to every description of readers. The remarks on Fireplaces and Smoky chimnies are infinitely more original, concise, and scientific, than those of Count Rumford; and the observations on the Gulph-stream afford, we believe, the first example of just theory, and accurate investigation, applied to that phenomenon.

Dr. Franklin, we think, has never made use of the mathematics, in his investigation of the phenomena of nature; and though this may render it surprising that he has fallen into so few errors of importance, we conceive that it helps in some measure to explain the unequalled perspicuity and vivacity of his expositions. An algebraist, who can work wonders with letters, seldom condescends to be much indebted to words; and thinks himself entitled to make his sentences obscure, provided his calculations be distinct. A writer who has nothing but words to make use of, must make all the use he can of them: he cannot afford to neglect the only chance he has of being understood.

We should now say something of the political writings of Dr. Franklin,—the productions which first raised him into public office and eminence, and which will be least read or attended to by posterity. They may be divided into two parts; those which relate to the internal affairs and provincial differences of the American colonies, before their quarrel with the mother country; and those which relate to that quarrel and its consequences. The former are no longer in any degree interesting: and the editor has done wisely, we think, in presenting his readers with an abstract only of the longest of them. This was published in 1759, under the title of an Historical Review of the Constitution of Pennsylvania, and consisted of upwards of 500 pages, composed for the purpose of showing that the political privileges reserved to the founder of the colony had been illegally and oppressively used. The Canada pamphlet, written in 1760, for the purpose of pointing out the importance of retaining that colony at the peace, is given entire; and appears to be composed with great force of reason, and in a style of extraordinary perspicuity. The same may be said of what are called the Albany Papers, or the plan for a general political union of the colonies in 1754; and a variety of other tracts on the provincial politics of that day. All these are worth preserving, both as monuments of Dr. Franklin's talents and activity, and as affording, in many places, very excellent models of strong reasoning and popular eloquence: but the interest of the subjects is now completely gone by; and the few specimens of general reasoning which we meet with, serve only to increase our regret, that the talents of the author should have been wasted on such perishable materials.

There is not much written on the subject of the dispute with the colonies; and most of Dr. Franklin's papers on that subject are already well known to the public. His examination before the House of Commons in 1766 affords a striking proof of the extent of his information, the clearness and force of his *extempore* composition, and the steadiness and self-possession which enabled him to display these qualities with so much effect upon such an occasion. His letters before the commencement of hostilities are full of grief and anxiety; but, no sooner did matters come to extremities, than he appears to have assumed a certain keen and confident cheerfulness, not unmixed with a seasoning of asperity, and more vindictiveness of spirit than perhaps became a philosopher. In a letter written in October 1775, he expresses himself in this manner:—

"Tell our dear good friend * * *, who sometimes has his doubts and despondencies about our firmness, that America is determined and unanimous; a very few Tories and placemen excepted, who will probably soon export themselves. Britain, at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankies this campaign, which is 20,000*l.* a head; and, at Bunker's Hill, she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time, sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data*, his mathematical head will easily calculate the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory."—vol. iii, p. 357, 358.

The following letters, which passed between Dr. Franklin and Lord Howe, when his Lordship arrived off the American coast with what were called the pacificatory proposals in 1776, show not only the consideration in which the former was held by the Noble Commissioner, but contain a very striking and prophetic statement of the consequences to be apprehended from the perseverance of Great Britain in her schemes of compulsion. His Lordship writes, in June 1776,—

"I cannot, my worthy friend, permit the letters and parcels, which I have sent (in the state I received them,) to be landed, without adding a word upon the subject of the injurious extremities in which our unhappy disputes have engaged us.

"You will learn the nature of my mission, from the official despatches which I have recommended to be forwarded by the same conveyance. Retaining all the earnestness I ever expressed, to see our differences accommodated; I shall conceive, if I meet with the disposition in the colonies which I was once taught to expect, the most flattering hopes of proving serviceable in the objects of the King's paternal solicitude, by promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the Colonies. But, if the deep-rooted prejudices of America, and the necessity of preventing her trade from passing into foreign channels, must keep us still a divided people, I shall, from every private as well as public motive, most heartily lament, that this is not the moment, wherein those great objects of my ambition are to be attained, and that I am to be longer deprived of an opportunity to assure you, personally, of the regard with which I am, &c."—vol. iii. p. 365—367.

Dr. Franklin answered,—

"I received safe the letters your Lordship so kindly forwarded to me, and beg you to accept *my* thanks.

"The official despatches to which you refer me, contain nothing more than what we had seen in the act of Parliament, viz. 'Offers of pardon upon submission;' which I was sorry to find; as it must give your Lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business.

"Directing pardons to be offered to the colonies, who are the very parties injured, expresses indeed that opinion of our ignorance, baseness, and insensibility, which your uninformed and proud nation has long been pleased to entertain of us; but it can have no other effect than that of increasing our resentments. It is impossible we should think of submission to a government that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burned our defenceless towns in the midst of winter; excited the savages to massacre our (peaceful) farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters; and is even now* bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. These atrocious injuries have *extinguished* every spark of affection for that parent country we once held so dear: but, were it possible for *us* to forget and forgive them, it is not possible for *you* (I mean the British nation) to forgive the people you have so heavily injured. You can never confide again in those as fellow-subjects, and permit them to enjoy equal freedom, to whom you know you have given such just causes of lasting enmity: and this must impel you, were we again under your government, to endeavour the breaking our spirit by the severest tyranny, and obstructing, by every means in your power, our growing strength and prosperity.

"But your Lordship mentions 'the King's paternal solicitude for promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the Colonies.' If by *peace* is here meant, a peace to be entered into by distinct states, now at war; and his Majesty has given your Lordship powers to treat with us of such a peace; I may venture to say, though without authority, that I think a treaty for that purpose not quite impracticable, before we enter into foreign alliances. But I am persuaded you have no such powers. Your nation, though, by punishing those American governors who have fomented the discord, rebuilding our burnt towns, and repairing as far as possible the mischiefs done us, she might recover a great share of our regard, and the greatest share of our growing commerce, with all the advantages of that additional strength, to be derived from a friendship with us; yet I know too well her abounding pride and deficient wisdom, to believe she will ever take such salutary measures. Her fondness for conquest as a warlike nation; her lust of dominion as an ambitious one; and her thirst for a gainful monopoly as a commercial one, (none of them legitimate causes of war,) will join to hide from her eyes every view of her true interest, and continually goad her on in those ruinous distant expeditions, so destructive both of lives and of treasure, that they must prove as pernicious to her in the end, as the Croisades formerly were to most of the nations of Europe.

"I have not the vanity, my Lord, to think of intimidating, by thus predicting the effects of this war; for I know it will in England have the fate of all my former predictions—not to be believed till the event shall verify it.

"Long did I endeavour, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble porcelain vase—the British empire; for I knew that, being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their *share* of the strength and value that existed in the whole; and that a perfect reunion of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for. Your Lordship may possibly remember the tears of joy that wetted my cheek, when, at your good sister's in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune to find these expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was labouring to prevent. My consolation under that groundless and malevolent treatment was, that I retained the friendship of many wise and good men in that country; and, among the rest, some share in the regard of Lord Howe.

"The well-founded esteem, and, permit me to say, affection, which I shall always have for your Lordship, make it painful to me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which (as described in your letter) is 'the necessity of preventing the American *trade* from passing into foreign channels.' To me it seems, that neither the obtaining or retaining any trade, how valuable soever, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce, are the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profits of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and holding it by fleets and armies. I consider this war against us, therefore, as both unjust and unwise; and I am persuaded that cool and dispassionate posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it; and that even success will not save from some degree of dishonour, those who have voluntarily engaged to conduct it.

"I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and I believe, when you find that to be impossible, on any terms given you to propose, you will then relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honourable private station.

"With the greatest and most sincere respect, I have the honour to be, &c."—vol. iii. p. 367—371.

None of Dr. Franklin's political writings, during the nine years when he resided as Ambassador at the Court of France, have yet been made public. Some of them, we should imagine, must be highly interesting.

Of the merit of this author as a political economist, we have already had occasion to say something, in the general remarks which we made on the character of his genius; and we cannot now spare time to go much into particulars. He is perfectly sound upon many important and practical points;—upon the corn-trade, and the theory of money, for instance; and also upon the more general doctrines, as to the freedom of commerce, and the principle of population. In the more elementary and abstract parts of the science, however, his views seem to have been less just and luminous. He is not very consistent or profound in what he says of the effects of luxury; and seems to have gone headlong into the radical error of the *Economistes*, when he maintains, that all that is done by manufacture, is to embody the value of the manufacturer's subsistence in his work, and that agriculture is the only source from which a real increase of wealth can be derived. Another favourite position is, that all commerce is *cheating*, where a commodity, produced by a certain quantity of labour, is exchanged for another, on which more labour has been expended; and that the only *fair* price of any thing, is some other thing requiring the same exertion to bring it to market. This is evidently a very narrow and erroneous view of the nature of commerce. The fair price to the purchaser is, whatever he deliberately chooses to give, rather than go without the commodity;—it is no matter to him, whether

* About this time the Hessians, &c. had just arrived from Europe at Staten Island and New York. B. V.

the seller bestowed much or little labour upon it, or whether it came into his possession without any labour at all;—whether it be a diamond, which he picked up, or a picture, at which he had been working for years. The commodity is not valued by the purchaser, on account of the labour which is supposed to be embodied in it, but solely on account of certain qualities, which he finds convenient or agreeable: he compares the convenience and delight which he expects to derive from this object, with the convenience and delight which is afforded by the things asked in exchange for it; and if he find the former preponderate, he consents to the exchange, and makes a beneficial bargain.

We have stated the case in the name of a purchaser, because, in barter, both parties are truly purchasers, and act upon the same principles; and it is easy to show, that all commerce resolves itself, ultimately, into barter. There can be no unfairness in trade, except where there is concealment on the part of the seller, either of the defects of the commodity, or of the fact that the purchaser may be supplied with it at a cheaper rate by another. It is a matter of *fact*, but not of *morality*, that the price of most commodities will be influenced by the labour employed in producing them. If they are capable of being produced in unlimited quantities, the competition of the producers will sink the price very nearly to what is necessary to maintain this labour; and the impossibility of continuing the production, without repaying that labour, will prevent it from sinking lower. The doctrine does not apply at all, to cases where the materials, or the skill necessary to work them up, are scarce in proportion to the demand. The author's speculations on the effects of paper-money, seem also to be superficial and inaccurate. *Statistics* had not been carefully studied in the days of his activity; and, accordingly, we meet with a good deal of loose assumption, and sweeping calculation in his writings. Yet he had a genius for exact observation, and complicated detail; and probably wanted nothing but leisure, to have made very great advances in this branch of economy.

As a writer on morality and general literature, the merits of Dr. Franklin cannot be estimated properly, without taking into consideration the peculiarities that have been already alluded to in his early history and situation. He never had the benefit of any academical instruction, nor of the society of men of letters;—his style was formed entirely by his own judgment and occasional reading; and most of his moral pieces were written while he was a tradesman, addressing himself to the tradesmen of his native city. We cannot expect, therefore, either that he should write with extraordinary elegance or grace; or that he should treat of the accomplishments, follies, and occupations of polite life. He had no great occasion, as a moralist, to expose the guilt and the folly of gaming or seduction; or to point a poignant and playful ridicule against the lighter immoralities of fashionable life. To the mechanics and traders of Boston and Philadelphia, such warnings were altogether unnecessary; and he endeavoured, therefore, with more appropriate eloquence, to impress upon them the importance of industry, sobriety, and economy, and to direct their wise and humble ambition to the attainment of useful knowledge and honourable independence. That morality, after all, is certainly the most valuable, which is adapted to the circumstances of the greater part of mankind; and that eloquence the most meritorious, that is calculated to convince and persuade the multitude to virtue. Nothing can be more perfectly and beautifully adapted to its object, than most of Dr. Franklin's compositions of this sort. The tone of familiarity, of good-will, and homely jocularity—the plain and pointed illustrations—the short sentences, made up of short words—and the strong sense, clear information, and obvious conviction of the author himself, make most of his moral exhortations perfect models of popular eloquence; and afford the finest specimens of a style which has been but too little cultivated in a country which numbers perhaps more than half a million of readers among its tradesmen and artificers.

In writings which possess such solid and unusual merit, it is of no great consequence that the fastidious eye of a critic can discover many blemishes. There is a good deal of vulgarity in the practical writings of Dr. Franklin; and more vulgarity than was any way necessary for the object he had in view. There is something childish, too, in some of his attempts at pleasantry; his story of the Whistle, and his Parisian letter, announcing the discovery that the sun gives light as soon as he rises, are instances of this. The soliloquy of an Ephemeris, however, is much better; and both it, and the Dialogue with the Gout, are executed with the lightness and spirit of genuine French compositions. The Speech in the Divan of Algiers, composed as a parody on those of the defenders of the slave trade, and the scriptural parable against persecution are inimitable;—they have all the point and facility of the fine pleasantries of Swift and Arbuthnot, with something more of directness and apparent sincerity.

The style of his letters, in general, is excellent. They are chiefly remarkable, for great simplicity of language, admirable good sense and ingenuity, and an amiable and inoffensive cheerfulness, that is never overclouded or eclipsed. Among the most valuable of the writings that are published for the first time, in the present edition, are four letters from Dr. Franklin to Mr. Whatley, written within a few years of his death, and expressive of all that unbroken gaiety, philanthropy, and activity, which distinguish the compositions of his earlier years. We give with pleasure the following extracts.

"I am not acquainted with the saying of Alphonsus, which you allude to as a sanctification of your rigidity, in refusing to allow me the plea of old age as an excuse for my want of exactitude in correspondence. What was that saying?—You do not, it seems, feel any occasion for such an excuse, though you are, as you say, rising seventy-five, but I am rising (perhaps more properly falling) eighty—and I leave the excuse with you till you arrive at that age; perhaps you may then be more sensible of its validity, and see fit to use it for yourself.

"I must agree with you that the gout is bad, and that the stone is worse. I am happy in not having them both together; and I join in your prayer, that you may live till you die without either. But I doubt the author of the epitaph you sent me is a little mistaken, when, speaking of the world, he says, that

—'he ne'er car'd a pin
What they said or may say of the mortal within.'

"It is so natural to wish to be well spoken of, whether alive or dead, that I imagine he could not be quite exempt from that desire; and that at least he wished to be thought a wit, or he would not have given himself the trouble of writing so good an epitaph to leave behind him."—"You see I have some reason to wish that in a future state I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it: for I, too, with your poet, *trust in God*. And when I observe, that there is great frugality as well as wisdom in his works, since he has been evidently sparing both of labour and materials; for, by the various wonderful inventions of propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his world with plants and animals, without being at the trouble of repeated new creations: and by the natural reduction of compound substances to their original elements, capable of being employed in new compositions, he has prevented the necessity of creating new matter; for that the earth, water, air, and perhaps fire, which being compounded, form wood, do, when the wood is dissolved, return, and again become air, earth, fire and water;—I say, that when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls; or believe that he will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall in some shape or other always exist. And with all the inconveniences human *life* is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping, however, that the errata of the last may be corrected."—Vol. iii. pp. 546—548.

"Our constitution seems not to be well understood with you. If the congress were a permanent body, there would be more reason in being jealous of giving it powers. But its members are chosen annually, and cannot be chosen more than three years successively, nor more than three years in seven, and any of them may be recalled at any time, whenever their constituents shall be dissatisfied with their conduct. They are of the people, and return again to mix with the people, having no more durable preeminence than the different grains of sand in an hour-glass. Such an assembly cannot easily become dangerous to liberty. They are the servants of the people, sent together to do the people's business, and promote the public welfare; their powers must be sufficient, or their duties cannot be performed. They have no profitable appointments, but a mere payment of daily wages, such as are scarcely equivalent to their expenses; so that, having no chance of great places and enormous salaries or pensions, as in some countries, there is no intriguing or bribing for elections. I wish Old England were as happy in its government, but I do not see it. Your people, however, think their constitution the best in the world, and affect to despise ours. It is comfortable to have a good opinion of one's self, and of every thing that belongs to us; to think one's own religion, king, and wife, the best of all possible wives, kings, and religions. I remember three Greenlanders, who had travelled two years in Europe, under the care of some Moravian missionaries, and had visited Germany, Denmark, Holland, and England: when I asked them at Philadelphia (when they were in their way home) whether, now they had seen how much more commodiously the white people lived by the help of the arts, they would not choose to remain among us—their answer was, that they were pleased with having had an opportunity of seeing many fine things, *but they chose to live in their own country:* which country, by the way, consisted of rock only: for the Moravians were obliged to carry earth in their ship from New York, for the purpose of making there a cabbage garden!"—Vol. iii. pp. 550, 551.

"You are now seventy-eight, and I am eighty-two. You tread fast upon my heels; but, though you have more strength and spirit, you cannot come up with me till I stop, which must now be soon; for I am grown so old as to have buried most of the friends of my youth; and I now often hear persons, whom I knew when children, called *old* Mr. such a one, to distinguish them from their sons, now men grown, and in business; so that, by living twelve years beyond *David's* period, I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been abed and asleep. Yet had I gone at seventy, it would have cut off twelve of the most active years of my life, employed, too, in matters of the greatest importance: but whether I have been doing good or mischief, is for time to discover. I only know that I intended well, and I hope all will end well.

"Be so good as to present my affectionate respects to Dr. Rowley. I am under great obligations to him, and shall write to him shortly. It will be a pleasure to him to hear that my malady does not grow sensibly worse, and that is a great point; for it has always been so tolerable, as not to prevent my enjoying the pleasures of society, and, being cheerful in conversation. I owe this in a great measure to his good counsels."—Vol. iii. pp. 555, 556.

"Your eyes must continue very good, since you are able to write so small a hand without spectacles. I cannot distinguish a letter even of large print; but am happy in the invention of double spectacles, which, serving for distant objects as well as near ones, make my eyes as useful to me as ever they were. If all the other defects and infirmities of old age could be as easily and cheaply remedied, it would be worth while, my friend, to live a good deal longer. But I look upon death to be as necessary to our constitutions as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning. Adieu, and believe me ever, &c."—Vol. iii. pp. 544, 545.

There is something extremely amiable in old age, when thus exhibited without querulousness, discontent, or impatience, and free, at the same time, from any affected or unbecoming levity. We think there must be many more of Dr. Franklin's letters in existence, than have yet been given to the public; and from the tone and tenor of those which we have seen, we are satisfied that they would be read with general avidity and improvement.

His account of his own life, down to the year 1730, has been in the hands of the public since 1790. It is written with great simplicity and liveliness, though it contains too many trifling details and anecdotes of obscure individuals. It affords however a striking example of the irresistible force with which talents and industry bear upwards in society; as well as an impressive illustration of the substantial wisdom and good policy of invariable integrity and candour. We should think it a very useful reading for all young persons of unconfirmed principles, who have their fortunes to make or to mend in the world.

Upon the whole, we look upon the life and writings of Dr. Franklin as affording a striking illustration of the incalculable value of a sound and well directed understanding; and of the comparative uselessness of learning and laborious accomplishments. Without the slightest pretensions to the character of a scholar or a man of science, he has extended the bounds of human knowledge on a variety of subjects, which scholars and men of science had previously investigated without success; and has only been found deficient in those studies which the learned have generally turned from in disdain. We would not be understood to say any thing in disparagement of scholarship and science; but the value of these instruments is apt to be over-rated by their possessors; and it is a wholesome mortification, to show them that the work may be done without them. We have long known that their employment does not insure its success.

(September, 1816.)

The Works of Jonathan Swift, D. D., *Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. Containing Additional Letters, Tracts, and Poems not hitherto published. With Notes, and a life of the Author, by* Walter Scott, Esq. 19 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh: 1815.

By far the most considerable change which has taken place in the world of letters, in our days, is that by which the wits of Queen Anne's time have been gradually brought down from the supremacy which they had enjoyed, without competition, for the best part of a century. When we were at our studies, some twenty-five years ago, we can perfectly remember that every young man was set to read Pope, Swift, and Addison, as regularly as Virgil, Cicero, and Horace. All who had any tincture of letters were familiar with their writings and their history; allusions to them abounded in all popular discourses and all ambitious conversation; and they and their contemporaries were universally acknowledged as our great models of excellence, and placed without challenge at the head of our national literature. New books, even when allowed to have merit, were never thought of as fit to be placed in the same class, but were generally read and forgotten, and passed away like the transitory meteors of a lower sky; while *they* remained in their brightness, and were supposed to shine with a fixed and unalterable glory.

All this, however, we take it, is now pretty well altered; and in so far as persons of our antiquity can judge of the training and habits of the rising generation, those celebrated writers no longer form the manual of our studious youth, or enter necessarily into the institution of a liberal education. Their names, indeed, are still familiar to our ears; but their writings no longer solicit our habitual notice, and their subjects begin already to fade from our recollection. Their high privilieges and proud distinctions, at any rate, have evidently passed into other hands. It is no longer to them that the ambitious look up with envy, or the humble with admiration; nor is it in their pages that the pretenders to wit and eloquence now search for allusions that are sure to captivate, and illustrations that cannot be mistaken. In this decay of their reputation they have few advocates, and no imitators: and from a comparison of many observations, it seems to be clearly ascertained, that they are declined considerably from 'the high meridian of their glory,' and may fairly be apprehended to be 'hastening to their setting.' Neither is it time alone that has wrought this obscuration; for the fame of Shakespeare still shines in undecaying brightness; and that of Bacon has been steadily advancing and gathering new honours during the whole period which has witnessed the rise and decline of his less vigorous successors.

There are but two possible solutions for phenomena of this sort. Our taste has either degenerated—or its old models have been fairly surpassed; and we have ceased to admire the writers of the last century, only because they are too good for us—or because they are not good enough. Now, we confess we are no believers in the absolute and permanent corruption of national taste; on the contrary, we think that it is, of all faculties, that which is most sure to advance and improve with time and experience; and that, with the exception of those great physical or political disasters which have given a check to civilization itself, there has always been a sensible progress in this particular; and that the general taste of every successive generation is better than that of its predecessors. There are little capricious fluctuations, no doubt, and fits of foolish admiration or fastidiousness, which cannot be so easily accounted for: but the great movements are all progressive: and though the progress consists at one time in withholding toleration from gross faults, and at another in giving their high prerogative to great beauties, this alternation has no tendency to obstruct the general advance; but, on the contrary, is the best and the safest course in which it can be conducted.

We are of opinion, then, that the writers who adorned the beginning of the last century have been eclipsed by those of our own time; and that they have no chance of ever regaining the supremacy in which they have thus been supplanted. There is not, however, in our judgment, any thing very stupendous in this triumph of our contemporaries; and the greater wonder with us, is, that it was so long delayed, and left for them to achieve. For the truth is, that the writers of the former age had not a great deal more than their judgment and industry to stand on; and were always much more remarkable for the fewness of their faults than the greatness of their beauties. Their laurels were won much more by good conduct and discipline, than by enterprising boldness or native force;—nor can it be regarded as any very great merit in those who had so little of the inspiration of genius, to have steered clear of the dangers to which that inspiration is liable. Speaking generally of that generation of authors, it may be said that, as poets, they had no force or greatness of fancy—no pathos, and no enthusiasm;—and, as philosophers, no comprehensiveness, depth, or originality. They are sagacious, no doubt, neat, clear, and reasonable; but for the most part cold, timid, and superficial. They never meddle with the great scenes of nature, or the great passions of man; but content themselves with just and sarcastic representations of city life, and of the paltry passions and meaner vices that are bred in that lower element. Their chief care is to avoid being ridiculous in the eyes of the witty, and above all to eschew the ridicule of excessive sensibility or enthusiasm—to be at once witty and rational themselves, with as good a grace as possible; but to give their countenance to no wisdom, no fancy, and no morality, which passes the standards current in good company. Their inspiration, accordingly, is little more than a sprightly sort of good sense; and they have scarcely any invention but what is subservient to the purposes of derision and satire. Little gleams of pleasantry, and sparkles of wit, glitter through their compositions; but no glow of feeling—no blaze of imagination—no flashes of genius, ever irradiate their substance. They never pass beyond "the visible diurnal sphere," or deal in any thing that can either lift us above our vulgar nature, or ennoble its reality. With these accomplishments, they may pass well enough for sensible and polite writers,—but scarcely for men of genius; and it is certainly far more surprising, that persons of this description should have maintained themselves, for near a century, at the head of the literature of a country that had previously produced a Shakespeare, a Spenser, a Bacon, and a Taylor, than that, towards the end of that long period, doubts should have arisen as to the legitimacy of the title by which they laid claim to that high station. Both parts of the phenomenon, however, we dare say, had causes which better expounders might explain to the satisfaction of all the world. We see them but imperfectly, and have room only for an imperfect sketch of what we see.

Our first literature consisted of saintly legends, and romances of chivalry,—though Chaucer gave it a more national and popular character, by his original descriptions of external nature, and the familiarity and gaiety of his social humour. In the time of Elizabeth, it received a copious infusion of classical images and ideas: but it was still intrinsically romantic—serious—and even somewhat lofty and enthusiastic. Authors were then so few in number, that they were looked upon with a sort of veneration, and considered as a kind of inspired persons; at least they were not yet so numerous, as to be obliged to abuse each other, in order to obtain a share of distinction for themselves;—and they neither affected a tone of derision in their writings, nor wrote in fear of derision from others. They were filled with their subjects, and dealt with them fearlessly in their own way; and the stamp of originality, force, and freedom, is consequently upon almost all their productions. In the reign of James I., our literature, with some few exceptions, touching rather the form than the substance of its merits, appears to us to have reached the greatest perfection to which it has yet attained; though it would probably have advanced still farther in the succeeding reign, had not the great national dissensions which then arose, turned the talent and energy of the people into other channels—first, to the assertion of their civil rights, and afterwards to the discussion of their religious interests. The graces of literature suffered of course in those fierce contentions; and a deeper shade of austerity was thrown upon the intellectual character of the nation. Her genius, however, though less captivating and adorned than in the happier days which preceded, was still active, fruitful, and commanding; and the period of the civil wars, besides the mighty minds that guided the public councils, and were absorbed in public cares, produced the giant powers of Taylor, and Hobbes, and Barrow—the muse of Milton—the learning of Coke—and the ingenuity of Cowley.

The Restoration introduced a French court—under circumstances more favourable for the effectual exercise of court influence than ever before existed in England: but this of itself would not have been sufficient to account for the sudden change in our literature which ensued. It was seconded by causes of far more general operation. The Restoration was undoubtedly a popular act;—and, indefensible as the conduct of the army and the civil leaders was on that occasion, there can be no question that the severities of Cromwell, and the extravagancies of the sectaries, had made republican professions hateful, and religious ardour ridiculous, in the eyes of a great proportion of the people. All the eminent writers of the preceding period, however, had inclined to the party that was now overthrown; and their writings had not merely been accommodated to the character of the government under which they were produced, but were deeply imbued with its obnoxious principles, which were those of their respective authors. When the restraints of authority were taken off, therefore, and it became profitable, as well as popular, to discredit the fallen party, it was natural that the leading authors should affect a style of levity and derision, as most opposite to that of their op-

ponents, and best calculated for the purposes they had in view. The nation, too, was now for the first time essentially divided in point of character and principle, and a much greater proportion were capable both of writing in support of their own notions, and of being influenced by what was written. Add to all this, that there were real and serious defects in the style and manner of the former generation; and that the grace, and brevity, and vivacity of that gayer manner which was now introduced from France, were not only good and captivating in themselves, but had then all the charms of novelty and of contrast; and it will not be difficult to understand how it came to supplant that which had been established of old in the country,—and that so suddenly, that the same generation, among whom Milton had been formed to the severe sanctity of wisdom and the noble independence of genius, lavished its loudest applauses on the obscenity and servility of such writers as Rochester and Wycherly.

This change, however, like all sudden changes, was too fierce and violent to be long maintained at the same pitch; and when the wits and profligates of King Charles had sufficiently insulted the seriousness and virtue of their predecessors, there would probably have been a revulsion towards the accustomed taste of the nation, had not the party of the innovators been reinforced by champions of more temperance and judgment. The result seemed at one time suspended on the will of Dryden—in whose individual person the genius of the English and of the French school of literature may be said to have maintained a protracted struggle. But the evil principle prevailed! Carried by the original bent of his genius, and his familiarity with our older models, to the cultivation of our native style, to which he might have imparted more steadiness and correctness—for in force and in sweetness it was already matchless—he was unluckily seduced by the attractions of fashion, and the dazzling of the dear wit and gay rhetoric in which it delighted, to lend his powerful aid to the new corruptions and refinements; and in fact, to prostitute his great gifts to the purposes of party rage or licentious ribaldry.

The sobriety of the succeeding reigns allayed this fever of profanity; but no genius arose sufficiently powerful to break the spell that still withheld us from the use of our own peculiar gifts and faculties. On the contrary, it was the unfortunate ambition of the next generation of authors, to improve and perfect the new style, rather than to return to the old one;—and it cannot be denied that they did improve it. They corrected its gross indecency—increased its precision and correctness—made its pleasantry and sarcasm more polished and elegant—and spread through the whole of its irony, its narration, and its reflection, a tone of clear and condensed good sense, which recommended itself to all who had, and all who had not any relish for higher beauties.

This is the praise of Queen Anne's wits—and to this praise they are justly entitled. This was left for them to do, and they did it well. They were invited to it by the circumstances of their situation, and do not seem to have been possessed of any such bold or vigorous spirit, as either to neglect or to outgo the invitation. Coming into life immediately after the consummation of a bloodless revolution, effected much more by the cool sense, than the angry passions of the nation, they seem to have felt that they were born in an age of reason, rather than of feeling or fancy; and that men's minds, though considerably divided and unsettled upon many points, were in a much better temper to relish judicious argument and cutting satire, than the glow of enthusiastic passion, or the richness of a luxuriant imagination. To those accordingly they made no pretensions; but, writing with infinite good sense, and great grace and vivacity, and, above all, writing for the first time in a tone that was peculiar to the upper ranks of society, and upon subjects that were almost exclusively interesting to them, they naturally figured, at least while the manner was new, as the most accomplished, fashionable, and perfect writers which the world had ever seen; and made the wild, luxuriant, and humble sweetness of our earlier authors appear rude and untutored in the comparison. Men grew ashamed of admiring, and afraid of imitating writers of so little skill and smartness; and the opinion became general, not only that their faults were intolerable, but that even their beauties were puerile and barbarous, and unworthy the serious regard of a polite and distinguishing age.

These, and similar considerations, will go far to account for the celebrity which those authors acquired in their day; but it is not quite so easy to explain how they should have so long retained their ascendant. One cause undoubtedly was, the real excellence of their productions, in the style which they had adopted. It was hopeless to think of surpassing them in that style; and, recommended as it was, by the felicity of their execution, it required some courage to depart from it, and to recur to another, which seemed to have been so lately abandoned for its sake. The age which succeeded, too, was not the age of courage or adventure. There never was, on the whole, a quieter time than the reigns of the two first Georges, and the greater part of that which ensued. There were two little provincial rebellions indeed, and a fair proportion of foreign war; but there was nothing to stir the minds of the people at large, to rouse their passions, or excite their imaginations—nothing like the agitations of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, or of the civil wars in the seventeenth. They went on, accordingly, minding their old business, and reading their old books, with great patience and stupidity: And certainly there never was so remarkable a dearth of original talent—so long an *interregnum* of native genius—as during about sixty years in the middle of the last century. The dramatic art was dead fifty years before—and poetry

seemed verging to a similar extinction. The few sparks that appeared, too, showed that the old fire was burnt out, and that the altar must hereafter be heaped with fuel of another quality. Gray, with the talents, rather of a critic than a poet—with learning, fastidiousness, and scrupulous delicacy of taste, instead of fire, tenderness, or invention—began and ended a small school, which we could scarcely have wished to become permanent, admirable in many respects as some of its productions are—being far too elaborate and artificial, either for grace or for fluency, and fitter to excite the admiration of scholars, than the delight of ordinary men. However, he had the merit of not being in any degree French, and of restoring to our poetry the dignity of seriousness, and the tone at least of force and energy. The Whartons, both as critics and as poets, were of considerable service in discrediting the high pretensions of the former race, and in bringing back to public notice the great stores and treasures of poetry which lay hid in the records of our older literature. Akenside attempted a sort of classical and philosophical rapture, which no elegance of language could easily have rendered popular, but which had merits of no vulgar order for those who could study it. Goldsmith wrote with perfect elegance and beauty, in a style of mellow tenderness and elaborate simplicity. He had the harmony of Pope without his quaintness, and his selectness of diction without his coldness and eternal vivacity. And, last of all, came Cowper, with a style of complete originality,—and, for the first time, made it apparent to readers of all descriptions, that Pope and Addison were no longer to be the models of English poetry.

In philosophy and prose writing in general, the case was nearly parallel. The name of Hume is by far the most considerable which occurs in the period to which we have alluded. But, though his thinking was English, his style is entirely French; and being naturally of a cold fancy, there is nothing of that eloquence or richness about him, which characterizes the writings of Taylor, and Hooker, and Bacon—and continues, with less weight of matter, to please in those of Cowley and Clarendon. Warburton had great powers; and wrote with more force and freedom than the wits to whom he succeeded—but his faculties were perverted by a paltry love of paradox, and rendered useless to mankind by an unlucky choice of subjects, and the arrogance and dogmatism of his temper. Adam Smith was nearly the first who made deeper reasonings and more exact knowledge popular among us; and Junius and Johnson the first who again familiarized us with more glowing and sonorous diction—and made us feel the tameness and poorness of the serious style of Addison and Swift.

This brings us down almost to the present times—in which the revolution in our literature has been accelerated and confirmed by the concurrence of many causes. The agitations of the French revolution, and the discussions as well as the hopes and terrors to which it gave occasion—the genius of Edmund Burke, and some others of his land of genius—the impression of the new literature of Germany, evidently the original of our lake-school of poetry, and many innovations in our drama—the rise or revival of a more evangelical spirit, in the body of the people—and the vast extension of our political and commercial relations, which have not only familiarized all ranks of people with distant countries, and great undertakings, but have brought knowledge and enterprise home, not merely to the imagination, but to the actual experience of almost every individual.—All these, and several other circumstances, have so far improved or excited the character of our nation, as to have created an effectual demand for more profound speculation, and more serious emotion than was dealt in by the writers of the former century, and which, if it has not yet produced a corresponding supply in all branches, has at least had the effect of decrying the commodities that were previously in vogue, as unsuited to the altered condition of the times.

Of those ingenious writers, whose characteristic certainly was not vigour, any more than tenderness or fancy, SWIFT was indisputably the most vigorous—and perhaps the least tender or fanciful. The greater part of his works being occupied with politics and personalities that have long since lost all interest, can now attract but little attention, except as memorials of the manner in which politics and personalities were then conducted. In other parts, however, there is a vein of peculiar humour and strong satire, which will always be agreeable—and a sort of heartiness of abuse and contempt of mankind, which produces a greater sympathy and animation in the reader than the more elaborate sarcasms that have since come into fashion. Altogether his merits appear to be more *unique* and inimitable than those of any of his contemporaries; and as his works are connected in many parts with historical events which it must always be of importance to understand, we conceive that there are none, of which a new and careful edition is so likely to be acceptable to the public, or so worthy to engage the attention of a person qualified for the undertaking. In this respect, the projectors of the present publication must be considered as eminently fortunate—the celebrated person who has here condescended to the functions of an editor, being almost as much distinguished for the skill and learning required for that humbler office, as for the creative genius which has given such unexampled popularity to his original compositions—and uniting to the minute knowledge and patient research of the Malones and Chalmerses, a vigour of judgment and a vivacity of style to which they had no pretensions. In the exercise of these comparatively humble functions, he has acquitted himself, we think, on the present occasion, with great judgment and ability. The edition, upon the whole, is much better than that of Dryden. It is less loaded with long notes and illustrative quota-

tions; while it furnishes all the information that can reasonably be desired, in a simple and compendious form. It contains upwards of a hundred letters, and other original pieces of Swift's never before published—and, among the rest, all that has been preserved of his correspondence with the celebrated Vanessa. Explanatory notes and remarks are supplied with great diligence to all the passages over which time may have thrown any obscurity; and the critical observations that are prefixed to the more considerable productions, are, with a reasonable allowance for an editor's partiality to his author, very candid and ingenious.

The Life is not every where extremely well written, in a literary point of view; but is drawn up, in substance, with great intelligence, liberality, and good feeling. It is quite fair and moderate in politics; and perhaps rather too indulgent and tender towards individuals of all descriptions—more full, at least, of kindness and veneration for genius and social virtue, than of indignation at baseness and profligacy. Altogether, it is not much like the production of a mere man of letters, or a fastidious speculator in sentiment and morality; but exhibits throughout, and in a very pleasing form, the good sense and large toleration of a man of the world—with much of that generous allowance for the

"Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise,"

which genius too often requires, and should therefore always be most forward to show. It is impossible, however, to avoid noticing, that Mr. Scott is by far too favourable to the personal character of his author; whom we think, it would really be injurious to the cause of morality to allow to pass, either as a very dignified or a very amiable person. The truth is, we think, that he was extremely ambitious, arrogant, and selfish; of a morose, vindictive, and haughty temper; and, though capable of a sort of patronizing generosity towards his dependants, and of some attachment towards those who had long known and flattered him, his general demeanour, both in public and private life, appears to have been far from exemplary. Destitute of temper and magnanimity—and, we will add, of principle, in the former; and, in the latter, of tenderness, fidelity, or compassion.

The transformation of a young Whig into an old Tory—the gradual falling off of prudent men from unprofitable virtues, is, perhaps, too common an occurrence, to deserve much notice, or justify much reprobation. But Swift's desertion of his first principles was neither gradual nor early—and was accomplished under such circumstances as really require to be exposed a little, and cannot well be passed over in a fair account of his life and character. He was bred a Whig under Sir William Temple—he took the title publicly in various productions; and, during all the reign of King William, was a strenuous, and indeed an intolerant advocate of Revolution principles and Whig pretensions. His first patrons were Somers, Hortland, and Halifax; and, under that ministry, the members of which he courted in private and defended in public, he received church preferment to the value of near 400*l.* a year (equal at least to 1200*l.* at present), with the promise of still farther favours. He was dissatisfied, however, because his livings were not in England; and having been sent over on the affairs of the Irish clergy in 1710, when he found the Whig ministry in a tottering condition, he temporized for a few months, till he saw that their downfal was inevitable; and then, without even the pretext of any public motive, but on the avowed ground of not having been sufficiently rewarded for his former services, he went over in the most violent and decided manner to the prevailing party; for whose gratification he abused his former friends and benefactors, with a degree of virulence and rancour, to which it would not be too much to apply the term of brutality; and, in the end, when the approaching death of the Queen, and their internal dissensions made his services of more importance to his new friends, openly threatened to desert them also, and retire altogether from the scene, unless they made a suitable provision for him; and having, in this way, extorted the deanery of St. Patrick's, which he always complained of as quite inadequate to his merits, he counselled measures that must have involved the country in a civil war, for the mere chance of keeping his party in power; and, finally, on the Queen's death, retired in a state of despicable despondency and bitterness to his living, where he continued, to the end of his life, to libel liberty and mankind with unrelenting and pitiable rancour—to correspond with convicted traitors to the constitution they had sworn to maintain—and to lament as the worst of calamities, the dissolution of a ministry which had no merit but that of having promised him advancement, and of which several of the leading members immediately indemnified themselves by taking office in the court of the Pretender.

As this part of his conduct is passed over a great deal too slightly by his biographer; and as nothing can be more pernicious than the notion, that the political sins of eminent persons should be forgotten in the estimate of their merits, we must beg leave to verify the comprehensive sketch we have now given, by a few references to the documents that are to be found in the volumes before us. Of his original Whig professions, no proof will probably be required; the fact being notorious, and admitted by all his biographers. Abundant evidence, however, is furnished by his first successful pamphlet in defence of Lord Somers, and the other Whig lords impeached in 1701;—by his own express declaration in another work (vol. iii. p. 240), that "having been long conversant with the Greek and Latin authors, and therefore a lover of liberty, he was naturally inclined to be what they call a Whig in politics;"—by the copy of verses in which he deliberately designates himself "a Whig, and one who wears a gown;"—by his exulting statement to Tisdal, whom he

reproaches with being a Tory, and says—"To cool your insolence a little, know that the Queen, and Court, and House of Lords, and half the Commons almost, are Whigs, and the number daily increases:"—And, among innumerable other proofs, by the memorable verses on Whitehall, in which, alluding to the execution of King Charles in front of that building, he is pleased to say, with more zeal than good prosody,

"That theatre produced an action truly great,
On which eternal acclamations wait," &c.

Such being the principles, by the zealous profession of which he had first obtained distinction and preferment, and been admitted to the friendship of such men as Somers, Addison, and Steele, it only remains to be seen on what occasion, and on what considerations, he afterwards renounced them. It is, of itself, a tolerably decisive fact, that this change took place just when the Whig ministry went out of power, and their adversaries came into full possession of all the patronage and interest of the government. The whole matter, however, is fairly spoken out in various parts of his own writings:—and we do not believe there is anywhere on record a more barefaced avowal of political apostasy, undisguised and unpalliated by the slightest colour or pretence of public or conscientious motives. It is quite a singular fact, we believe, in the history of this sort of conversion, that he nowhere pretends to say that he had become aware of any danger to the country from the continuance of the Whig ministry—nor ever presumes to call in question the patriotism or penetration of Addison and the rest of his former associates, who remained faithful to their first professions. His only apology, in short, for this sudden dereliction of the principles which he had maintained for near forty years—for it was at this ripe age that he got the first glimpse of his youthful folly—is a pretence of ill usage from the party with whom he had held them; a pretence—to say nothing of its inherent baseness—which appears to be utterly without foundation, and of which it is enough to say, that no mention is made, till that same party is overthrown. While they remain in office, they have full credit for the sincerity of their good wishes (see vol. xv. p. 250, &c.):—and it is not till it becomes both safe and profitable to abuse them, that we hear of their ingratitude. Nay, so critically and judiciously timed is this discovery of their unworthiness, that, even after the worthy author's arrival in London in 1710, when the movements had begun which terminated in their ruin, he continues, for some months, to keep on fair terms with them, and does not give way to his well considered resentment, till it is quite apparent that his interest must gain by the indulgence. He says, in the Journal to Stella, a few days after his arrival, "The Whigs would gladly lay hold on me, as a twig, while they are drowning—and their great men are making me their clumsy apologies. But my Lord Treasurer (Godolphin) received me with a great deal of coldness, which has enraged me so, that I am almost vowing revenge." In a few weeks after—the change being by that time complete—he takes his part definitively, and makes his approaches to Harley, in a manner which we should really imagine no *rat* of the present day would have confidence enough to imitate. In mentioning his first interview with that eminent person, he says, "I had prepared him before by another hand, where he was very intimate, and *got myself represented* (which I might justly do) *as one extremely ill used by the last ministry*, after some obligation, because I refused to go certain lengths they would have me." (Vol. xv. p. 350.) About the same period, he gives us farther lights into the conduct of this memorable conversion, in the following passages of the Journal.

"Oct. 7. He (Harley) told me he must bring Mr. St. John and me acquainted; and spoke so many things of personal kindness and esteem, that I am inclined to believe what some friends had told me, that he would do every thing *to bring me over*. He desired me to dine with him on Tuesday; and, after four hours being with him, set me down at St. James's coffee-house in a Hackney-coach.

"I must tell you a great piece of refinement in Harley. He charged me to come and see him often; I told him I was loath to trouble him, in so much business as he had, and desired I might have leave to come at his levee; which he immediately refused, and said, 'That was no place for friends.'

"I believe never was any thing compassed so soon: and purely done by my personal credit with Mr. Harley; who *is so excessively obliging, that I know not what to make of it, unless to shew the rascals of the other party, that they used a man unworthily who had deserved better*. He speaks all the kind things of me in the world.—Oct. 14. I stand with the new people ten times better than ever I did with the old, and forty times more caressed." *Life*, vol. i. p. 126.

"Nov. 8. Why should the Whigs think I came to England to leave them? But who the devil cares what they think? Am I under obligations in the least to any of them all? Rot them, ungrateful dogs. I will make them repent their usage of me, before I leave this place. They say the same thing here *of my leaving the Whigs; but they own they cannot blame me, considering the treatment I have had*," &c. &c.

If he really ever scrupled about going lengths with his Whig friends (which we do believe), he seems to have resolved, that his fortune should not be hurt by any delicacy of this sort in his new connection;—for he took up the cudgels this time with the ferocity of a hireling, and the rancour of a renegade. In taking upon himself the conduct of the paper called "The Examiner," he gave a new character of acrimony and bitterness to the contention in which he mingled—and not only made the most furious and unmeasured attacks upon the body of the party to which it had formerly been his boast that he belonged, but singled out, with a sort of savage discourtesy, a variety of his former friends and benefactors, and made them, by name and description, the objects of the most malignant abuse. Lord Somers, Godolphin, Steele, and many others with whom he had formerly lived in intimacy, and from whom he had received obligations, were successively attacked in public with the most rancorous personalities, and often with the falsest insinuations: In short,

as he has himself emphatically expressed it in the Journal, he "libelled them all round." While he was thus abusing men he could not have ceased to esteem, it is quite natural, and in course, to find him professing the greatest affection for those he hated and despised. A thorough partisan is a thorough despiser of sincerity; and no man seems to have got over that weakness more completely than the reverend person before us. In every page of the Journal to Stella, we find a triumphant statement of things he was writing or saying to the people about him, in direct contradiction to his real sentiments. We may quote a line or two from the first passage that presents itself. "I desired my Lord Radnor's brother to let my lord know I would call on him at six, which I did; and was arguing with him three hours to bring him over to us; and I spoke so closely, that I believe he will be tractable. But he is a scoundrel; *and though I said I only talked from my love to him, I told a lie; for I did not care if he were hanged: but every one gained over is of consequence.*"—Vol. iii. p. 2. We think there are not many even of those who have served a regular apprenticeship to corruption and jobbing, who could go through their base task wi h more coolness and hardihood than this pious neophyte.

These few references are, of themselves, sufficient to show the spirit and the true motives of this dereliction of his first principles; and seem entirely to exclude the only apology which the partiality of his biographer has been able to suggest, viz. that though, from first to last, a Whig in politics, he was all along still more zealously a High-Churchman as to religion; and left the Whigs merely because the Tories seemed more favourable to ecclesiastical pretensions. It is obvious, however, that this is quite inadmissible. The Whigs were as notoriously connected with the Low-Church party when he joined and defended them, as when he deserted and reviled them;—nor is this anywhere made the specific ground of his revilings. It would not have been very easy, indeed, to have asserted such a principle as the motive of his libels on the Earl of Nottingham, who, though a Whig, was a zealous High-Churchman, or his eulogies on Bolingbroke, who was pretty well known to be no churchman at all. It is plain, indeed, that Swift's High-Church principles were all along but a part of his selfishness and ambition; and meant nothing else than a desire to raise the consequence of the order to which he happened to belong. If he had been a layman, we have no doubt he would have treated the pretensions of the priesthood, as he treated the persons of all priests who were opposed to him, with the most bitter and irreverent disdain. Accordingly, he is so far from ever recommending Whig principles of government to his High-Church friends, or from confining his abuse of the Whigs to their tenets in matters ecclesiastical, that he goes the whole length of proscribing the party, and proposing, with the desperation of a true apostate, that the Monarch should be made substantially absolute by the assistance of a military force, in order to make it impossible that their principles should ever again acquire a preponderance in the country. It is impossible, we conceive, to give any other meaning to the advice contained in his "Free Thoughts on the State of Affairs," which he wrote just before the Queen's death, and which Bolingbroke himself thought too strong for publication, even at that critical period. His leading injunction there, is to adopt a system of the most rigorous exclusion of all Whigs from every kind of employment; and that, as they cannot be too much or too soon disabled, they ought to be proceeded against with as strong measures as can possibly consist with the lenity of our government; so that in no time to come it should be in the power of the Crown, even if it wished it, to choose an ill majority in the House of Commons. This great work, he adds very explicitly, could only be well carried on by an entire new-modelling of *the army:* and especially of the Royal Guards,—which, as they then stood, he chooses to allege were fitter to guard a prince to the bar of a high court of justice, than to secure him on the throne. (Vol. v. p. 404.) This, even Mr. Scott is so little able to reconcile with the alleged Whig principles of his author, that he is forced to observe upon it, that it is "daring, uncompromising counsel; better suited to the genius of the man who gave it, than to that of the British nation, and most likely, if followed, to have led to a civil war." After this admission, it really is not very easy to understand by what singular stretch of charity the learned editor conceives he may consistently hold, that Swift was always a good Revolution Whig as to politics, and only sided with the Tories—reluctantly, we must suppose, and with great tenderness to his political opponents—out of his overpowering zeal for the Church.

While he thus stooped to the dirtiest and most dishonourable part of a partisan's drudgery, it was not to be expected that he should decline any of the mean arts by which a Court party may be maintained. Accordingly, we find him regular in his attendance upon Mrs. Masham, the Queen's favourite; and, after reading the contemptuous notices that occur of her in some of his Whig letters, as "one of the Queen's dressers, who, by great intrigue and flattery, had gained an ascendant over her," it is very edifying to find him writing periodical accounts of the progress of her pregnancy, and "praying God to preserve her life, which is of great importance to this nation," &c. &c.

A connection thus begun upon an avowed dissatisfaction with the reward of former services, cannot, with consistency, be supposed to have had any thing but self-interest as its foundation: and though Swift's love of power, and especially of the power of wounding, was probably gratified by his exertions in behalf of the triumphant party, no room is left for doubting that these exertions were substantially prompted by a desire to better

his own fortune, and that his opinion of the merits of the party depended entirely upon their power and apparent inclination to perform this first of all duties. The thing is spoken out continually in the confidential Journal to Stella; and though he was very angry with Harley for offering him a bank note for fifty pounds, and refused to be his chaplain, this was very plainly because he considered these as no sufficient pay for his services—by no means because he wished to serve without pay. Very soon after his profession of Toryism, he writes to Stella—"This is the last sally I shall ever make; but *I hope it will turn to some account*. I have done more for these, and I think they are more honest than the last." And a little after—"My new friends are very kind; and I have promises enough. To return without some mark of distinction, would look extremely little; and I *would likewise gladly be somewhat richer than I am*." At last, he seems to have fairly asked for the see of Hereford (Vol. xvi. p. 45.); and when this is refused, he says, "I dined with Lord Treasurer, who chid me for being absent three days. Mighty kind with a p—! Less of civility, and more of interest!" At last, when the state of the Queen's health made the duration of the ministry extremely precarious, and the support of their friends more essential, he speaks out like a true Swiss, and tells them that he will run away and leave them, if they do not instantly make a provision for him. In the Journal to Stella, he writes, that having seen the warrants for three deaneries, and none of them for him, he had gone to the Lord Treasurer, and "told him I had nothing to do but to go back to Ireland immediately; for I could not, with any reputation, stay longer here, *unless I had something honourable immediately given to me*. He afterwards told me he had stopped the warrants, and hoped something might be compassed for me," &c. And in the page following we find, that all his love for his dear friend the Lord Treasurer, would not induce him ever to see him again, if he was disappointed in this object of ambition. "The warrants for the deaneries are still stopped, for fear I should be gone. Do you think any thing will be done? In the mean time, I prepare for my journey, and see no great people;—*nor will I see Lord Treasurer any more*, if I go." (Vol. iii. p. 207.) It is under this threat that he extorts the Deanery of St. Patrick's,—which he accepts with much grumbling and discontent, and does not enter into possession till all hope of better preferment seems for the time at an end. In this extremity he seems resolved, however, to make the most of it; and finding that the expenses of his induction and the usual payments to government on the occasion come to a considerable sum, he boldly resolves to ask a thousand pounds from the ministers, on the score of his past services, in order to make himself easy. This he announces to Stella soon after the appointment. "I hope in time they will be persuaded *to give me some money* to clear off these debts. They expect I shall pass the next winter here; and *then I will drive them to give me a sum of money*." And a little after—"I shall be sadly cramped, unless the Queen will give me a thousand pounds. I am sure she owes me a great deal more. Lord Treasurer rallies me upon it, and, I am sure, intends it—but *quando?*" And again—"Lord Treasurer uses me barbarously. He laughs when I mention a thousand pounds—though a thousand pounds is a very serious thing." It appears, however, that this modest request never was complied with; for, though Bolingbroke got the Queen's warrant for it, to secure Swift's attachment after he had turned out Harley, yet her majesty's immediate death rendered the gift unavailing.

If any thing were wanting to show that his change of party and his attachment to that which was now uppermost, was wholly founded on personal, and in no degree on public considerations, it would be supplied by the innumerable traits of personal vanity, and the unrestrained expressions of eulogy or abuse, according as that vanity was gratified or thwarted, that are scattered over the whole journal and correspondence,—and which are utterly irreconcileable with the conduct of a man who was acting on any principle of dignity or fairness. With all his talent and all his pride, indeed, it appears that Swift exhibited, during this period of favour, as much of the ridiculous airs of a *parvenu*—of a low-bred underling brought suddenly into contact with wealth and splendour, as any of the base understrappers that ever made party disgusting. The studied rudeness and ostentatious arrogance with which he withheld the usual tribute of respect that all well-bred persons pay to rank and office, may be reckoned among the signs of this. But for a fuller picture, we would refer to the Diary of Bishop Kennet, who thus describes the demeanour of this politic partisan in the year 1713.

"Dr. Swift came into the coffee-house, and had a bow from every body but me. When I came to the antichamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as a master of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother the Duke of Ormond, to get a chaplain's place established in the garrison of Hull for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in jail, and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my Lord Treasurer, that, according to his petition, he should obtain a salary of 200*l. per annum* as minister of the English church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq., going in with the red bag to the Queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my Lord Treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad, and took out his pocket-book, and wrote down several things, as *memoranda*, to do for him. He turned to the fire, and took out his gold watch, and telling the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said 'he was too fast.'—'How can I help it,' says the doctor, 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman, that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which 'he must have them all subscribe;'—'for,' says he, 'the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thousand guineas for him.' Lord Treasurer, after leaving the Queen,

came through the room, beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him: both went off *just before prayers*."—*Life*, vol. i. p. 139, 140.

We are very unwilling, in any case, to ascribe to unworthy motives, what may be sufficiently accounted for upon better considerations; but we really have not charity enough to impute Swift's zealous efforts to prevent the rupture between Harley and Bolingbroke, or his continued friendship with both after that rupture took place, to his personal and disinterested affection for those two individuals. In the first place, he had a most manifest interest to prevent their disunion, as that which plainly tended to the entire dissolution of the ministry, and the ruin of the party on which he depended; and, as to his remaining the friend of both after they had become the most rancorous enemies of each other, it must be remembered that they were still respectively the two most eminent individuals with whom he had been connected; and that, if ever that party should be restored to power, from which alone he could now look for preferment, he who stood well with *both* these statesmen would have a double chance of success. Considering, indeed, the facility with which he seems to have cast off friendships far more intimate than the inequality of their condition renders it possible that those of Oxford or Bolingbroke could be with him, whenever party interest interfered with them;—considering the disrespect with which he spoke of Sir William Temple's memory, after he had abjured his principles;—the coarseness with which he calls Lord Somers "a false deceitful rascal," after having designated him as the modern Aristides, for his blameless integrity;—and the unfeeling rancour with which he exposes the personal failings and pecuniary embarrassments of Steele, with whom he had been long so closely united;—it would seem to require something more than the mere personal attachment of a needy pamphleteer to two rival peers, to account for his expressions of affection for both, after one had supplanted the other. The natural solution, indeed, seems to lie sufficiently open. After the perfidy he had shown to the Whig party, and the virulence with which he had revenged his own apostasy, there was no possibility of his being again received by *them*. His only chance, therefore, was in the restoration of the Tories, and his only policy to keep well with both their great leaders.

Mr. Scott, indeed, chooses to represent him as actuated by a romantic attachment to Lord Oxford, and pronounces an eloquent encomium on his devoted generosity in applying for leave of absence, upon that nobleman's disgrace, in order to be able to visit him in his retirement. Though he talks of such a visit, however, it is certain that he never did pay it; and that he was all the time engaged in the most friendly correspondence with Bolingbroke, from whom the very day after he had kicked out his dear friend with the most undisguised anger and contempt, he condescended to receive an order for the thousand pounds he had so long solicited from his predecessor in vain. The following, too, are the terms in which Bolingbroke, at that very time, thought there was no impropriety, and could be no offence, in writing of Oxford, in a private confidential letter to this his dear devoted friend. "Your state of late passages is right enough. I reflect upon them with indignation; and shall never forgive myself for having trusted so long to so much real pride and awkward humility;—to an air of such familiar friendship, and a heart so void of all tenderness;—to such a temper of engrossing business and power, and so perfect an incapacity to manage one, with such a tyrannical disposition to abuse the other," &c. &c. (Vol. xvi. p. 219.) If Swift's feelings for Oxford had borne any resemblance to those which Mr. Scott has imputed to him, it is not conceivable that he should have continued upon a footing of the greatest cordiality with the man who, after supplanting him, could speak in those terms of his fallen rival. Yet Swift's friendship, as they called it, with Bolingbroke, continued as long as that with Oxford; and we find him not only giving him his advice how to act in the government which had now fallen entirely into his hands, but kindly offering, "if his own services may be of any use, to attend him by the beginning of winter." (Id. p. 215.) Those who know of what stuff political friendships are generally made, indeed, will not require even this evidence to prove the hollowness of those in which Swift was now connected. The following passage, in a letter from Lewis, the most intimate and confidential of all his coadjutors, dated only a week or two before Oxford's disgrace, gives a delicious picture, we think, of the whole of those persons for whom the learned Dean was thus professing the most disinterested attachment, and receiving, no doubt, in return, professions not less animated and sincere. It is addressed to Swift in July, 1714.

"I meet with no man or woman, who pretend upon any probable grounds to judge who will carry the great point. Our female friend (Mrs. Masham) told the dragon (Lord Oxford) in her own house, last Thursday morning, these words: 'You never did the Queen any service, nor are you capable of doing her any.' He made no reply, *but supped with her and Mercurialis* (Bolingbroke) *that night at her own house.*—His *revenge is not the less meditated for that.* He tells the words clearly and distinctly to all mankind. *Those who range under his banner, call her ten thousand bitches and kitchen-wenches. Those who hate him do the same.* And from my heart, I grieve that she should give such a loose to her passion; for she is susceptible of true friendship, and has many social and domestic virtues. The great attorney (Lord Chancellor Harcourt) who made you the sham offer of the Yorkshire living, had a long conference with the dragon on Thursday, *kissed him at parting*, and *cursed him at night!*"—vol. xvi. p. 173, 174.

The death of Queen Anne, however, which happened on the 1st of August thereafter, speedily composed all those dissensions, and confounded the victors and the vanquished in one common proscription. Among the most miserable and downcast of all the mourners on that occasion, we confess we were somewhat surprised to find our reverend author.

He who, but a few months before, was willing to have hazarded all the horrors of a civil war, for the chance of keeping his party in office, sunk instantly into pitiable and unmanly despondency upon the final disgrace of that party. We are unwilling to believe, and we do not in fact believe, that Swift was privy to the designs of Bolingbroke, Ormond, and Mar, to bring in the Pretender on the Queen's demise, and are even disposed to hold it doubtful whether Oxford concurred in those measures; but we are sure that no man of common firmness could have felt more sorrow and despair, if the country had been conquered by a lawless invader, than this friend of the Act of Settlement did upon the quiet and regular transmission of the sceptre to the appointed heir; and the discomfiture of those ministers who are proved to have traitorously conspired to accomplish a counter revolution, and restore a dynasty which he always affected to consider as justly rejected. How all this sorrow is to be reconciled to the character of a good Revolution Whig, we leave it to the learned editor, who has invested him with that character, to discover. To us it merely affords new evidence of the selfishness and ambition of the individual, and of that utter and almost avowed disregard of the public, which constituted his political character. Of the sorrow and despondency itself, we need produce no proofs,—for they are to be found in every page of his subsequent writings. His whole life, indeed, after this event, was one long fit of spleen and lamentation: and, to the very end of his days, he never ceases bewailing the irreparable and grievous calamity which the world had suffered in the death of that most imbecile princess. He speaks of it, in short, throughout, as a pious divine might be supposed to speak of the fall of primeval man from the state of innocence. The sun seems darkened for ever in his eyes, and mankind degenerated beyond the toleration of one who was cursed with the remembrance of their former dignity! And all this for what?—because the government was, with the full assent of the nation, restored to the hands of those whose talents and integrity he had once been proud to celebrate—or rather, because it was taken from those who would have attempted, at the evident risk of a civil war, to defeat that solemn settlement of which *he* had always approved, and in virtue of which alone the late Sovereign had succeeded;—because the liberties of the nation were again to be secured in peace, under the same councils which had carried its glories so high in war—and the true friends of the Revolution of 1688 to succeed to that patronage which had previously been exercised by its virtual enemies! Such were the public calamities which he had to lament as a patriot;—and the violence done to his political attachments seems to have been of the same character. His two friends were Bolingbroke and Oxford: and both these had been abusing each other, and endeavouring to supplant each other, with all their might, for a long period of time;—and, at last, one of them did this good office for the other, in the most insulting and malignant manner he could devise: and yet the worthy Dean had charity enough to love them both just as dearly as ever. He was always a zealous advocate, too, for the Act of Settlement; and has in twenty places expressed his abomination of all who could allow themselves to think of the guilt of calling in the Pretender. If, therefore, he could love and honour and flatter Bolingbroke, who not only turned out his beloved Oxford, but actually went over to the Pretender, it is not easy to see why he should have been so implacable towards those older friends of his, who only turned out Bolingbroke in order to prevent the Pretender from being brought in. On public grounds, in short, there is nothing to be said for him;—nor can his conduct or feelings ever receive any explanation upon such principles. But every thing becomes plain and consistent when we look to another quarter—when we consider, that by the extinction of the Tory party, his hopes of preferment were also extinguished; and that he was no longer to enjoy the dearer delight of bustling in the front of a triumphant party—of inhaling the incense of adulation from its servile dependants—and of insulting with impunity the principles and the benefactors he had himself deserted.

That this was the true key to his feelings, on this and on every other occasion, may be concluded indeed with safety, not only from his former, but from his after life. His Irish politics may all be referred to one principle—a desire to insult and embarrass the government by which he was neglected, and with which he despaired of being reconciled:—A single fact is decisive upon this point. While his friends were in power, we hear nothing of the grievances of Ireland; and to the last we hear nothing of its radical grievance, the oppression of its Catholic population. His object was, not to do good to Ireland, but to vex and annoy the English ministry. To do this however with effect, it was necessary that he should speak to the interests and the feelings of some party who possessed a certain degree of power and influence. This unfortunately was not the case in that day with the Catholics; and though this gave them only a stronger title to the services of a truly brave or generous advocate, it was sufficient to silence Swift. They are not so much as named above two or three times in his writings—and then only with scorn and reprobation. In the topics which he does take up, it is no doubt true, that he frequently inveighs against real oppression and acts of indisputable impolicy; yet it is no want of charity to say, that it is quite manifest that these were not his reasons for bringing them forward, and that he had just as little scruple to make an outcry, where no public interest was concerned, as where it was apparent. It was sufficient for him, that the subject was likely to excite popular prejudice and clamour,—or that he had some personal pique or animosity to gratify. The Drapier's letters are a sufficient proof of the influence of the former

principle; and the Legion Club, and the numberless brutalities against Tighe and Bettesworth, of the latter. Every body is now satisfied of the perfect harmlessness, and indeed of the great utility of Wood's scheme for a new copper coinage; and the only pretexts for the other scurrilities to which we have alluded were, that the Parliament had shown a disposition, to interfere for the alleviation, in some inconsiderable particulars, of the intolerable oppression of the tithe system, —to the detriment, as Swift imagined, of the order to which he himself belonged; and that Mr. Tighe had obtained for a friend of his own, a living which Swift had wished to secure for one of his dependants.

His main object in all this, we make no doubt, was personal pique and vengeance;—yet it is probable, that there was occasionally, or throughout, an expectation of being again brought into the paths of power and preferment, by the notoriety which these publications enabled him to maintain, and by the motives which they held out to each successive ministry, to secure so efficient a pen in their favour. That he was willing to have made his peace with Walpole, even during the reign of George I., is admitted by Mr. Scott,—though he discredits the details which Lord Chesterfield and others have given, apparently from very direct authority, of the humiliating terms upon which he was willing to accede to the alliance;—and it is certain, that he paid his court most assiduously to the successor of that Prince, both while he was Prince of Wales, and after his accession to the throne. The manner in which he paid his court, too, was truly debasing, and especially unworthy of a High-Churchman and a public satirist. It was chiefly by flatteries and assiduity to his mistress, Mrs. Howard! with whom he maintained a close correspondence, and upon whom he always professed mainly to rely for advancement. When George I. died, Swift was among the first to kiss the hands of the new sovereign, and indulged anew in the golden dreams of preferment. Walpole's recal to power, however, soon overcast those visions; and he then wrote to the mistress, humbly and earnestly entreating her, to tell him sincerely what were his chances of success. She flattered him for a while with hopes; but at last he discovered that the prejudice against him was too strong to be overcome; and ran back in terrible humour to Ireland, where he railed ever after with his usual vehemence against the King, the Queen, and the concubine. The truth, it seems, was, that the latter was disposed to favour him; but that her influence with the King was subordinate to that of the Queen, who made it a principle to thwart all applications which were made through that channel.

Such, we think, is a faithful sketch of the political career of this celebrated person;—and if it be correct in the main, or even in any material particulars, we humbly conceive that a more unprincipled and base course of proceeding never was held up to the scorn and ridicule of mankind. To the errors and even the inconsistencies of honest minds, we hope we shall always be sufficiently indulgent; and especially to such errors in practical life as are incident to literary and ingenious men. For Swift, however, there is no such apology. His profession, through life, was much more that of a politician than of a clergyman or an author. He was not led away in any degree by heated fancy, or partial affection—by deluding visions of impossible improvements, or excessive indignation at incurable vices. He followed, from first to last, the eager, but steady impulse of personal ambition and personal animosity; and in the dirty and devious career into which they impelled him, he never spared the character or the feelings of a single individual who appeared to stand in his way. In no respect, therefore, can he have any claim to lenity;—and now, when his faults are of importance only as they may serve the purpose of warning or misleading to others, we consider it as our indispensable duty to point them out in their true colours; and to show that, even when united to talents as distinguished as his, political profligacy and political rancour must lead to universal distrust and avoidance during the life of the individual, and to contempt and infamy thereafter.

Of Swift's personal character, his ingenious biographer has given almost as partial a representation, as of his political conduct;—a great part of it indeed has been anticipated, in tracing the principles of that conduct;—the same arrogance and disdain of mankind, leading to profligate ambition and scurrility in public life, and to domineering and selfish habits in private. His character seems to have been radically overbearing and tyrannical;—for though, like other tyrants, he could stoop low enough where his interests required it, it was his delight to exact an implicit compliance with his humours and fancies, and to impose upon all around him the task of observing and accommodating themselves to his habits, without the slightest regard to their convenience or comfort. Wherever he came, the ordinary forms of society were to give way to his pleasure; and every thing, even to the domestic arrangements of a family, to be suspended for his caprice.—If he was to be introduced to a person of rank, he insisted that the first advances and the first visit should be made to him. If he went to see a friend in the country, he would order an old tree to be cut down, if it obstructed the view from his window—and was never at his ease unless he was allowed to give nicknames to the lady of the house, and make lampoons upon her acquaintance. On going for the first time into any family, he frequently prescribed beforehand the hours for their meals, sleep, and exercise: and insisted rigorously upon the literal fulfilment of the capitulation. From his intimates he uniformly exacted the most implicit submission to all his whims and absurdities; and carried his prerogative so far, that he sometimes used to chase the Grattans and other accommodating friends, through the apartments of the Deanery, and up and down stairs, driving them like

horses, with a large whip, till he thought he had enough of exercise. All his jests have the same character of insolence and coarseness. When he first came to his curate's house, he announced himself as "his master;"—took possession of the fireside, and ordered his wife to take charge of his shirts and stockings. When a young clergyman was introduced to him, he offered him the dregs of a bottle of wine, and said, he always kept a poor parson about him to drink up his dregs. Even in hiring servants, he always chose to insult them, by inquiring into their qualifications for some filthy and degrading office. And though it may be true, that his after conduct was not exactly of a piece with those preliminaries, it is obvious, that as no man of proper feelings could submit to such impertinence, so no man could have a right to indulge in it. Even considered merely as a manner assumed to try the character of those with whom he lived, it was a test which no one but a tyrant could imagine himself entitled to apply;—and Swift's practical conclusion from it was just the reverse of what might be expected. He attached himself to those only who were mean enough to bear this usage, and broke with all who resented it. While he had something to gain or to hope from the world, he seems to have been occasionally less imperious; but, after he retired to Ireland, he gave way without restraint to the native arrogance of his character; and, accordingly, confined himself almost entirely to the society of a few easy-tempered persons, who had no talents or pretensions to come in competition with his; and who, for the honour of his acquaintance, were willing to submit to the dominion he usurped.

A singular contrast to the rudeness and arrogance of this behaviour to his friends and dependants, is afforded by the instances of extravagant adulation and base humility, which occur in his addresses to those upon whom his fortune depended. After he gets into the society of Bolingbroke and Oxford, and up to the age of forty, these are composed in something of a better taste; but the true models are to be found in his addresses to Sir William Temple, the first and most honoured of his patrons, upon whose sickness and recovery he has indited a heroic epistle and a Pindaric ode, more fulsome and extravagant than any thing that had then proceeded from the pen even of a poet-laureate; and to whom, after he had left his family in bad humour, he sends a miserable epistle, entreating a certificate of character, in terms which are scarcely consistent with the consciousness of deserving it; and are, at all events, infinitely inconsistent with the proud and peremptory tone which he assumed to those who would bear with it. A few lines may be worth quoting. He was then full twenty-seven years of age, and a candidate for ordination. After explaining this, he adds—

"I entreat that your honour will consider this, and will please to send me some certificate of my behaviour during almost three years in your family; wherein I shall stand in need of all your goodness to excuse my many weaknesses and oversights, much more to say any thing to my advantage. The particulars expected of me are what relate to morals and learning, and the reasons of quitting your honour's family, that is, whether the last was occasioned by any ill actions. They are all left entirely to your honour's *mercy*, though in the first I think I cannot reproach myself any farther than for *infirmities*.

"This is all I dare beg at present from your honour, under circumstances of life not worth your regard. What is left me to wish (next to the health and prosperity of your honour and family), is, that Heaven would one day allow me the opportunity of leaving my acknowledgments at your feet for so many favours I have received; which, whatever effect they have had upon my fortune, shall never fail to have the greatest upon my mind, in approving myself, upon all occasions, your honour's most obedient and most dutiful servant."—Vol. xv. pp. 230, 231.

By far the most characteristic, and at the same time most discreditable and most interesting part of Swift's history, however, is that which relates to his connection with the three unfortunate women, whose happiness he ruined, and whose reputation he did what was in him to destroy. We say, the three women —for though *Varina* was cast off before he had fame or practice enough in composition to celebrate her in song, like *Stella* or *Vanessa*, her injuries seem to have been nearly as great, and altogether as unpardonable as those of the other two. Soon after leaving college, he appears to have formed, or at best professed, an attachment to a Miss Jane Waryng, the sister of a fellow-student, to whom his assiduities seemed to have rendered him acceptable, and with whom he corresponded for a series of years, under the preposterous name of Varina. There appear to be but two letters of this correspondence preserved, both written by Swift, one in the height of his passion, and the other in its decline—and both extremely characteristic and curious. The first is dated in 1696, and is chiefly remarkable for its extreme badness and stupidity; though it is full enough of love and lamentation. The lady, it seems, had long before confessed a mutual flame; but prudential considerations made her averse to an immediate union,—upon which the lover raves and complains in the following deplorable sentences,—written, it will be observed, when he was on the borders of thirty, and proving, along with his early poems, how very late he came to the use of his faculties.

"Madam—Impatience is the most inseparable quality of a lover, and indeed of every person who is in pursuit of a design whereon he conceives his greatest happiness or misery to depend. It is the same thing in war, in courts, and in common business. Every one who hunts after pleasure, or fame, or fortune, is still restless and uneasy till he has hunted down his game; and all this is not only very natural, but something reasonable too: for a violent desire is little better than a distemper, and therefore men are not to blame in looking after a cure. *I find myself hugely infected with this malady*, and am easily vain enough to believe it has some very good reasons to excuse it. For indeed, in my case, there are some circumstances which will admit pardon for more than ordinary disquiets. That dearest object upon which all my prospect of happiness entirely depends, is in perpetual danger to be removed for ever from my

sight. Varina's life is daily wasting; and though one just and honourable action would furnish health to her, and unspeakable happiness to us both, yet some power that repines at human felicity has that influence to hold her continually doating upon her cruelty, and me on the cause of it.

"Would to Heaven you were but a while sensible of the thoughts into which my present distractions plunge me; *they hale me a thousand ways, and I not able to bear them. It is so, by Heaven:* The love of Varina is of more tragical consequence than her cruelty. Would to God you had treated and scorned me from the beginning. It was your pity opened the first way to my misfortune; and now your love is finishing my ruin: and is it so then? In one fortnight I must take eternal farewell of Varina: and (I wonder) will she weep at parting, a little to justify her poor pretences of some affection to me?

"Surely, Varina, you have but a very mean opinion of the joys that accompany a true, honourable, unlimited love; yet either nature *and our ancestors* have highly deceived us, or else all other sublunary things are dross in comparison. Is it possible you can be yet insensible to the prospect of a rapture and delight so innocent and so exalted? *By Heaven, Varina, you are more experienced and have less virgin innocence than I.* Would not your conduct make one think you were hugely skilled in all the little politic methods of intrigue? Love, with the gall of too much discretion, is a thousand times worse than with none at all. It is a peculiar part of nature which art debauches, but cannot improve.

"Farewell, madam; and may love make you a while forget your temper to do me justice. Only remember, *that if you still refuse to be mine, you will quickly lose, for ever lose, him that has resolved to die as he has lived, all yours,* JON. SWIFT."—Vol. xv. pp. 232—237.

Notwithstanding these tragic denunciations, he neither died—nor married—nor broke off the connection, for four years thereafter; in the latter part of which, having been at last presented to two livings in Ireland, worth near 400*l.* a year, the lady seems to have been reduced to remind him of his former impatience, and fairly to ask him, whether his affections had suffered any alteration. His answer to this appeal is contained in the second letter;—and is, we think, one of the most complete patterns of meanness, selfishness, and brutality, we have ever met with. The truth undoubtedly was, that his affections were estranged, and had probably settled by this time on the unfortunate Stella: but instead of either fairly avowing this inconstancy, or honourably fulfilling engagements, from which inconstancy perhaps could not release him, he thinks fit to write, in the most frigid, insolent, and hypocritical terms, undervaluing her fortune and person, and finding fault with her humour;—and yet pretending, that if she would only comply with certain conditions which he specifies, he might still be persuaded to venture himself with her into the perils of matrimony. It will be recollected, that when he urged immediate marriage so passionately in 1696, he had no provision in the world, and must have intended to live on her fortune, which yielded about 100*l.* a year, and that he thought her health as well as happiness would be saved by the match. In 1700, when he had got two livings, he addresses her as follows—

"I desire. therefore, you will let me know if your health be otherwise than it was when you told me the doctors advised you against marriage, as what would certainly hazard your life. Are they or you grown of another opinion in this particular? are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs, with an income of less (perhaps) than 300*l.* a-year? (it must have been near 500*l.*) have you such an inclination to my person and humour, as to comply with my desires and way of living, and endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? can you bend your love and esteem and indifference to others the same way as I do mine? shall I have so much power in your heart, or you so much government of your passions, as to grow in good humour upon my approach, though provoked by a ———? have you so much good nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any rugged humour occasioned by the cross accidents of life? shall the place wherever your husband is thrown be more welcome than courts or cities without him? *In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men, who, like me, are deep read in the world; and to a person thus made, I should be proud in giving all due returns towards making her happy.*"—Vol. xv. pp. 247, 248.

He then tells her, that if every thing else were suitable, he should not care whether her person were beautiful, or her fortune large.

"Cleanliness in the first. and competency in the other, is all I look for. I desire, indeed, a plentiful revenue, but would rather it should be of my own; though I should bear from a wife to be reproached for the greatest."—Vol. xv. pp. 248.

To complete the picture of his indifference, or rather his ill-disguised disinclination, he adds—

"The dismal account you say I have given you of my livings I can assure you to be a true one; and, since it is a dismal one even in your own opinion, *you can best draw consequences from it.* The place where Dr. Bolton lived is upon a living which he keeps with the deanery; but the place of residence for that they have given me is within a mile of a town called Trim, twenty miles from hence; and there is no other way but to hire a house at Trim, or build one on the spot: the *first is hardly to be done, and the other I am too poor to perform at present.*"—Vol. xv. p. 246.

The lady, as was to be expected, broke off all correspondence after this letter—and so ended Swift's first matrimonial engagement, and first eternal passion!—What became of the unhappy person, whom he thus heartlessly abandoned, with impaired health, and mortified affections, after a seven-years' courtship, is nowhere explained. The fate of his next victim is at least more notorious.

Esther Johnson, better known to the reader of Swift's works by the name of *Stella*, was the child of a London merchant, who died in her infancy; when she went with her mother, who was a friend of Sir W. Temple's sister, to reside at Moorpark, where Swift was then domesticated. Some part of the charge of her education devolved upon him;—and though he was twenty years her senior, the interest with which he regarded her, appears to have ripened into something as much like affection as could find a place in his selfish bosom. Soon after Sir William's death, he got his Irish livings, besides a considerable legacy;—and as she had a small independence of her own, it is obvious that there was nothing to prevent their honourable and immediate union. Some cold-blooded vanity or ambition, however, or some politic anticipation of his own possible inconstancy, deterred him from this onward and open course; and led him to an arrangement which was dishonourable and absurd in the beginning, and in the end productive of the most accumulated misery. He prevailed upon her to remove her residence from the bosom of her own family in England, to his immediate neighbourhood in Ireland, where she took lodgings with an elderly companion, of the name of Mrs. Dingley—avowedly for the sake of his society and protection, and on a footing of intimacy so very strange and unprecedented, that whenever he left his parsonage house for England or Dublin, these ladies immediately took possession, and occupied it till he came back.—A situation so extraordinary and undefined, was liable of course to a thousand misconstructions; and must have been felt as degrading by any woman of spirit and delicacy: and accordingly, though the master of this Platonic seraglio seems to have used all manner of paltry and insulting practices, to protect a reputation which he had no right to bring into question,—by never seeing her except in the presence of Mrs. Dingley, and never sleeping under the same roof with her,—it is certain both that the connection was regarded as indecorous by persons of her own sex, and that she herself felt it to be humiliating and improper. Accordingly, within two years after her settlement in Ireland, it appears that she encouraged the addresses of a clergyman of the name of Tisdall, between whom and Swift there was a considerable intimacy; and that she would have married him, and thus sacrificed her earliest attachment to her freedom and her honour, had she not been prevented by the private dissuasions of that false friend, who did not choose to give up his own claims to her, although he had not the heart or the honour to make her lawfully his own. She was then a blooming beauty, of little more than twenty, with fine black hair, delicate features, and a playful and affectionate character. It seems doubtful to us, whether she originally felt for Swift any thing that could properly be called love—and her willingness to marry another in the first days of their connection, seems almost decisive on the subject: but the ascendancy he had acquired over her mind, and her long habit of submitting her own judgment and inclinations to his, gave him at least an equal power over her, and moulded her pliant affections into too deep and exclusive a devotion. Even before his appointment to the Deanery of St. Patrick's, it is utterly impossible to devise any apology for his not marrying her, or allowing her to marry another; the only one that he ever appears to have stated himself, viz. the want of a sufficient fortune to sustain the expenses of matrimony, being palpably absurd in the mouth of a man born to nothing, and already more wealthy than nine-tenths of his order: but, after he obtained that additional preferment, and was thus ranked among the well beneficed dignitaries of the establishment, it was plainly an insult upon common sense to pretend that it was the want of money that prevented him from fulfilling his engagements. Stella was then twenty-six, and he near forty-five; and both had hitherto lived very far within an income that was now more than doubled. That she now expected to be made his wife, appears from the pains he takes in the Journal indirectly to destroy that expectation; and though the awe in which he habitually kept her, probably prevented her either from complaining, or inquiring into the cause, it is now certain that a new attachment, as heartless, as unprincipled, and as fatal in its consequences as either of the others, was at the bottom of this cruel and unpardonable proceeding.

During his residence in London, from 1710 to 1712, he had leisure, in the intervals of his political labours, to form the acquaintance of Miss Esther Vanhomrigh, whose unfortunate love he has recorded, with no great delicacy, under the name of Vanessa. This young lady, then only in her twentieth year, joined to all the attractions of youth, fashion, and elegance, the still more dangerous gifts of a lively imagination, a confiding temper, and a capacity of strong and permanent affection—Swift, regardless of the ties which bound him to Stella, allowed himself to be engaged by those qualities; and, without explaining the nature of those ties to his new idol, strove by his assiduities to obtain a return of affection—while he studiously concealed from the unhappy Stella the wrong he was conscious of doing her. We willingly borrow the words of his partial biographer, to tell the rest of a story, which, we are afraid, we should tell with little temper ourselves.

"While Vanessa was occupying much of his time, and much doubtless of his thoughts, she is never once mentioned in the Journal directly by name, and is only twice casually indicated by the title of Vanhomrigh's eldest daughter. There was, therefore, a consciousness on Swift's part, that his attachment to his younger pupil was of a nature which could not be gratifying to her predecessor, although he probably shut his own eyes to the consequences of an intimacy which he wished to conceal from those of Stella. Miss Vanhomrigh, in the mean while, conscious of the pleasure which Swift received from her society, and of the advantages of youth and fortune which she possessed, and ignorant of the peculiar circumstances in which he stood with respect to another, naturally, and surely without offence either to reason or virtue, gave way to the hope of forming an union with a man whose talents had first attracted her admiration, and whose attentions, in the course of their mutual studies, had, by degrees, gained her affections, and seemed to warrant his own. The friends continued to use the language of friendship, but with the assiduity and earnestness of a warmer passion, until Vanessa rent asunder the veil, by intimating to Swift the state of her affections; and in this, as she conceived, she was justified by his own favourite, though dangerous maxim, of doing that which seems in itself right, without respect to the common opinion of the world. We cannot doubt that he actually felt the 'shame, disappointment, guilt, surprise,' expressed in his celebrated poem, though he had not courage to take the open and manly course of avowing those engagements with Stella, or other impediments which prevented him from accepting the hand and fortune of her rival.—Without, therefore, making this painful but just

confession, he answered the avowal of Vanessa's passion, at first in raillery, and afterwards by an offer of devoted and everlasting friendship, founded on the basis of virtuous esteem. Vanessa seems neither to have been contented nor silenced by the result of her declaration; but to the very close of her life persisted in endeavouring, by entreaties and arguments, to extort a more lively return to her passion, than this cold proffer was calculated to afford.

"The effect of his increasing intimacy with the fascinating Vanessa, may be plainly traced in the Journal to Stella, which, in the course of its progress, becomes more and more cold and indifferent,—breathes fewer of those aspirations after the quiet felicity of a life devoted to M. D. and the willows at Laracor,—uses less frequently the affectionate jargon, called the 'little language,' in which his fondness at first displays itself,—and, in short, exhibits all the symptoms of waning affection. Stella was neither blind to the altered style of his correspondence, nor deaf to the rumours which were wafted to Ireland. Her letters are not preserved; but, from several passages of the Journal, it appears that they intimated displeasure and jealousy, which Swift endeavours to appease.

"Upon Swift's return to Ireland, we may guess at the disturbed state of his feelings, wounded at once by ungratified ambition, and harassed by his affection being divided between two objects, each worthy of his attachment, and each having great claims upon him, while neither was likely to remain contented with the limited return of friendship in exchange for love, and that friendship too divided with a rival. The claims of Stella were preferable in point of date; and, to a man of honour and good faith, in every respect irresistible. She had resigned her country, her friends, and even hazarded her character, in hopes of one day being united to Swift. But if Stella had made the greatest sacrifice, Vanessa was the more important victim. She had youth, fortune, fashion; all the acquired accomplishments and information in which Stella was deficient; possessed at least as much wit, and certainly higher powers of imagination. That he had no intention to marry Vanessa, is evident from passages in his letters, which are inconsistent with such an arrangement; as, on the other hand, their whole tenor excludes that of guilty intimacy. On the other hand, his conduct, with respect to Stella, was equally dubious. So soon as he was settled in the Deanery-house, his first care was to secure lodgings for Mrs. Dingley and Stella, upon Ormond's Quay, on the other side of the Liffy; and to resume, with the same guarded caution, the intercourse which had formerly existed between them. But circumstances soon compelled him to give that connection a more definite character.

"Mrs. Vanhomrigh was now dead. Her two sons survived her but a short time; and the circumstances of the young ladies were so far embarrassed by inconsiderate expences, as gave them a handsome excuse for retiring to Ireland, where their father had left a small property near Celbridge. The arrival of Vanessa in Dublin excited the apprehensions of Swift, and the jealousy of Stella. However imprudently the Dean might have indulged himself and the unfortunate young lady, by frequenting her society during his residence in England, there is no doubt that he was alive to all the hazards that might accrue to the reputation and peace of both, by continuing the same intimacy in Dublin. But the means of avoiding it were no longer in his power, although his reiterated remonstrances assumed even the character of unkindness. She importuned him with complaints of neglect and cruelty; and it was obvious, that any decisive measure to break their correspondence, would be attended with some such tragic consequence, as, though late, at length concluded their story. Thus engaged in a labyrinth, where perseverance was wrong, and retreat seemed almost impossible, Swift resolved to temporise, in hopes probably, that time, accident, the mutability incident to violent affections, might extricate himself and Vanessa from the snare in which his own culpable imprudence had involved them. Mean while, he continued to bestow on her those marks of regard which it was impossible to refuse to her feelings towards him, even if they had not been reciprocal. But the conduct which he adopted as kindest to Miss Vanhomrigh, was likely to prove fatal to Stella. His fears and affections were next awakened for that early favourite, whose suppressed grief and jealousy, acting upon a frame naturally delicate, menaced her health in an alarming manner. The feelings with which Swift beheld the wreck which his conduct had occasioned, will not bear description. Mrs. Johnson had forsaken her country, and clouded even her reputation, to become the sharer of his fortunes, when at their lowest; and the implied ties by which he was bound to make her compensation, were as strong as the most solemn promise, if indeed even promises of future marriage had not been actually exchanged between them. He employed Dr. St. George Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, his tutor and early friend, to request the cause of her melancholy; and he received the answer which his conscience must have anticipated—it was her sensibility to his recent indifference, and to the discredit which her own character sustained from the long subsistence of the dubious and mysterious connection between them. To convince her of the constancy of his affection, and to remove her beyond the reach of calumny, there was but one remedy. To this communication Swift replied, that he had formed two resolutions concerning matrimony:—one, that he would not marry till possessed of a competent fortune; the other, that the event should take place at a time of life which gave him a reasonable prospect to see his children settled in the world. The independence proposed, he said, he had not yet achieved, being still embarrassed by debt; and, on the other hand, he was past that term of life after which he had determined never to marry. Yet he was ready to go through the ceremony for the ease of Mrs. Johnson's mind, providing it should remain a strict secret from the public, and that they should continue to live separately, and in the same guarded manner as formerly. To these hard terms Stella subscribed; they relieved her own mind at least from all scruples on the impropriety of their connection; and they soothed her jealousy, by rendering it impossible that Swift should ever give his hand to her rival. They were married in the garden of the Deanery, by the Bishop of Clogher, in the year 1716."—Vol. i. pp. 229—238.

Even admitting all the palliations that are here suggested, it is plain that Swift's conduct is utterly indefensible—and that his ingenious biographer thinks nearly as ill of it as we do. Supposing it possible that a man of his penetration should have inspired an innocent young girl with a violent passion, without being at all aware of it, what possible apology can there be for his not disclosing his engagements with Mrs. Johnson, and peremptorily breaking off all intercourse with her rejected rival?—He was bound to *her* by ties even more sacred than those of actual marriage—and was no more at liberty, under such circumstances, to disguise that connection than the other:—or if he had himself unconsciously imbibed an irresistible passion for his younger admirer, it would have been far less guilty or dishonourable to have avowed this to Stella, and followed the impulse of such a fatal attachment. In either of these ways, he would

have spared at least one of his victims. But he had not the apology of any such passion; and, desirous apparently of saving himself the shock of any unpleasant disclosure, or wishing to secure to himself the gratification of both their attachments, he endeavoured basely to conceal from each the share which the other had in his affections, and sacrificed the peace of both to the indulgence of this mean and cold-blooded duplicity. The same disgusting selfishness is, if possible, still more apparent, in the mortifying and degrading conditions he annexed to his nominal marriage with Stella, for the concealment of which no reason can be assigned, to which it is possible to listen with patience,—at least after the death of Vanessa had removed all fear of its afflicting or irritating that unhappy rival. This tragical event, of which Swift was as directly and as guiltily the cause, as if he had plunged a dagger into her heart, is described with much feeling by Mr. Scott, who has added a fuller account of her previous retirement than any former editor.

"About the year 1717, she retired from Dublin, to her house and property near Celbridge, to nurse her hopeless passion in seclusion from the world. Swift seems to have foreseen and warned her against the consequences of this step. His letters uniformly exhort her to seek general society, to take exercise, and to divert, as much as possible, the current of her thoughts from the unfortunate subject which was preying upon her spirits. He even exhorts her to leave Ireland. Until the year 1720, he never appears to have visited her at Celbridge; they only met when she was occasionally in Dublin. But in that year, and down to the time of her death, Swift came repeatedly to Celbridge; and, from the information of a most obliging correspondent, I am enabled to give account of some minute particulars attending them.

"Marley Abbey, near Celbridge, where Miss Vanhomrigh resided, is built much in the form of a real cloister, especially in its external appearance. An aged man (upwards of ninety by his own account) showed the grounds to my correspondent. He was the son of Mrs. Vanhomrigh's gardener, and used to work with his father in the garden when a boy. He remembered the unfortunate Vanessa well, and his account of her corresponded with the usual description of her person, especially as to her *embonpoint*. He said she went seldom abroad, and saw little company: her constant amusement was reading, or walking in the garden. Yet, according to this authority, her society was courted by several families in the neighbourhood, who visited her, notwithstanding her seldom returning that attention,—and he added, that her manners interested every one who knew her. But she avoided company, and was always melancholy save when Dean Swift was there, and then she seemed happy.—The garden was to an uncommon degree crowded with laurels. The old man said, that when Miss Vanhomrigh expected the Dean, she always planted, with her own hand, a laurel or two against his arrival. He showed her favourite seat, still called Vanessa's Bower. Three or four trees, and some laurels, indicate the spot. They had formerly, according to the old man's information, been trained into a close arbour. There were two seats and and a rude table within the bower, the opening of which commanded a view of the Liffy, which had a romantic effect; and there was a small cascade that murmured at some distance. In this sequestered spot, according to the old gardener's account, the Dean and Vanessa used often to sit, with books and writing-materials on the table before them.

"Vanessa, besides musing over her unhappy attachment, had, during her residence in this solitude, the care of nursing the declining health of her younger sister, who at length died about 1720. This event, as it left her alone in the world, seems to have increased the energy of her fatal passion for Swift, while he, on the contrary, saw room for still greater reserve, when her situation became that of a solitary female, without the society or countenance of a female relation. But Miss Vanhomrigh, irritated at the situation in which she found herself, determined on bringing to a crisis those expectations of an union with the object of her affections, to the hope of which she had clung amid every vicissitude of his conduct towards her. The most probable bar was his undefined connection with Mrs. Johnson, which, as it must have been perfectly known to her, had, doubtless, long excited her secret jealousy: although only a single hint to that purpose is to be found in their correspondence, and that so early as 1713, when she writes to him, then in Ireland, "If you are very happy, it is ill-natured of you not to tell me so, *except 'tis what is inconsistent with mine.*' Her silence and patience under this state of uncertainty, for no less than eight years, must have been partly owing to her awe for Swift, and partly perhaps to the weak state of her rival's health, which from year to year, seemed to announce speedy dissolution. At length, however, Vanessa's impatience prevailed; and she ventured on the decisive step of writing to Mrs. Johnson herself, requesting to know the nature of that connection. Stella, in reply, informed her of her marriage with the Dean; and, full of the highest resentment against Swift for having given another female such a right in him as Miss Vanhomrigh's inquiries implied, she sent to him her rival's letter of interrogation, and, without seeing him, or awaiting his reply, retired to the house of Mr. Ford, near Dublin. Every reader knows the consequence. Swift, in one of those paroxysms of fury to which he was liable, both from temper and disease, rode instantly to Marley Abbey. As he entered the apartment, the sternness of his countenance, which was peculiarly formed to express the fiercer passions, struck the unfortunate Vanessa with such terror, that she could scarce ask whether he would not sit down. He answered by flinging a letter on the table: and, instantly leaving the house, mounted his horse, and returned to Dublin. When Vanessa opened the packet, she only found her own letter to Stella. It was her death warrant. She sunk at once under the disappointment of the delayed, yet cherished hopes, which had so long sickened her heart, and beneath the unrestrained wrath of him for whose sake she had indulged them. How long she survived this last interview, is uncertain, but the time does not seem to have exceeded a few weeks."—*Life*, vol. i. pp. 248—253.

Among the novelties of the present edition, is what is called a complete copy of the correspondence betwixt Swift and this unfortunate lady. To us it is manifest, that it is by no means a complete copy;—and, on the whole, the parts that are now published for the first time, are of less moment than those that had been formerly printed. But it is altogether a very interesting and painful collection; and there is something to us inexpressibly touching in the innocent fondness, and almost childish gaiety, of Vanessa at its commencement, contrasted with the deep gloom into which she sinks in its later stages; while the ardour of affection which breathes through the whole, and the tone of devoted innocence and simplicity of character which are every where preserved, make us both hate and wonder at the man who could de-

liberately break a heart so made to be cherished. We cannot resist the temptation of extracting a little of the only part of this whole publication in which any thing like heart or tenderness is to be discovered. His first letter is written immediately after their first separation, and while she yet believed that his slowness in returning her passion arose, as he had given her ample warrant to suppose, (see the whole of the poem of Cadenus and Vanessa, vol. xiv,) from nothing but a sense of the unsuitableness of their years and habits, which would give way to the continued proofs of its constancy and ardour. He had written her a cold note on his journey, to which she thus rapturously answers:—

"Now you are good beyond expression, in sending me that dear voluntary from St. Alban's. It gives me more happiness than you can imagine, or I describe, to find that your head is so much better already. I do assure you all my wishes are employed for the continuance of it. I hope the next will tell me they have been of force. Pray, why did not you remember me at Dunstable, as well as Moll? Lord! what a monster is Moll grown since. But nothing of poor Hess; except that the mark will be in the same place of Davilla where you left it. Indeed, it is not much advanced yet, for I have been studying of Rochefoucault to see if he described as much of love as I found in myself a Sunday, and I find he falls very short of it. I am very impatient to hear from you at Chester. It is impossible to tell you how often I have wished you a cup of coffee and an orange at your inn."—Vol. xix, pp. 403, 404.

Upon hearing of his arrival in Ireland, she writes again in the same spirit.

"Here is now three long weeks passed since you wrote to me. Oh! happy Dublin, that can employ all your thoughts, and happy Mrs. Emerson, that could hear from you the moment you landed. Had it not been for her, I should be yet more uneasy than I am. I really believe, before you leave Ireland, I shall give you just reason to wish I did not know my letters, or at least that I could not write: and I had rather you should wish so, than entirely forget me. Mr. Lewis has given me '*Les Dialogues Des Mortes*,' and I am so charmed with them, that I am resolved to quit my *body*, let the consequence be what it will, except you will talk to me, for I find no conversation on earth comparable to yours; so, if you care I should stay, do but talk, and you will keep me with pleasure."—Vol. xix, pp. 407—409.

There is a great deal more of this trifling of a heart at ease, and supported by enchanting hopes. It is miserable to think how sadly the style is changed, when she comes to know better the object on whom she had thus irretrievably lavished her affections. The following is the first letter that appears after she followed him to Ireland in 1714; and it appears to us infinitely more touching and pathetic, in the truth and simplicity of the wretchedness it expresses, than all the eloquent despair of all the heroines of romance. No man, with a heart, we think, could receive such letters and live.

"You bid me be easy, and you'd see me as often as you could. you had better have said as often as you could get the better of your inclinations so much; or as often as you remembered there was such a person in the world. If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long. 'Tis impossible to describe what I have suffered since I saw you last; I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing, killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more, but those resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long: for there is something in human nature that prompts one so to find relief in this world: I must give way to it, and beg you'd see me, and speak kindly to me! for I am sure you would not condemn any one to suffer what I have done, could you but know it. The reason I write to you is, because I cannot tell it you, should I see you; for when I begin to complain, then you are angry, and there is something in your look so awful, that it strikes me dumb. Oh! that you may but have so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity. I say as little as ever I can. Did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you. Forgive me, and believe I cannot help telling you this, and live."—Vol. xix. p. 421.

And a little after,

"I am, and cannot avoid being in the spleen to the last degree. Every thing combines to make me so. Yet this and all other disappointments in life I can bear with ease, but that of being neglected by .... Spleen I cannot help, so you must excuse it. I do all I can to get the better of it; but it is too strong for me. I have read more since I saw Cad, than I did in a great while passed, and chose those books that required most attention, on purpose to engage my thoughts, but I find the more I think the more unhappy I am.

"I had once a mind not to have wrote to you, for fear of making you uneasy to find me so dull; but I could not keep to that resolution, for the pleasure of writing to you. The satisfaction I have in your remembering me, when you read my letters, and the delight I have in expecting one from Cad, makes me rather choose to give you some uneasiness, than add to my own."—Vol. xix. pp. 431, 432.

As the correspondence draws to a close, her despair becomes more eloquent and agonizing. The following two letters are dated in 1720.

"Believe me, it is with the utmost regret that I now complain to you;—yet what can I do? I must either unload my heart, and tell you all its griefs, or sink under the inexpressible distress I now suffer by your prodigious neglect of me. 'Tis now ten long weeks since I saw you, and in all that time I have never received but one letter from you, and a little note with an excuse. Oh, how have you forgot me! You endeavour by severities to force me from you: Nor can I blame you; for with the utmost distress and confusion, I behold myself the cause of uneasy reflections to you, yet I cannot comfort you, but here declare, that 'tis not in the power of time or accident to lessen the inexpressible passion which I have for .....

"Put my passion under the utmost restraint,—send me as distant from you as the earth will allow,—yet you cannot banish those charming ideas which will ever stick by me whilst I have the use of memory. Nor is the love I bear you only seated in my soul, for there is not a single atom of my frame that is not blended with it. Therefore, don't flatter yourself that separation will ever change my sentiments; for I find myself unquiet in the midst of silence, and my heart is at once pierced with sorrow and love. For Heaven's sake, tell me what has caused this prodigious change on you, which I have found of late. If you have the least remains of pity for me left, tell me tenderly. No: don't: tell it so that it may cause my present death, and don't suffer me to live a life like a languishing death, which is the only life I can lead, if you have lost any of your tenderness for me."—Vol. xix. pp. 441, 442.

"Tell me sincerely, if you have once wished

with earnestness to see me, since I wrote last to you. No, so far from that, you have not once pitied me, though I told you how I was distressed. Solitude is insupportable to a mind which is not at ease. I have worn on my days in sighing, and my nights with watching and thinking of .... who thinks not of me. How many letters must I send you before I shall receive an answer? Can you deny me in my misery the only comfort which I can expect at present? Oh! that I could hope to see you here, or that I could go to you! I was born with violent passions, which terminate all in one, that inexpressible passion I have for you. Consider the killing emotions which I feel from your neglect, and show some tenderness for me, or I shall lose my senses. Sure you cannot possibly be so much taken up, but you might command a moment to write to me, and force your inclinations to do so great a charity. I firmly believe, could I know your thoughts which no human creature is capable of guessing at, (because never any one living thought like you.) I should find you have often in a rage wished me religious, hoping then I should have paid my devotions to Heaven: but that would not spare you,—for was I an enthusiast, still you'd be the deity I should worship. What marks are there of a deity, but what you are to be known by?—you are present everywhere: your dear image is always before mine eyes. Sometimes you strike me with that prodigious awe, I tremble with fear, at other times a charming compassion shines through your countenance, which revives my soul. Is it not more reasonable to adore a radiant form one has seen, than one only described?"—Vol. xix. pp. 442, 443.

From this heart-breaking scene we turn to another, if possible, still more deplorable. Vanessa was now dead. The grave had heaped its tranquillising mould on her agitated heart, and given her tormentor assurance, that he should no more suffer from her reproaches on earth; and yet, though with her the last pretext was extinguished for refusing to acknowledge the wife he had so infamously abused, we find him, with this dreadful example before his eyes, persisting to withhold from his remaining victim, that late and imperfect justice to which her claim was so apparent, and from the denial of which she was sinking before his eyes in sickness and sorrow to the grave. It is utterly impossible to suggest any excuse or palliation for such cold-blooded barbarity. Even though we were to believe with Mr. Scott, that he had ceased to be a man, this would afford no apology for his acting like a beast! He might still have acknowledged his wife in public; and restored to her the comfort and the honour, of which he had robbed her without the excuse of violent passion, or thoughtless precipitation. He was rich, far beyond what either of them could have expected when their union was first contemplated; and had attained a name and a station in society which made him independent of riches. Yet, for the sake of avoiding some small awkwardness or inconvenience to himself—to be secured from the idle talking of those who might wonder why, since they were to marry, they did not marry before—or perhaps merely to retain the object of his regard in more complete subjection and dependence, he could bear to see her pining, year after year, in solitude and degradation, and sinking at last into an untimely grave, prepared by his hard and unrelenting refusal to clear her honour to the world, even at her dying hour. There are two editions of this dying scene—one on the authority of Mr. Sheridan, the other on that of Mr. Theophilus Swift, who is said to have received it from Mrs. Whiteway. Mr. Scott, who is unable to discredit the former, and is inclined at the same time to prefer the least disreputable for his author, is reduced to the necessity of supposing, that both may be true, and that Mr. Sheridan's story may have related to an earlier period than that reported by Mrs. Whiteway. We shall lay both before our readers. Mr. Sheridan says,

"'A short time before her death, a scene passed between the Dean and her, an account of which I had from my father, and which I shall relate with reluctance, as it seems to bear more hard on Swift's humanity than any other part of his conduct in life. As she found her final dissolution approach, a few days before it happened, in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, she addressed Swift in the most earnest and pathetic terms to grant her dying request; 'That, as the ceremony of marriage had passed between them, though for sundry considerations they had not cohabited in that state, in order to put it out of the power of slander to be busy with her fame after death, she adjured him by their friendship to let her have the satisfaction of dying at least, though she had not lived, his acknowledged wife.'

"'Swift made no reply, but, turning on his heel, walked silently out of the room, nor ever saw her afterward, during the few days she lived. This behaviour threw Mrs. Johnson into unspeakable agonies, and for a time she sunk under the weight of so cruel a disappointment. But soon after, roused by indignation, she inveighed against his cruelty in the bitterest terms; and, sending for a lawyer, made her will, bequeathing her fortune by her own name to charitable uses. This was done in the presence of Dr. Sheridan, whom she appointed one of her executors.'"—Vol. i. p. 357.

If this be true, Swift must have had the heart of a monster; and it is of little consequence, whether, when her death was nearer, he pretended to consent to what his unhappy victim herself then pathetically declared to be 'too late;' and to what, at all events, certainly never was done. Mrs. Whiteway's statement is as follows:—

"'When Stella was in her last weak state, and one day had come in a chair to the Deanery, she was with difficulty brought into the parlour. The Dean had prepared some mulled wine, and kept it by the fire for her refreshment. After tasting it, she became very faint, but having recovered a little by degrees, when her breath (for she was asthmatic), was allowed her, she desired to lie down. She was carried up stairs, and laid on a bed; the Dean sitting by her, held her hand, and addressed her in the most affectionate manner. She drooped, however, very much. Mrs. Whiteway was the only third person present. After a short time, her politeness induced her to withdraw to the adjoining room, but it was necessary, on account of air, that the door should not be closed,—it was half shut: the rooms were close adjoining. Mrs. Whiteway had too much honour to listen, but could not avoid observing, that the Dean and Mrs. Johnson conversed together in a low tone; the latter, indeed, was too weak to raise her voice. Mrs. Whiteway paid no attention, having no idle curiosity, but at length she heard the Dean say, in an audible voice, "*Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned,*" to which Stella answered with a sigh, "*It is too late.*"—Vol. i. pp. 355, 356.

With the consciousness of having thus barbarously destroyed all the women for whom he had ever professed affection, it is not wonderful that his latter days should have been overshadowed with gloom and dejection: but it was not the depression of late regret, or unavailing self-condemnation, that darkened his closing scene. It was but the rancour of disappointed ambition, and the bitterness of proud misanthropy: and we verily believe, that if his party had got again into power, and given him the preferment he expected, the pride and joy of his vindictive triumph would have been but little alloyed by the remembrance of the innocent and accomplished women of whom we have no hesitation to pronounce him the murderer. In the whole of his later writings, indeed, we shall look in vain for any traces of that penitential regret, which was due to the misery he had occasioned, even if it had arisen without his guilt, or even of that humble and solemn self-reproach, which is apt to beset thoughtful men in the decline of life and animation, even when their conduct has been generally blameless, and the judgment of the candid finds nothing in them to condemn: on the contrary, there is nowhere to be met with, a tone of more insolent reproach, and intolerant contempt to the rest of the world, or so direct a claim to the possession of sense and virtue, which that world was no longer worthy to employ. Of women, too, it is very remarkable, that he speaks with unvaried rudeness and contempt, and rails indeed at the whole human race, as wretches with whom he thinks it an indignity to share a common nature. All this, we confess, appears to us intolerable; for, whether we look to the fortune, or the conduct of this extraordinary person, we really recollect no individual who was less entitled to be either discontented or misanthropical—to complain of men or of accidents. Born almost a beggar, and neither very industrious nor very engaging in his early habits, he attained, almost with his first efforts, the very height of distinction, and was rewarded by appointments, which placed him in a state of independence and respectability for life. He was honoured with the acquaintance of all that was distinguished for rank, literature, or reputation;—and, if not very generally beloved, was, what he probably valued far more, admired and feared by most of those with whom he was acquainted. When his party was overthrown, neither his person nor his fortune suffered;—but he was indulged, through the whole of his life, in a licence of scurrility and abuse, which has never been permitted to any other writer,—and possessed the exclusive and devoted affection of the only two women to whom he wished to appear interesting. In this *history*, we confess, we see but little apology for discontent and lamentation;—and, in his *conduct*, there is assuredly still less for misanthropy. In public life, we do not know where we could have found any body half so profligate and unprincipled as himself, and the friends to whom he finally attached himself;—nor can we conceive that complaints of venality, and want of patriotism, could ever come with so ill a grace from any quarter, as from him who had openly deserted and libelled his original party, without the pretext of any other cause than the insufficiency of the rewards they bestowed upon him,—and joined himself with men, who were treacherous not only to their first professions, but to their country and to each other, to all of whom he adhered, after their mutual hatred and villanies were detected. In private life, again, with what face could he erect himself into a rigid censor of morals, or pretend to complain of men in general, as unworthy of his notice, after breaking the hearts of two, if not three, amiable women, whose affections he had engaged by the most constant assiduities,—after savagely libelling almost all his early friends and benefactors, and exhibiting, in his daily life and conversation, a picture of domineering insolence and dogmatism, to which no parallel could be found, we believe, in the history of any other individual, and which rendered his society intolerable to all who were not subdued by their awe of him, or inured to it by long use? He had some right, perhaps, to look with disdain upon men of ordinary understandings; but for all that is the proper object of reproach, he should have looked only *within:* and whatever may be his merits as a writer, we do not hesitate to say, that he was despicable as a politician, and hateful as a man.

With these impressions of his personal character, perhaps it is not easy for us to judge quite fairly of his works. Yet we are far from being insensible to their great and very peculiar merits. Their chief peculiarity is, that they were almost all what may be called occasional productions—not written for fame or for posterity—from the fulness of the mind, or the desire of instructing mankind—but on the spur of the occasion—for promoting some temporary and immediate object, and producing a practical effect, in the attainment of which their whole importance centered. With the exception of The Tale of a Tub, Gulliver, the Polite Conversation, and about half a volume of poetry, this description will apply to almost all that is now before us;—and it is no small proof of the vigour and vivacity of his genius, that posterity should have been so anxious to preserve these careless and hasty productions, upon which their author appears to have set no other value than as means for the attainment of an end. The truth is, accordingly, that *they are* very extraordinary performances: And, considered with a view to the purposes for which they were intended, have probably never been equalled in any period of the world. They are written with great plainness, force, and intrepidity—advance at once to the matter in dispute—give battle to the strength of the enemy, and never seek any kind of advantage from darkness or obscurity. Their distinguishing feature, however, is the force and the vehemence of the invective in which they abound, —the copiousness, the steadiness, the perseverance, and the dexterity with which abuse and ridicule are showered upon the adversary. This, we think, was, beyond all doubt, Swift's great talent, and the weapon by which he made himself formidable. He was, without exception, the greatest and most efficient *libeller* that ever exercised the trade; and possessed, in an eminent degree, all the qualifications which it requires:—a clear head—a cold heart—a vindictive temper—no admiration of noble qualities—no sympathy with suffering—not much conscience—not much consistency—a ready wit—a sarcastic humour—a thorough knowledge of the baser parts of human nature—and a complete familiarity with every thing that is low, homely, and familiar in language. These were his gifts;—and he soon felt for what ends they were given. Almost all his works are libels; generally upon individuals, sometimes upon sects and parties, sometimes upon human nature. Whatever be his end, however, personal abuse, direct, vehement, unsparing invective, is his means. It is his sword and his shield, his panoply and his chariot of war. In all his writings, accordingly, there is nothing to raise or exalt our notions of human nature,—but every thing to vilify and degrade. We may learn from them, perhaps, to dread the consequences of base actions, but never to love the feelings that lead to generous ones. There is no spirit, indeed, of love or of honour in any part of them; but an unvaried and harassing display of insolence and animosity in the writer, and villany and folly in those of whom he is writing. Though a great polemic, he makes no use of general principles, nor ever enlarges his views to a wide or comprehensive conclusion. Every thing is particular with him, and, for the most part, strictly personal. To make amends, however, we do think him quite without a competitor in personalities. With a quick and sagacious spirit, and a bold and popular manner, he joins an exact knowledge of all the strong and the weak parts of every cause he has to manage; and, without the least restraint from delicacy, either of taste or of feeling, he seems always to think the most effectual blows the most advisable, and no advantage unlawful that is likely to be successful for the moment. Disregarding all the laws of polished hostility, he uses, at one and the same moment, his sword and his poisoned dagger—his hands and his teeth, and his envenomed breath,—and does not even scruple, upon occasion, to imitate his own yahoos, by discharging on his unhappy victims a shower of filth, from which neither courage nor dexterity can afford any protection.—Against such an antagonist, it was, of course, at no time very easy to make head; and accordingly his invective seems, for the most part, to have been as much dreaded, and as tremendous as the personal ridicule of Voltaire. Both were inexhaustible, well-directed, and unsparing; but even when Voltaire drew blood, he did not mangle the victim, and was only mischievous when Swift was brutal. Any one who will compare the epigrams on M. Franc de Pompignan with those on Tighe or Bettesworth, will easily understand the distinction.

Of the few works which he wrote in the capacity of an author, and not of a party zealot or personal enemy, The Tale of a Tub was by far the earliest in point of time, and has, by many, been considered as the first in point of merit. We confess we are not of that opinion. It is by far too long and elaborate for a piece of pleasantry;—the humour sinks, in many places, into mere buffoonery and nonsense;—and there is a real and extreme tediousness arising from the too successful mimicry of tediousness and pedantry. All these defects are apparent enough even in the main story, in which the incidents are without the shadow of verisimilitude or interest, and by far too thinly scattered; but they become insufferable in the interludes or digressions, the greater part of which are to us utterly illegible, and seem to consist almost entirely of cold and forced conceits, and exaggerated representations of long exploded whims and absurdities. The style of this work, which appears to us greatly inferior to the History of John Bull or even of Martinus Scriblerus, is evidently more elaborate than that of Swift's other writings,—but has all its substantial characteristics. Its great merit seems to consist in the author's perfect familiarity with all sorts of common and idiomatical expressions, his unlimited command of established phrases, both solemn and familiar, and the unrivalled profusion and propriety with which he heaps them up and applies them to the exposition of the most fantastic conceptions. To deliver absurd notions or incredible tales in the most authentic, honest, and direct terms, that have been used for the communication of truth and reason, and to luxuriate in all the variations of that grave, plain, and perspicuous phraseology, which dull men use to express their homely opinions, seems to be the great art of this extraordinary humorist, and that which gives their character and their edge to his sly strokes of satire, his keen sarcasms and bitter personalities.

The voyages of Captain Lemuel Gulliver is indisputably his greatest work. The idea of making fictitious travels the vehicle of satire as well as of amusement, is at least as old as Lucian; but has never been carried into execution with such success, spirit, and originality, as in this celebrated performance. The brevity, the minuteness, the homeliness, the unbroken seriousness of the narrative, all give a character of truth and simplicity to the work, which at once palliates the extravagance of the fiction, and enhances the effect of those weighty reflections and cutting severities in which it abounds. Yet though it is probable enough, that without those touches of satire and observation the work would have appeared childish and preposterous, we are persuaded that it pleases chiefly by the novelty and vivacity of the extraordinary pictures it presents, and the entertainment we receive from following the fortunes of the traveller in his several extraordinary adventures. The greater part of the wisdom and satire at least appears to us to be extremely vulgar and common-place; and we have no

idea that they could possibly appear either impressive or entertaining, if presented without these accompaniments. A considerable part of the pleasure we derive from the voyages of Gulliver, in short, is of the same description with that which we receive from those of Sinbad the sailor; and is chiefly neightened, we believe, by the greater brevity and minuteness of the story, and the superior art that is employed to give it an appearance of truth and probability, in the very midst of its wonders. Among those arts, as Mr. Scott has judiciously observed, one of the most important is the exact adaptation of the narrative to the condition of its supposed author.

"The character of the imaginary traveller is exactly that of Dampier, or any other sturdy nautical wanderer of the period, endowed with courage and common sense, who sailed through distant seas, without losing a single English prejudice which he had brought from Portsmouth or Plymouth, and on his return gave a grave and simple narrative of what he had seen or heard in foreign countries. The character is perhaps strictly English, and can be hardly relished by a foreigner. The reflections and observations of Gulliver are never more refined or deeper than might be expected from a plain master of a merchantman, or surgeon in the Old Jewry; and there was such a reality given to his whole person, that one seaman is said to have sworn he knew Captain Gulliver very well, but he lived at Wapping, not at Rotherhithe. It is the contrast between the natural ease and simplicity of such a style, and the marvels which the volume contains, that forms one great charm of this memorable satire on the imperfections, follies, and vices of mankind. The exact calculations preserved in the first and second part, have also the effect of qualifying the extravagance of the fable. It is said that in natural objects where proportion is exactly preserved, the marvellous, whether the object be gigantic or diminutive, is lessened in the eyes of the spectator; and it is certain, in general, that proportion forms an essential attribute of truth, and consequently of verisimilitude, or that which renders a narration probable. If the reader is disposed to grant the traveller his postulates as to the existence of the strange people whom he visits, it would be difficult to detect any inconsistency in his narrative. On the contrary, it would seem that he and they conduct themselves towards each other, precisely as must necessarily have happened in the respective circumstances which the author has supposed. In this point of view, perhaps the highest praise that could have been bestowed on Gulliver's Travels was the censure of a learned Irish prelate, who said the book contained *some* things which he could not prevail upon himself to believe."—Vol. i. pp. 340, 341.

That the interest does not arise from the satire but from the plausible description of physical wonders, seems to be farther proved by the fact, that the parts which please the least are those in which there is most satire and least of those wonders. In the voyage to Laputa, after the first description of the flying island, the attention is almost exclusively directed to intellectual absurdities; and every one is aware of the dulness that is the result. Even as a satire, indeed, this part is extremely poor and defective; nor can any thing show more clearly the author's incapacity for large and comprehensive views than his signal failure in all those parts which invite him to such contemplations. In the multitude of his vulgar and farcical representations of particular errors in philosophy, he nowhere appears to have any sense of its true value or principles; but satisfies himself with collecting or imagining a number of fantastical quackeries, which tend to illustrate nothing but his contempt for human understanding. Even where his subject seems to invite him to something of a higher flight, he uniformly shrinks back from it, and takes shelter in common-place derision. What, for instance, can be poorer than the use he makes of the evocation of the illustrious dead—in which Hannibal is conjured up, just to say that he had not a drop of vinegar in his camp; and Aristotle, to ask two of his commentators, "whether the rest of the tribe were as great dunces as themselves?" The voyage to the Houyhnhnms is commonly supposed to displease by its vile and degrading representations of human nature; but, if we do not strangely mistake our own feelings on the subject, the impression it produces is not so much that of disgust as of dulness. The picture is not only extravagant, but bald and tame in the highest degree; while the story is not enlivened by any of those numerous and uncommon incidents which are detailed in the two first parts, with such an inimitable air of probability as almost to persuade us of their reality. For the rest, we have observed already, that the scope of the whole work, and indeed of all his writings, is to degrade and vilify human nature; and though some of the images which occur in this part may be rather coarser than the others, we do not think the difference so considerable as to account for its admitted inferiority in the power of pleasing.

His only other considerable works in prose, are the "Polite Conversation," which we think admirable in its sort, and excessively entertaining; and the "Directions to Servants," which, though of a lower pitch, contains as much perhaps of his peculiar, vigorous and racy humour, as any one of his productions. The Journal to Stella, which was certainly never intended for publication, is not to be judged of as a literary work at all—but to us it is the most interesting of all his productions—exhibiting not only a minute and masterly view of a very extraordinary political crisis, but a truer, and, upon the whole, a more favourable picture of his own mind, than can be gathered from all the rest of his writings—together with innumerable anecdotes characteristic not only of various eminent individuals, but of the private manners and public taste and morality of the times, more nakedly and surely authentic than any thing that can be derived from contemporary publications.

Of his Poetry, we do not think there is much to be said;—for we cannot persuade ourselves that Swift was in any respect a poet. It would be proof enough, we think, just to observe, that, though a popular and most miscellaneous writer, he does not mention the name of Shakespeare above two or three times in any part of his works, and has

nowhere said a word in his praise. His partial editor admits that he has produced nothing which can be called either sublime or pathetic; and we are of the same opinion as to the beautiful. The merit of correct rhymes and easy diction, we shall not deny him; but the diction is almost invariably that of the most ordinary prose, and the matter of his pieces no otherwise poetical, than that the Muses and some other persons of the Heathen mythology are occasionally mentioned. He has written lampoons and epigrams, and satirical ballads and abusive songs in great abundance, and with infinite success. But these things are not poetry;—and are better in verse than in prose, for no other reason than that the sting is more easily remembered, and the ridicule occasionally enhanced, by the hint of a ludicrous parody, or the drollery of an extraordinary rhyme. His witty verses, when they are not made up of mere filth and venom, seem mostly framed on the model of Hudibras; and are chiefly remarkable, like those of his original, for the easy and apt application of homely and familiar phrases, to illustrate ingenious sophistry or unexpected allusions. One or two of his imitations of Horace, are executed with spirit and elegance, and are the best, we think, of his familiar pieces; unless we except the verses on his own death, in which, however, the great charm arises, as we have just stated, from the singular ease and exactness with which he has imitated the style of ordinary society, and the neatness with which he has brought together and reduced to metre such a number of natural, characteristic, and common-place expressions. The Cadenus and Vanessa is, of itself, complete proof that he had in him none of the elements of poetry. It was written when his faculties were in their perfection, and his heart animated with all the tenderness of which it was ever capable—and yet it is as cold and as flat as the ice of Thulé. Though describing a real passion, and a real perplexity, there is not a spark of fire nor a throb of emotion in it from one end to the other. All the return he makes to the warm-hearted creature who had put her destiny into his hands, consists in a frigid mythological fiction, in which he sets forth, that Venus and the Graces lavished their gifts on her in her infancy, and moreover got Minerva, by a trick, to inspire her with wit and wisdom. The style is mere prose—or rather a string of familiar and vulgar phrases tacked together in rhyme, like the general tissue of his poetry. However, it has been called not only easy but elegant, by some indulgent critics—and therefore, as we take it for granted nobody reads it now-a-days, we shall extract a few lines at random, to abide the censure of the judicious. To us they seem to be about as much poetry as so many lines out of Coke upon Littleton.

"But in the poets we may find
A wholesome law, time out of mind,
Had been confirm'd by Fate's decree,
That gods, of whatsoe'er degree,
Resume not what themselves have given,
Or any brother god in Heaven:
Which keeps the peace among the gods,
Or they must always be at odds:
And Pallas, if she broke the laws,
Must yield her foe the stronger cause;
A shame to one so much ador'd
For wisdom at Jove's council board;
Besides, she fear'd the Queen of Love
Would meet with better friends above.
And though she must with grief reflect,
To see a mortal virgin deck'd
With graces hitherto unknown
To female breasts except her own:
Yet she would act as best became
A goddess of unspotted fame.
She knew by augury divine,
Venus would fail in her design:
She studied well the point, and found
Her foe's conclusions were not sound,
From premises erroneous brought;
And therefore the deduction's naught,
And must have contrary effects,
To what her treacherous foe expects."
Vol. xiv. pp. 448, 449.

The Rhapsody of Poetry, and the Legion Club, are the only two pieces in which there is the least glow of poetical animation; though, in the latter, it takes the shape of ferocious and almost frantic invective, and, in the former, shines out but by fits in the midst of the usual small wares of cant phrases and snappish misanthropy. In the Rhapsody, the following lines, for instance, near the beginning, are vigorous and energetic.

"Not empire to the rising sun
By valour, conduct, fortune won;
Not highest wisdom in debates
For framing laws to govern states;
Not skill in sciences profound
So large to grasp the circle round:
Such heavenly influence require,
As how to strike the Muse's lyre.
Not beggar's brat on bulk begot;
Not bastard of a pedlar Scot;
Not boy brought up to cleaning shoes,
The spawn of bridewell or the stews;
Nor infants dropped, the spurious pledges
Of gypsies littering under hedges;
Are so disqualified by fate
To rise in church, or law, or state,
As he whom Phœbus in his ire
Has blasted with poetic fire."
Vol. xiv. pp. 310, 311.

Yet, immediately after this nervous and poetical line, he drops at once into the lowness of vulgar flippancy.

"What hope of custom in the fair,
While not a soul demands your ware?" &c.

There are undoubtedly many strong lines, and much cutting satire in this poem; but the staple is a mimicry of Hudibras, without the richness or compression of Butler; as, for example,

"And here a simile comes pat in:
Though chickens take a month to fatten,
The guests in less than half an hour,
Will more than half a score devour.
So, after toiling twenty days
To earn a stock of pence and praise,
Thy labours, grown the critic's prey,
Are swallow'd o'er a dish of tea:
Gone to be never heard of more,
Gone where the chickens went before.
How shall a new attempter learn
Of different spirits to discern,
And how distinguish which is which,
The poet's vein, or scribbling itch?"
Vol. xiv. pp. 311, 312.

The Legion Club is a satire, or rather a tremendous invective on the Irish House of Commons, who had incurred the reverend author's displeasure for entertaining some propositions about alleviating the burden of the tithes in Ireland; and is chiefly remarkable, on the whole, as a proof of the extraordinary liberty of the press which was indulged to the disaffected in those days—no prosecution having been instituted, either by that Honourable House itself, or by any of the individual members, who are there attacked in a way in which no public men were ever attacked, before or since. It is also deserving of attention, as the most thoroughly animated, fierce, and energetic, of all Swift's metrical compositions; and though the animation be altogether of a ferocious character, and seems occasionally to verge upon absolute insanity, there is still a force and a terror about it which redeems it from ridicule, and makes us shudder at the sort of demoniacal inspiration with which the malison is vented. The invective of Swift appears in this, and some other pieces, like the infernal fire of Milton's rebel angels, which

"Scorched and blasted and o'erthrew—"

and was launched even against the righteous with such impetuous fury,

"That whom it hit none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks—but down they fell
By thousands, angel on archangel rolled."

It is scarcely necessary to remark, however, that there is never the least approach to dignity or nobleness in the style of these terrible invectives; and that they do not even pretend to the tone of a high-minded disdain or generous impatience of unworthiness. They are honest, coarse, and violent effusions of furious anger and rancorous hatred; and their effect depends upon the force, heartiness, and apparent sincerity with which those feelings are expressed. The author's object is simply to vilify his opponent,—by no means to do honour to himself. If he can make his victim writhe, he cares not what may be thought of his tormentor;—or rather, he is contented, provided he can make *him* sufficiently disgusting, that a good share of the filth which he throws should stick to his own fingers; and that he should himself excite some of the loathing of which his enemy is the principal object. In the piece now before us, many of the personalities are too coarse and filthy to be quoted; but the very opening shows the spirit in which it is written.

"As I stroll the city oft I
See a building large and lofty,
Not a bow-shot from the college,
Half the globe from sense and knowledge!
By the prudent architect,
Plac'd against the church direct,
Making good my grandam's jest,
'Near the church'—you know the rest.
"Tell us what the pile contains?
Many a head that holds no brains.
These demoniacs let me dub
With the name of Legion Club.
Such assemblies, you might swear,
Meet when butchers bait a bear:
Such a noise and such haranguing,
When a brother thief is hanging:
Such a rout and such a rabble
Run to hear Jackpudding gabble:
Such a crowd their ordure throws
On a far less villain's nose.
"Could I from the building's top
Hear the rattling thunder drop,
While the devil upon the roof
(If the devil be thunder proof)
Should with poker fiery red
Crack the stones, and melt the lead;
Drive them down on every scull,
When the den of thieves is full;
Quite destroy the harpies' nest;
How then might our isle be blest!
"Let them, when they once get in,
Sell the nation for a pin;
While they sit a picking straws,
Let them rave at making laws;
While they never hold their tongue,
Let them dabble in their dung;
Let them form a grand committee,
How to plague and starve the city;
Let them stare, and storm, and frown
When they see a clergy gown;
Let them, ere they crack a louse;
Call for th' orders of the House;
Let them, with their gosling quills,
Scribble senseless heads of bills;
We may, while they strain their throats,
Wipe our noses with their votes.
"Let Sir Tom, that rampant ass,
Stuff his guts with flax and grass;
But before the priest he fleeces,
Tear the Bible all to pieces:
At the parsons, Tom, halloo, boy!
Worthy offspring of a shoeboy,
Footman! traitor! vile seducer!
Perjur'd rebel! brib'd accuser!
Lay thy paltry privilege aside,
Sprung from Papists, and a regicide!
Fall a working like a mole,
Raise the dirt about your hole!"

Vol. x. pp. 548—550.

This is strong enough, we suspect, for most readers; but we shall venture on a few lines more, to show the tone in which the leading characters in the country might be libelled by name and surname in those days.

"In the porch Briareus stands,
Shows a bribe in all his hands;
Briareus the secretary,
But we mortals call him Carey.
When the rogues their country fleece,
They may hope for pence a-piece.
"Clio, who had been so wise
To put on a fool's disguise,
To bespeak some approbation,
And be thought a near relation,
When she saw three hundred brutes
All involv'd in wild disputes,
Roaring till their lungs were spent,
Privilege of Parliament,
Now a new misfortune feels,
Dreading to be laid by th' heels," &c.
"Keeper, show me where to fix
On the puppy pair of Dicks:
By their lantern jaws and leathern,
You might swear they both are brethren:
Dick Fitzbaker, Dick the player!
Old acquaintance, are you there?
Dear companions, hug and kiss,
Toast Old Glorious in your ——;
Tie them, keeper, in a tether,
Let them starve and stink together;
Both are apt to be unruly,
Lash them daily, lash them duly;
Though 'tis hopeless to reclaim them,
Scorpion rods, perhaps, may tame them."

Vol. x. pp. 553, 554.

Such were the libels which a Tory writer found it safe to publish under a Whig administration in 1736; and we do not find that any national disturbance arose from their impunity,—though the libeller was the most celebrated and by far the most popular writer of the age. Nor was it merely the exasperation ot bad fortune that put that polite party upon the use of this discourteous style of discussion. In all situations, the Tories have been the great libellers—and, as is fitting, the great prosecutors of libels; and even in this early age of their glory, had themselves, when in power, encouraged the same licence of defamation, and in the same hands. It will scarcely be believed, that the following character of the Earl of Wharton, then actually Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was publicly printed and sold, with his Lordship's name and addition at full length, in 1710, and was one of the first productions by which the reverend penman bucklered the cause of the Tory ministry, and revenged himself on a parsimonious patron. We cannot afford to give it at full length—but this specimen will answer our purpose.

"Thomas, Earl of Wharton, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by the force of a wonderful constitution, has some years passed his grand climateric, without any visible effects of old age, either on his body or his mind; and in spite of a continual prostitution to those vices which usually wear out both. His behaviour is in all the forms of a young man at five-and-twenty. Whether he walks, or whistles, or talks bawdy, or calls names, he acquits himself in each, beyond a templar of three years' standing.—He seems to be but an ill dissembler, and an ill liar, although they are the two talents he most practises, and most values himself upon. The ends he has gained by lying, appear to be more owing to the frequency, than the art of them: his lies being sometimes detected in an hour, often in a day, and always in a week. He tells them freely in mixed companies, although he knows half of those that hear him to be his enemies, and is sure they will discover them the moment they leave him. He swears solemnly he loves and will serve you; and your back is no sooner turned, but he tells those about him, you are a dog and a rascal. He goes constantly to prayers in the forms of his place, and will talk bawdy and blasphemy at the chapel-door. He is a presbyterian in politics, and an atheist in religion; but he chooses at present to whore with a papist.—He has sunk his fortune by endeavouring to ruin one kingdom, and has raised it by going far in the ruin of another.

"He bears the gallantries of his lady with the indifference of a stoic; and thinks them well recompensed, by a return of children to support his family, without the fatigues of being a father.

"He has three predominant passions, which you will seldom find united in the same man, as arising from different dispositions of mind, and naturally thwarting each other: these are, love of power, love of money, and love of pleasure; they ride him sometimes by turns, sometimes all together. Since he went into Ireland, he seems most disposed to the second, and has met with great success; having gained by his goverment, of under two years, five-and-forty thousand pounds by the most favourable computation, half in the regular way, and half in the prudential.

"He was never yet known to refuse, or keep a promise, as I remember he told a lady, but with an exception to the promise he then made (which was to get her a pension); yet he broke even that, and, I confess, deceived us both. But here I desire to distinguish between a promise and a bargain; for he will be sure to keep the latter, when he has the fairest offer."—Vol. iv. pp. 149—152.

We have not left ourselves room now to say much of Swift's style, or of the general character of his literary genius:—But our opinion may be collected from the remarks we have made on particular passages, and from our introductory observations on the school or class of authors, with whom he must undoubtedly be rated. On the subjects to which he confines himself, he is unquestionably a strong, masculine, and perspicuous writer. He is never finical, fantastic, or absurd—takes advantage of no equivocations in argument—and puts on no tawdriness for ornament. Dealing always with particulars, he is safe from all great and systematic mistakes; and, in fact, reasons mostly in a series of small and minute propositions, in the handling of which, dexterity is more requisite than genius; and practical good sense, with an exact knowledge of transactions, of far more importance than profound and high-reaching judgment. He did not write history or philosophy, but party pamphlets and journals;—not satire, but particular lampoons;—not pleasantries for all mankind, but jokes for a particular circle. Even in his pamphlets, the broader questions of party are always waved, to make way for discussions of personal or immediate interest. His object is not to show that the Tories have better principles of government than the Whigs,—but to prove Lord Oxford an angel, and Lord Somers a fiend, to convict the Duke of Marlborough of avarice or Sir Richard Steele of insolvency;—not to point out the wrongs of Ireland, in the depression of her Catholic population, her want of education, or the discouragement of her industry; but to raise an outcry against an amendment of the copper or the gold coin, or against a parliamentary proposition for remitting the tithe of *agistment*. For those ends, it cannot be denied, that he chose his means judiciously, and used them with incomparable skill and spirit. But to choose such ends, we humbly conceive, was not the part either of a high intellect or a high character; and his genius must share in the disparagement which ought perhaps to be confined to the impetuosity and vindictiveness of his temper.

Of his style, it has been usual to speak with great, and, we think, exaggerated praise. It is less mellow than Dryden's—less elegant than Pope's or Addison's—less free and noble than Lord Bolingbroke's—and utterly without the glow and loftiness which belonged to our earlier masters. It is radically a low and homely style—without grace and without affectation; and chiefly remarkable for a great choice and profusion of *common* words and expressions. Other writers, who have used a plain and direct style, have been for the most part jejune and limited in their diction, and generally give us an impression of the poverty as well as the tameness of their language; but Swift, without ever trespassing into figured or poetical expressions, or ever employing a

word that can be called fine, or pedantic, has a prodigious variety of good set phrases always at his command, and displays a sort of homely richness, like the plenty of an old English dinner, or the wardrobe of a wealthy burgess. This taste for the plain and substantial was fatal to his poetry, which subsists not on such elements; but was in the highest degree favourable to the effect of his humour, very much of which depends on the imposing gravity with which it is delivered, and on the various turns and heightenings it may receive from a rapidly shifting and always appropriate expression. Almost all his works, after The Tale of a Tub, seem to have been written very fast, and with very little minute care of the diction. For his own ease, therefore, it is probable they were all pitched on a low key, and set about on the ordinary tone of a familiar letter or conversation; as that from which there was a little hazard of falling, even in moments of negligence, and from which any rise that could be effected, must always be easy and conspicuous. A man fully possessed of his subject, indeed, and confident of his cause, may almost always write with vigour and effect, if he can get over the temptation of writing finely, and really confine himself to the strong and clear exposition of the matter he has to bring forward. Half of the affectation and offensive pretension we meet with in authors, arises from a want of matter,—and the other half, from a paltry ambition of being eloquent and ingenious out of place. Swift had complete confidence in himself; and had too much real business on his hands, to be at leisure to intrigue for the fame of a fine writer;—in consequence of which, his writings are more admired by the judicious than if he had bestowed all his attention on their style. He was so much a man of business, indeed, and so much accustomed to consider his writings merely as means for the attainment of a practical end—whether that end was the strengthening of a party, or the wounding a foe—that he not only disdained the reputation of a composer of pretty sentences, but seems to have been thoroughly indifferent to all sorts of literary fame. He enjoyed the notoriety and influence which he had procured by his writings; but it was the glory of having carried his point, and not of having written well, that he valued. As soon as his publications had served their turn, they seem to have been entirely forgotten by their author;—and, desirous as he was of being richer, he appears to have thought as little of making money as immortality by means of them. He mentions somewhere, that except 300*l.* which he got for Gulliver, he never made a farthing by any of his writings. Pope understood his trade better,—and not only made knowing bargains for his own works, but occasionally borrowed his friends' pieces, and pocketed the price of the whole. This was notoriously the case with three volumes of Miscellanies, of which the greater part were from the pen of Swift.

In humour and in irony, and in the talent of debasing and defiling what he hated, we join with all the world in thinking the Dean of St. Patrick's without a rival. His humour, though sufficiently marked and peculiar, is not to be easily defined. The nearest description we can give of it, would make it consist in expressing sentiments the most absurd and ridiculous—the most shocking and atrocious—or sometimes the most energetic and original—in a sort of composed, calm, and unconscious way, as if they were plain, undeniable, commonplace truths, which no person could dispute, or expect to gain credit by announcing—and in maintaining them, always in the gravest and most familiar language, with a consistency which somewhat palliates their extravagance, and a kind of perverted ingenuity, which seems to give pledge for their sincerity. The secret, in short, seems to consist in employing the language of humble good sense, and simple undoubting conviction, to express, in their honest nakedness, sentiments which it is usually thought necessary to disguise under a thousand pretences—or truths which are usually introduced with a thousand apologies. The basis of the art is the personating a character of great simplicity and openness, for whom the conventional or artificial distinctions of society are supposed to have no existence; and making use of this character as an instrument to strip vice and folly of their disguises, and expose guilt in all its deformity, and truth in all its terrors. Independent of the moral or satire, of which they may thus be the vehicle, a great part of the entertainment to be derived from works of humour, arises from the contrast between the grave, unsuspecting indifference of the character personated, and the ordinary feelings of the world on the subjects which he discusses. This contrast it is easy to heighten, by all sorts of imputed absurdities: in which case, the humour degenerates into mere farce and buffoonery. Swift has yielded a little to this temptation in The Tale of a Tub; but scarcely at all in Gulliver, or any of his later writings in the same style. Of his talent for reviling, we have already said at least enough, in some of the preceding pages.

(January, 1810.)

Correspondance inédite de Madame du Deffand, *avec D'Alembert, Montesquieu, le Président Henault, La Duchesse du Maine, Mesdames de Choiseul, De Staal, &c. &c.* 3 tomes, 12mo. Paris: 1809.

Lettres de Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, *écrites depuis l'Année* 1773 *jusqu'à l'Année* 1776, &c. 3 tomes, 12mo. Paris: 1809.

The popular works of La Harpe and Marmontel have made the names at least of these ladies pretty well known in this country; and we have been induced to place their correspondence under one article, both because their history is in some measure connected, and because, though extremely unlike each other, they both form a decided contrast to our own national character, and, taken together, go far to exhaust what was peculiar in that of France.

Most of our readers probably remember what La Harpe and Marmontel have said of these two distinguished women; and, at all events, it is not necessary for our purpose to give more than a very superficial account of them. Madame du Deffand was left a widow with a moderate fortune, and a great reputation for wit, about 1750; and soon after gave up her hotel, and retired to apartments in the *couvent* de St. Joseph, where she continued to receive, almost every evening, whatever was most distinguished in Paris for rank, talent, or accomplishment. Having become almost blind in a few years thereafter, she found she required the attendance of some intelligent young woman, who might read and write for her, and assist in doing the honours of her *conversazioni*. For this purpose she cast her eyes on Mademoiselle Lespinasse, the illegitimate daughter of a man of rank, who had been boarded in the same convent, and was for some time delighted with her election. By and bye, however, she found that her young companion began to engross more of the notice of her visitors than she thought suitable; and parted from her with violent, ungenerous, and implacable displeasure. Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, however, carried with her the admiration of the greater part of her patroness' circle; and having obtained a small pension from government, opened her own doors to a society not less brilliant than that into which she had been initiated under Madame du Deffand. The fatigue, however, which she had undergone in reading the old marchioness asleep, had irreparably injured her health, which was still more impaired by the agitations of her own inflammable and ambitious spirit; and she died, before she had obtained middle age, about 1776,—leaving on the minds of almost all the eminent men in France, an impression of talent, and of ardour of imagination, which seems to have been considered as without example. Madame du Deffand continued to preside in her circle till a period of extreme old age; and died in 1780, in full possession of her faculties.

Where the letters that are now given to the world have been secreted for the last thirty years, or by whom they are at last published, we are not informed in either of the works before us. That they are authentic, we conceive, is demonstrated by internal evidence; though, if more of them are extant, the selection that has been made appears to us to be a little capricious. The correspondence of Madame du Deffand reaches from the year 1738 to 1764;—that of Mademoiselle de Lespinasse extends only from 1773 to 1776. The two works, therefore, relate to different periods; and, being entirely of different characters, seem naturally to call for a separate consideration. We begin with the correspondence of Madame du Deffand, both out of respect to her seniority, and because the variety which it exhibits seems to afford room for more observation.

As this lady's house was for fifty years the resort of every thing brilliant in Paris, it is natural to suppose, that she herself must have possessed no ordinary attraction—and to feel an eager curiosity to be introduced even to that shadow of her conversation which we may expect to meet with in her correspondence. Though the greater part of the letters are addressed to her by various correspondents, yet the few which she does write are strongly marked with the traces of her peculiar character and talent; and the whole taken together give a very lively idea of the structure and occupations of the best French society, in the days of its greatest splendour. Laying out of view the greater constitutional gaiety of our neighbours, it appears to us, that this society was distinguished from any that has ever existed in England, by three circumstances chiefly:—in the first place, by the exclusion of all low-bred persons; secondly, by the superior intelligence and cultivation of the women; and, finally, by the want of political avocations, and the absence of political antipathies.

By the first of these circumstances, the old Parisian society was rendered considerably more refined, and infinitely more easy and natural. The general and peremptory proscription of the *bourgeois*, excluded, no doubt, a good deal of vulgarity and coarseness; but it had a still better effect in excluding those feelings of mutual jealousy and contempt, and that conflict of family pride and consequential opulence, which can only be prevented from disturbing a more promiscuous assembly, by means of universal and systematic reserve.

Where all are noble, all are equal;—there is no room for ostentation or pretension of any sort;—every one is in his place every where; and the same manners being familiar to the whole society from their childhood, manners cease in a great measure to be an object of attention. Nobody apprehends any imputation of vulgarity; and nobody values himself on being free from it. The little peculiarities by which individuals are distinguished, are ascribed, not to ignorance or awkwardness, but to caprice merely, or to peculiarity of disposition; and not being checked by contempt or derision, are indulged, for the most part, as caprice or disposition may dictate; and thus the very highest society is brought back, and by the same causes, to much of the freedom and simplicity of the lowest.

In England, we have never had this arrangement. The great wealth of the mercantile classes, and the privilege which every man here possesses of aspiring to every situation, has always prevented any such complete separation of the high and the low-born, even in ordinary society, and made all large assemblages of people to a certain degree promiscuous. Great wealth, or great talents, being sufficient to raise a man to power and eminence, are necessarily received as a sufficient passport into private company; and fill it, on the large scale, with such motley and discordant characters, as visibly to endanger either its ease or its tranquillity. The pride of purse, and of rank, and of manners, mutually provoke each other; and vanities which were undiscovered while they were universal, soon become visible in the light of opposite vanities. With us, therefore, society, when it passes beyond select clubs and associations, is apt either to be distracted with little jealousies and divisions, or finally to settle into constraint, insipidity, and reserve. People meeting from all the extremes of life, are afraid of being misconstrued, and despair of being understood. Conversation is left to a few professed talkers; and all the rest are satisfied to hold their tongues, and despise each other in their hearts.

The superior cultivation of French Women, however, was productive of still more substantial advantages. Ever since Europe became civilised, the females of that country have stood more on an intellectual level with the men than in any other,—and have taken their share in the politics and literature, and public controversies of the day, far more largely than in any other nation with which we are acquainted. For more than two centuries, they have been the umpires of polite letters, and the depositaries and the agents of those intrigues by which the functions of government are usually forwarded or impeded. They could talk, therefore, of every thing that men could wish to talk about; and general conversation, consequently, assumed a tone, both less frivolous and less uniform, than it has ever attained in our country.

The grand source, however, of the difference between the good society of France and of England, is, that, in the former counry, men had nothing but society to attend to; whereas, in the latter, almost all who are considerable for ranks or for talents, are continually engrossed with politics. They have no leisure, therefore, for society, in the first place: in the second place, if they do enter it at all, they are apt to regard it as a scene rather of relaxation than exertion; and, finally, they naturally acquire those habits of thinking and of talking, which are better adapted to carry on business and debate, than to enliven people assembled for amusement. In England, men of condition have still to perform the high duties of citizens and statesmen, and can only rise to eminence by dedicating their days and nights to the study of business and affairs—to the arts of influencing those, with whom, and by whom, they are to act—and to the actual management of those strenuous contentions by which the government of a free state is perpetually embarrassed and preserved. In France, on the contrary, under the old monarchy, men of the first rank had no political functions to discharge—no control to exercise over the government—and no rights to assert, either for themselves or their fellow subjects. They were either left, therefore, to solace their idleness with the frivolous enchantments of polished society, or, if they had any object of public ambition, were driven to pursue it by the mediation of those favourites or mistresses who were most likely to be won by the charms of an elegant address, or the assiduities of a skilful flatterer.

It is to this lamentable inferiority in the government and constitution of their country, that the French are indebted for the superiority of their polite assemblies. Their saloons are better filled than ours, because they have no senate to fill out of their population; and their conversation is more sprightly, and their society more animated than ours, because there is no other outlet for the talent and ingenuity of the nation but society and conversation. Our parties of pleasure, on the other hand, are mostly left to beardless youths and superannuated idlers—not because our men want talents or taste to adorn them, but because their ambition, and their sense of public duty, have dedicated them to a higher service. When we lose our constitution—when the houses of parliament are shut up, our assemblies, we have no doubt, will be far more animated and rational. It would be easy to have splendid gardens and parterres, if we would only give up our corn fields and our pastures: nor should we want for magnificent fountains and ornamental canals, if we were contented to drain the whole surrounding country of the rills that maintain its fertility and beauty.

But, while it is impossible to deny that the French enjoyed, in the agreeable constitution of their higher society, no slight compensation for the want of a free government, it is curious, and not unsatisfactory, to be able to trace the operation of this same compensating principle through all the departments we have alluded to. It is obviously to our free government, and to nothing else, that we owe that mixture of ranks and of characters, which certainly

renders our large society less amiable, and less unconstrained, than that of the old French nobility. Men, possessed of wealth and political power, must be associated with by all with whom they choose to associate, and to whom their friendship or support is material. A trader who has bought his borough but yesterday, will not give his influence to any set of noblemen or ministers, who will not receive him and his family into their society, and agree to treat them as their equals. The same principle extends downwards by imperceptible gradations;—and the whole community is mingled in private life, it must be owned with some little discomfort, by the ultimate action of the same principles which combine them, to their incalculable benefit, in public.

Even the backwardness or the ignorance of our women may be referred to the same noble origin. Women have no legal or direct political functions in any country in the universe. In the arbitrary governments of Europe, however, they exert a personal influence over those in power and authority, which raises them into consequence, familiarizes them in some degree with business and affairs, and leads them to study the character and the dispositions of the most eminent persons of their day. In free states, again, where the personal inclination of any individual can go but a little way, and where every thing must be canvassed and sanctioned by its legitimate censors, this influence is very inconsiderable; and women are excluded almost entirely from any concern in those affairs, with which the leading spirits of the country are necessarily occupied. They come, therefore, almost unavoidably, to be considered as of a lower order of intellect, and to act, and to be treated, upon that apprehension. The chief cause of their inferiority, however, arises from the circumstances that have been already stated. Most of the men of talent in upper life are engaged in pursuits from which women are necessarily excluded, and have no leisure to join in those pursuits which might occupy them in common. Being thus abandoned in a good degree to the society of the frivolous of our sex, it is impossible that they should not be frivolous in their turn. In old France, on the contrary, the men of talents in upper life had little to do but to please and be pleased with the women; and they naturally came to acquire that knowledge and those accomplishments which fitted them for such society.

The last distinction between good French and good English society, arises from the different position which was occupied in each by the men of letters. In France, certainly, they mingled much more extensively with the polite world,—incalculably to the benefit both of that world, and of themselves. In England, our great scholars and authors have commonly lived in their studies, or in the society of a few learned friends or dependants; and their life has been so generally gloomy, laborious and inelegant, that literature and intellectual eminence have lost some of their honours, and much of their attraction. With us, when a man takes to authorship, he is commonly looked upon as having renounced both the gay and busy world; and the consequence is, that the gay are extremely frivolous, and the active rash and superficial; while the man of genius is admired by posterity, and finishes his days rather dismally, without knowing or caring for any other denomination of men, than authors, booksellers and critics.

This distinction too, we think, arises out of the difference of government, or out of some of its more immediate consequences. Our politicians are too busy to mix with men of study; and our idlers are too weak and too frivolous. The studious, therefore, are driven in a great measure to herd with each other, and to form a little world of their own, in which all their peculiarities are aggravated, their vanity encouraged, and their awkwardness confirmed. In Paris, where talent and idleness met together, a society grew up, both more inviting and more accessible to men of thought and erudition. What they communicated to this society rendered it more intelligent and respectable; and what they learned from it, made them much more reasonable, amiable, and happy. They learned, in short, the true value of knowledge and of wisdom, by seeing exactly how much they could contribute to the government or the embellishment of life; and discovered, that there were sources both of pride and of happiness, far more important and abundant than thinking, writing, or reading.

It is curious, accordingly, to trace in the volumes before us, the more intimate and private life of some of those distinguished men, whom *we* find it difficult to represent to ourselves under any other aspect, than that of the authors of their learned publications. D'Alembert, Montesquieu, Henault, and several others, all appear in those letters in their true and habitual character, of cheerful and careless men of the world—whose thoughts ran mostly on the little exertions and amusements of their daily society; who valued even their greatest works chiefly as the means of amusing their leisure, or of entitling them to the admiration of their acquaintances; and occupied themselves about posterity far less than posterity will be occupied about them. It will probably scandalize a good part of *our* men of learning and science (though we think it will be consolatory to some) to be told, that there is great reason for suspecting that the most profound of those authors looked upon learning chiefly as a sort of tranquil and innocent amusement; to which it was very well to have recourse when more lively occupations were not at hand, but which it was wise and meritorious, at all times, to postpone to pleasant parties, and the natural play, either of the imagination or of the affections. It appears, accordingly, not only that they talked easily and familiarly of all their works to their female friends, but that they gave themselves very little anxiety either about their sale, or their notoriety out of the sphere of their own acquaintances, and made and invited all sorts of jokes upon them with unfeigned gaiety and indifference. The lives of our learned men

would be much happier, and their learning much more useful and amiable, if they could be persuaded to see things in the same light. It is more than time, however, to introduce the reader to the characters in the volumes before us.

Madame du Deffand's correspondence consists of letters from Montesquieu, D'Alembert, Henault, D'Argens, Formont, Bernstorff, Scheffer, &c. among the men,—and Mesdames de Staal, de Choiseul, &c. among the women. Her own letters, as we have already intimated, form but a very inconsiderable part of the collection;—and, as these distinguished names naturally excite, in persons out of Paris, more interest than that of any witty marchioness whatsoever, we shall begin with some specimens of the intimate and private style of those eminent individuals, who are already so well known for the value and the beauty of their public instructions.

Of these, the oldest and the most popularly known, was Montesquieu,—an author who frequently appears profound when he is only paradoxical, and seems to have studied with great success the art of hiding a desultory and fantastical style of reasoning in imposing aphorisms, and epigrams of considerable effect. It is impossible to read the *Esprit des Loix*, without feeling that it is the work of an indolent and very ingenious person, who had fits of thoughtfulness and ambition; and had meditated the different points which it comprehends at long intervals, and then connected them as he best could, by insinuations, metaphors, and vague verbal distinctions. There is but little of him in this collection; but what there is, is extremely characteristic. D'Alembert had proposed that he should write the articles *Democracy* and *Despotism*, for the Encyclopédie; to which proposal he answers with much *naïveté*, as follows:

"Quant à mon introduction dans l'Encyclopédie, c'est un beau palais où je serais bien glorieux de mettre les pieds; mais pour les deux articles *Démocratie* et *Despotisme*, je ne voudrais pas prendre ceux-là; j'ai tiré, sur ces articles, de mon cerveau tout ce qui y était. *L'esprit que j'ai est un moule; on n'en tire jamais que les mêmes portraits:* ainsi je ne vous dirais que ce que j'ai dit, et peut-être plus mal que je ne l'ai dit. Ainsi, si vous voulez de moi, laissez à mon esprit le choix de quelques articles; et si vous voulez ce choix, ce fera chez madame du Deffand avec du marasquin. Le père Castel dit qu'il ne peut pas se corriger, parce qu'en corrigeant son ouvrage, il en fait un autre; et moi je ne puis pas me corriger, parce que je chante toujours la même chose. Il me vient dans l'esprit que je pourrais prendre peut-être l'article *Goût*, et je prouverai bien que *difficile est propriè communia dicere.*"—Vol. i. pp. 30, 31.

There is likewise another very pleasing letter to M. de Henault, and a gay copy of verses to Madame de Mirepoix;—but we hasten on to a personage still more engaging. Of all the men of genius that ever existed, D'Alembert perhaps is the most amiable and truly respectable. The great extent and variety of his learning, his vast attainments and discoveries in the mathematical sciences, and the beauty and eloquence of his literary compositions, are known to all the world: But the simplicity and openness of his character—his perpetual gentleness and gaiety in society—the unostentatious independence of his sentiments and conduct—his natural and cheerful superiority to all feelings of worldly ambition, jealousy, or envy—and that air of perpetual youth and unassuming kindness, which made him so delightful and so happy in the society of women,—are traits which we scarcely expect to find in combination with those splendid qualifications; and compose altogether a character of which we should have been tempted to question the reality, were we not fortunate enough to be familiar with its counterpart in one living individual.*

It is not possible, perhaps, to give a better idea of the character of D'Alembert, than merely to state the fact, and the reason of his having refused to go to Berlin, to preside over the academy founded there by Frederic. In answer to a most flattering and urgent application from that sovereign, he writes thus to M. D'Argens.†

"La situation où je suis seroit peut-être, monsieur, un motif suffisant pour bien d'autres, de renoncer à leur pays. Ma fortune est au-dessous du médiocre; 1700 liv. de rente font tout mon revenu: entièrement indépendant et maître de mes volontés, je n'ai point de famille qui s'y oppose; oublié du gouvernement comme tant de gens le sont de la Providence, persécuté même autant qu'on peut l'être quand on évite de donner trop d'avantages sur soi à la méchanceté des hommes; je n'ai aucune part aux récompenses qui pleuvent ici sur les gens de lettres, avec plus de profusion que de lumières. Malgré tout cela, monsieur, la tranquillité dont je jouis est si parfaite et si douce, que je ne puis me résoudre à lui faire courir le moindre risque."—"Supérieur à la mauvaise fortune, les épreuves de toute espèce que j'ai essuyées dans ce genre, m'ont endurci à l'indigence et au malheur, et ne m'ont laissé de sensibilité que pour ceux qui me ressemblent. A force de privations, je me suis accoutumé sans effort à me contenter du plus étroit nécessaire, et je serois même en état de partager mon peu de fortune avec d'honnêtes gens plus pauvres que moi. J'ai commencé, comme les autres hommes, par désirer les places et les richesses, j'ai fini par y renoncer absolument; et de jour en jour je m'en trouve mieux. La vie retirée et assez obscure que je mène est parfaitement conforme à mon caractère, à mon amour extrême pour l'indépendance, et peut-être même à un peu d'éloignement que les événemens de ma vie m'ont inspiré pour les hommes. La retraite ou le régime que me prescrivent mon état et mon goût m'ont procuré la santé la plus parfaite et la plus égale—c'est-à-dire, le premier bien d'un philosophe; enfin j'ai le bonheur de jouir d'un petit nombre d'amis, dont le commerce et la confiance font la consolation et le charme de ma vie. Jugez maintenant vous-même, monsieur, s'il m'est possible de renoncer à ces avantages, et de changer un bonheur sûr pour une situation toujours incertaine, quelque brillante qu'elle puisse être. Je ne doute nullement des bontés du roi, et de tout ce qu'il peut faire pour me rendre agréable mon nouvel état; mais, malheureusement pour moi, toutes les circonstances essentielles à mon bonheur ne sont pas en son pouvoir. Si ma santé venoit à s'altérer, ce qui ne seroit que trop à craindre, que deviendrois-je alors? Incapable de me rendre utile au roi, je me verrois forcé à aller finir mes jours loin de lui, et à reprendre dans ma patrie, ou ailleurs, mon ancien état, qui auroit perdu ses premiers charmes. Peut-être même n'aurois-je plus la consolation de retrouver en France les amis que j'y aurois laissés, et à qui je percerois le cœur par mon départ. Je vous avoue, monsieur, que cette dernière raison seule peut tout sur moi.

"Enfin (et je vous prie d'être persuadé que je ne cherche point à me parer ici d'une fausse modestie) je doute que je fusse aussi propre à cette place que S. M. veut bien le croire. Livré dès mon enfance à des études continuelles, je n'ai que dans la théorie la connoissance des hommes, qui est si nécessaire dans la pratique quand on a affaire à eux. La tranquillité, et, si je l'ose dire, *l'oisiveté* du cabinet, m'ont rendu absolument incapable des détails auxquels le chef d'un corps doit se livrer. D'ailleurs, dans les différens objets dont l'Académie s'occupe, il en est qui me sont entièrement inconnus, comme la chimie, l'histoire naturelle, et plusieurs autres, sur lesquels par conséquent je ne pourrois être aussi utile que je le désirerois. Enfin une place aussi brillante que celle dont le roi veut m'honorer, oblige à une sorte de représentation tout-à-fait éloignée du train de vie que j'ai pris jusqu'ici; elle engage à un grand nombre de devoirs: et les devoirs sont les entraves d'un homme libre."—Vol. ii. pp.73—78.

This whole transaction was kept quite secret for many months; and, when it began to take air, he speaks of it to Madame du Deffand, in the following natural manner.

"Après tout, que cela se répande ou ne se répande pas, je n'en suis ni fâché ni bien-aise. Je garderai au roi de Prusse son secret, même lorsqu'il ne l'exige plus, et vous verrez aisément que mes lettres n'ont pas été faites pour être vues du ministère de France; je suis bien résolu de ne lui pas demander plus de grâces qu'aux ministres du roi de Congo; et je me contenterai que la postérité lise sur mon tombeau; *il fut estimé des honnêtes gens, et est mort pauvre, parce qu'il l'a bien voulu.* Voilà, madame, de quelle manière je pense. Je ne veux braver ni aussi flatter les gens qui m'ont fait du mal, ou qui sont dans la disposition de m'en faire; mais je me conduirai de manière que je les réduirai seulement à ne me pas faire du bien."—Vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.

Upon publishing his Melanges, he was furiously attacked by a variety of acrimonious writers; and all his revenge was to retire to his geometry, and to write such letters as the following to Madame du Deffand.

"Me voilà claquemuré pour long-temps, et vraisemblablement pour toujours, dans ma triste, mais très-chère et très-paisible Géométrie! Je suis fort content de trouver un prétexte pour ne plus rien faire, dans le déchaînement que mon livre a excité contre moi. Je n'ai pourtant ni attaqué personne, ni même désigné qui que ce soit, plus que n'a fait l'auteur du Méchant, et vingt autres, contre lesquels personne ne s'est déchaîné. Mais il n'y a qu'heur et malheur. Je n'ai besoin ni de l'amitié de tous ces gens-là, puisque assurément je ne veux rien leur demander, ni de leur estime, puisque j'ai bien résolu de ne jamais vivre avec eux: aussi je les mets à pis faire.

"Adieu, Madame; hâtez votre retour. Que ne savez-vous de la géométrie! qu'avec elle on se passe de bien des choses!"—Vol. i. pp. 104, 105.

"Mon ouvrage est publié; il s'est un peu vendu; les frais de l'impression sont retirés; les éloges, les critiques et l'argent viendront quand ils voudront."—"Je n'ai encore rien touché. Je vous mander ce que je gagnerai: il n'y a pas d'apparence que cela se monte fort haut; il n'y a pas d'apparence non plus que je continue à travailler dans ce genre. *Je ferai de la géométrie, et je lirai Tacite!* Il me semble qu'on a grande envie que je me taise et en vérité je ne demande pas mieux. Quand ma petite fortune ne suffira plus à ma subsistence, je me retirerai dans quelque endroit où je puisse vivre et mourir à bon marché. Adieu, Madame. Estimez, comme moi, les hommes ce qu'ils valent, et il ne vous manquera rien pour être heureuse. On dit Voltaire raccommodé avec le roi de Prusse, et Maupertuis retombé. Ma foi, les hommes sont bien foux, à commencer par les sages."—Vol. ii. pp. 50, 51.

"Eh bien! vous ne voulez donc pas, ni Formont non plus, que je me claquemure dans ma géométrie? J'en suis pourtant bien tenté. Si vous saviez combien cette géométrie est une retraite douce à la paresse! et puis les sots ne vous lisent point, et par conséquent ne vous blâment ni ne vous louent: et comptez-vous cet avantage-là pour rien? En tout cas, j'ai de la géométrie pour un an, tout au moins. Ah! que je fais à présent de belles choses que personne ne lira!

"J'ai bien quelques morceaux de littérature à traiter, qui seroient peut-être assez agréables; mais je chasse tout cela de ma tête, comme mauvais train. La géométrie est ma femme, et je me suis remis en ménage.

"Avec cela, j'ai plus d'argent devant moi que je n'en puis dépenser. Ma foi, on est bien fou de se tant tourmenter pour des choses qui ne rendent pas plus heureux: on a bien plutôt fait de dire: Ne pourrois-je pas me passer de cela? Et c'est la recette dont j'use depuis long-temps."—Vol. ii. pp. 52, 53.

With all this softness and carelessness of character, nothing could be more firm and inflexible when truth and justice were in question. The President Henault was the oldest and first favourite of Madame du Deffand; and, at the time of publishing the Encyclopædia, Madame du Deffand had more power over D'Alembert than any other person. She wished very much that something flattering should be said of her favourite in the Introductory Discourse, which took a review of the progress of the arts and sciences; but D'Alembert resisted, with heroic courage, all the entreaties that were addressed to him on this subject. The following may serve as specimens of the tone which he maintained on the occasion.

"Je suis devenu cent fois plus amoureux de la retraite et de la solitude, que je ne l'étois quand vous avez quitté Paris. Je dîne et soupe chez moi tous les jours, ou presque tous les jours, et je me trouve très-bien de cette manière de vivre. Je vous verrai donc quand vous n'aurez personne, et aux heures où je pourrai espérer de vous trouver seule: dans d'autres temps, j'y rencontrerois votre président, qui m'embarrasseroit, parce qu'il croiroit avoir des reproches á me faire, que je ne crois point en mériter, et que je ne veux pas être dans le cas de le désobliger, en me justifiant auprès de lui. Ce que vous me demandez pour lui est impossible, et je puis vous assurer qu'il est bien impossible, puisque je ne fais pas cela pour vous. En premier lieu, le Discours préliminaire est imprimé, il y a plus de six semaines: ainsi je ne pourrois pas l'y fourrer aujourd'hui, même quand je le voudrois. En second lieu, pensez-vous de bonne foi, madame, que dans un ouvrage destiné à célébrer les grands génies de la nation et les ouvrages qui ont véritablement contribué aux progrès des lettres et des sciences, je doive parler de l'Abrégé chronologique? C'est un ouvrage utile, j'en conviens, et assez commode; mais voilà tout en vérité: c'est là ce que les gens

* It cannot *now* offend the modesty of any living reader, if I explain that the person here alluded to was my excellent and amiable friend, the late Professor Playfair.

† This learned person writes in a very affected and *précieuse* style. He ends one of his letters to D'Alembert with the following eloquent expression:—"Ma santé s'effoiblit tous les jours de plus en plus; et je *me dispose à aller faire bientôt mes révérences au père éternel:* mais tandis que je resterai dans ce monde je serai le plus zélé de vos admirateurs."

de lettres en pensent, c'est là ce qu'on en dira quand le président ne sera plus: et quand je ne serai plus moi, je suis jaloux qu'on ne me reproche pas d'avoir donné d'éloges excessifs à personne."—Vol. ii. pp. 35, 36.

"J'ai une confession à vous faire: j'ai parlé de lui dans l'Encyclopédie, non pas à *Chronologie*, car cela est pour Newton, Petau et Scaliger, mais à *Chronologique*. J'y dis que nous avons, en notre langue, plusieurs bons abrégés chronologiques: le sien, un autre qui vaut pour le moins autant, et un troisième qui vaut mieux. Cela n'est pas dit si crûment, ainsi ne vous fâchez pas. Il trouvera la louange bien mince, surtout la partageant avec d'autres; mais Dieu et vous, et même vous toute seule, ne me feroient pas changer de langage."—"Il fera sur l'Académie tout ce qui lui plaira; ma conduite prouve que je ne désire point d'en être, et en vérité je le serois sans lui, si j'en avois bien envie; mais le plaisir de dire la vérite librement quand on n'outrage ni n'attaque personne, vaut mieux que toutes les Académies du monde, depuis la Françoise, jusqu'à celle de Dugast."—"Puisque je suis déjà d'une Académie, c'est un petit agrément de plus que d'être des autres; mais si j'avois mon expérience, et quinze ans de moins, je vous réponds que je ne serois d'aucune."—Vol. ii. pp. 56—64.

We may now take a peep at the female correspondents,—in the first rank of whom we must place Madame de Staal, so well known to most of our readers by her charming Memoirs. This lady was attached to the court of the Duchess of Maine; and her letters, independent of the wit and penetration they display, are exceedingly interesting, from the near and humiliating view they afford of the miserable ennui, the selfishness and paltry jealousies which brood in the atmosphere of a court,—and abundantly avenge the lowly for the outward superiority that is assumed by its inhabitants. There are few things more instructive, or more compassionable, than the picture which Madame de Staal has drawn, in the following passages, of her poor princess dragging herself about in the rain and the burning sun, in the vain hope of escaping from the load of her own inanity,—seeking relief, in the multitude of her visitors, from the sad vacuity of friendship and animation around her,—and poorly trying to revenge herself for her own unhappiness, by making every body near her uncomfortable.

"Je lus avant-hier votre lettre, ma reine, à S. A. Elle était dans un accès de frayeur du tonnerre, qui ne fit pas valoir vos galanteries. J'aurai soin une autre fois de ne vous pas exposer à l'orage. Nous nageons ces jours passés dans la joie; nous nageons à présent dans la pluie. Nos idées, devenues douces et agréables, vont reprendre toute leur noirceur. Pardessus cela est arrivé, depuis deux jours, à notre princesse un rhume, avec de la fièvre: ce nonobstant et malgré le temps diabolique, la promenade va toujours son train. Il semble que la Providence prenne soin de construire pour les princes des corps à l'usage de leurs fantaisies, sans quoi ils ne pourraient attraper âge d'homme."—Vol. i. pp. 161, 162.

"En dépit d'un troisième orage plus violent que les deux précédens, nous arrivons d'une chasse: nous avons essuyé la bordée au beau milieu de la forêt. J'espérais éviter comme à l'ordinaire cette belle partie; mais on a adroitement tiré parti des raisons que j'avais alléguées pour m'en dispenser; ce qui m'a mis hors d'état de reculer. C'est dommage qu'un art si ingénieux soit employé à désoler les gens."—Vol. i. p. 164.

"Je suis très fâchée que vous manquiez d'amusemens: c'est un médicament nécessaire à la santé, notre princesse le pense bien; car étant véritablement malade, elle va sans fin, sans cesse, quelque temps qu'il fasse."—Vol. i. p. 168.

"Nous faisons, nous disons toujours les mêmes choses: les promenades, les observations sur le vent, le cavagnole, les remarques sur la perte et le gain, les mesures pour tenir les portes fermées quelque chaud qu'il fasse, la désolation de ce qu'on appelle les étouffés, au nombre desquels je suis, et dont vous n'êtes pas, qualité qui redouble le désir de votre société."—Vol. i. p. 197.

"Rien n'est égal à la surprise et au chagrin où l'on est, ma reine, d'avoir appris que vous avez été chez Madame la Duchesse de Modène. Un amant bien passionné et bien jaloux supporte plus tranquillement les démarches les plus suspectes, qu'on n'endure celle-ci de votre part. 'Vous allez vous dévouer là, abandonner tout le reste; voilà à quoi on étoit réservé: c'est une destinée bien cruelle!' &c. J'ai dit ce qu'il y avait à dire pour ramener le calme; on n'a voulu rien entendre. Quoique je ne doive plus m'étonner, cette scène a encore trouvé moyen de me surprendre. Venez, je vous conjure, ma reine, nous rassurer contre cette alarme: ne louez point la personne dont il s'agit, et surtout ne parlez pas de son affliction; car cela serait pris pour un reproche."—Vol. ii. pp. 22, 23.

All this is miserable: but such are the necessary consequences of being bred up among flatterers and dependants. A prince has more chance to escape this heartlessness and insignificance; because he has high and active duties to discharge, which necessarily occupy his time, and exercise his understanding; but the education of a princess is a work of as great difficulty as it may come to be of importance. We must make another extract or two from Madame de Staal, before taking leave of her.

"Madame du Châtelet et Voltaire, qui s'étaient annoncés pour aujourd'hui et qu'on avait perdus de vue, parurent hier, sur le minuit, comme deux spectres, avec une odeur de corps embaumés qu'ils semblaient avoir apportée de leurs tombeaux. On sortait de table. C'étaient pourtant des spectres affamés: il leur fallut un souper, et qui plus est, des lits, qui n'étaient pas préparés. La concierge, déjà couchée, se leva à grande hâte. Gaya, qui avait offert son logement pour les cas pressans, fut forcé de le céder dans celui-ci, déménagea avec autant de précipitation et de déplaisir qu'une armée surprise dans son camp, laissant une partie de son bagage au pouvoir de l'ennemi. Voltaire s'est bien trouvé du gîte: cela n'a point du tout consolé Gaya. Pour la dame, son lit ne s'est pas trouvé bien fait: il a fallu la déloger aujourd'hui. Notez que ce lit elle l'avait fait elle-même, faute de gens, et avait trouvé un défaut de .... dans les matelas, ce qui, je crois, a plus blessé son esprit exact que son corps peu délicat."—"Nos revenans ne se montrent point de jour, ils apparurent hier à dix heures du soir: je ne pense pas qu'on les voie guère plus tôt aujourd'hui; l'un est à décrire de hauts faits, l'autre à commenter Newton; ils ne veulent ni jouer ni se promener: ce sont bien des non-valeurs dans une société, où leurs doctes écrits ne sont d'aucun rapport."—"Madame du Châtelet est d'hier à son troisième logement: elle ne pouvait plus supporter celui qu'elle avait choisi; il y avait du bruit, de la fumée sans feu (il me semble que c'est son emblême). Le bruit, ce n'est pas la nuit qu'il l'incommode, à ce qu'elle m'a dit, mais le jour, au fort de son travail: cela dérange ses idées. Elle fait actuellement la revue de ses principes! c'est un exercice qu'elle réitère chaque année, sans quoi ils pourraient s'échapper, et peut-être s'en aller si loin qu'elle n'en retrouverait pas un seul. Je crois bien que sa tête est pour eux une maison de force, et non pas le lieu de leur naissance: c'est le cas de veiller soigneusement à leur garde. Elle préfère le bon air de cette occupation à tout amusement, et persiste à ne se montrer qu'à la nuit close. Voltaire a fait des vers galans, qui réparent un peu le mauvais effet de leur conduite inusitée."—Vol. i. pp. 178, 179. 182. 185, 186.

After all this experience of the follies of the great and the learned, this lively little woman concludes in the true tone of French practical philosophy.

"O ma reine! que les hommes et leurs femelles sont de plaisans animaux! Je ris de leurs manœuvres, le jour que j'ai bien dormi; quand le sommeil me manque, je suis prête à les assommer. Cette variété de mes dispositions me fait voir que je ne dégénère pas de mon espèce. Moquons-nous des autres, et qu'ils se moquent de nous; c'est bien fait de toute part!"—Vol. i. p. 181.

Among the lady writers in these volumes, we do not know if there be any entitled to take precedence of la Duchesse de Choiseul, who writes thus learnedly on the subject of ennui to Madame du Deffand.

"Savez-vous pourquoi vous vous ennuyez tant, ma chère enfant? C'est justement par la peine que vous prenez *d'éviter, de prévoir, de combattre* l'ennui. Vivez au jour la journée; prenez le temps comme il vient; profitez de tous les momens, et avec cela vous verrez que vous ne vous ennuierez pas: si les circonstances vous sont contraires, cédez au torrent et ne prétendez pas y résister."—

"Je m'aperçois, ma chère enfant, que je vous dis des choses bien communes; mais accoutumez-vous à les supporter, 1°, parce que je ne suis pas en état de vous en dire d'autres; 2°, parce qu'en morale elles sont toujours les plus vraies, parce qu'elles tiennent à la nature. Après avoir bien exercé son esprit, le philosophe le plus éclairé sera obligé d'en revenir, à cet égard, à l'axiome du plus grand sot, de même qu'il partage avec lui l'air qu'il respire."—"Les préjuges se multiplient, les arts s'accroissent, les sciences s'approfondissent: mais la morale est toujours la même, parce que la nature ne change pas; elle est toujours réduite à ces deux points: être juste pour être bon, être sage pour être heureux. Sadi, poëte Persan, dit *que la sagesse est de jouir, la bonté de faire jouir:* j'y ajoute la justice."—

"Il y a trois choses dont vous dites que les femmes ne conviennent jamais: l'une d'entre elles est de s'ennuyer. Je n'en conviens pas non plus ici: malgré vos soupçons, je vois mes ouvriers, je crois conduire leurs ouvrages. A ma toilette, j'ai cette petite Corbie qui est laide, mais fraîche comme une pêche, folle comme un jeune chien; qui chante, qui rit, qui joue du clavecin, qui danse, qui saute au lieu de marcher, qui ne sait ce qu'elle fait, et fait tout avec grâce, qui ne sait ce qu'elle dit, et dit tout avec esprit, et surtout une naïveté charmante. La nuit je dors, le jour je rêve, et ces plaisirs si doux, si passifs, si bêtes, sont précisément ceux qui me conviennent le mieux."—Vol. ii. pp. 134, 135.

It is time now that we should come to Madame du Deffand herself:—the wittiest, the most selfish, and the most *ennuyé* of the whole party. Her wit, to be sure, is very enviable and very entertaining; but it is really consolatory to common mortals, to find how little it could amuse its possessor. This did not proceed in her, however, from the fastidiousness which is sometimes supposed to arise from a long familiarity with excellence, so much as from a long habit of selfishness, or rather from a radical want of heart or affection. La Harpe says of her, "Qu'il étoit difficile d'avoir moins de sensibilité, et plus d'égoïsme." With all this, she was greatly given to gallantry in her youth; though her attachments, it would seem, were of a kind not very likely to interfere with her peace of mind. The very evening her first lover died, after an intimacy of twenty years, La Harpe assures us, "Qu'elle vint souper en grande compagnie chez Madame de Marchais, où j'étais; et on lui parla de la perte qu'elle venait de faire. *Hélas! il est mort ce soir à six heures; sans cela, vous ne me verriez pas ici.* Ce furent ses propres paroles; et elle soupa comme à son ordinaire, c'est-à-dire fort bien; car elle était très-gourmande." (Pref. p. xvi.) She is also recorded to have frequently declared, that she could never bring herself to love any thing,—though, in order to take every possible chance, she had several times attempted to become *devote*—with no great success. This, we have no doubt, is the secret of her ennui; and a fine example it is of the utter worthlessness of all talent, accomplishment, and glory, when disconnected from those feelings of kindness and generosity, which are of themselves sufficient for happiness. Madame du Deffand, however, must have been delightful to those who sought only for amusement. Her tone is admirable; her wit flowing and natural; and though a little given to detraction, and not a little importunate and *exigeante* towards those on whose complaisance she had claims, there is always an air of politeness in her raillery, and of knowledge of the world in her murmurs, that prevents them from being either wearisome or offensive.

Almost all the letters of her writing which are published in these volumes, seem to have been written in the month of July 1742, when she spent a few weeks at the waters of *Forges*, and wrote almost daily to the President Henault at Paris. This close correspondence of theirs fills one of these volumes; and, considering the rapidity and carelessness with which both parties must have written, must give, we should think, a very correct, and certainly a very favourable idea of the style of their ordinary conversation. We shall give a few extracts very much at random. She had made the journey along with a Madame de Péquigni, of whom she gives the following account.

"Mais venons à un article bien plus intéressant, c'est ma compagne. O mon Dieu! qu'elle me déplaît! Elle est radicalement folle; elle ne connoit point d'heure pour ses repas; elle a déjeuné à Gisors à huit heures du matin, avec du veau froid; à Gournay, elle a mangé du pain trempé dans le pot, pour nourrir un Limousin, ensuite un morceau de brioche, et puis trois assez grands biscuits. Nous arrivons, il n'est que deux heures et demie, et elle veut du riz et une capilotade; elle mange comme un singe; ses mains ressemblent à leurs pattes; elle ne cesse de bavarder. Sa prétention est d'avoir de l'imagination, et de voir toutes choses sous des faces singulières, et comme la nouveauté des idées lui manque, elle y supplée par la bizarrerie de l'expression, sous prétexte qu'elle est naturelle. Elle me déclare toutes ses fantaisies, en m'assurant qu'elle ne veut que ce qui me convient; mais je crains d'être forcé à être sa complaisante; cepen-

dant je compte bien que cela ne s'étendra pas sur ce qui intéressera mon régime. Elle comptoit tout à l'heure s'établir dans ma chambre pour y faire ses repas, mais je lui ai dit que j'allois écrire : je l'ai priée de faire dire à Madame Laroche les heures où elle vouloit manger et ce qu'elle voudroit manger, et où elle vouloit manger ; et que, pour moi, je comptois avoir la même liberté : en conséquence je mangerai du riz et un poulet à huit heures du soir."—Vol. ii. pp, 191, 192.

After a few days she returns again to this unfortunate companion.

"La Péquigni n'est d'aucune ressource, et son esprit est comme l'espace : il y a étendue, profondeur, et peut-être toutes les autres dimensions que je ne saurais dire, parce que je ne les sais pas ; mais cela n'est que *du vide* pour l'usage. Elle a tout senti, tout jugé, tout éprouvé, tout choisi, tout rejeté ; elle est, dit-elle, d'une difficulté singulière en compagnie, et cependant elle est toute la journée avec toutes nos petites madames à jaboter comme une pie. Mais ce n'est pas cela qui me déplaît en elle : cela m'est commode dès aujourd'hui, et cela me sera très agréable sitôt que Formont sera arrivé. Ce qui m'est insupportable, c'est le dîner ; elle a l'air d'une folle en mangeant ; elle dépèce une poularde dans le plat où on la sert, ensuite elle la met dans un autre, se fait rapporter du bouillon pour mettre dessus, tout semblable à celui qu'elle rend, et puis elle prend un haut d'aile, ensuite le corps dont elle ne mange que la moitié ; et puis elle ne veut pas que l'on retourne le veau pour couper un os, de peur qu'on n'amollisse la peau ; elle coupe un os avec toute la peine possible, elle le ronge à demi, puis retourne à sa poularde ; après elle pèle tout le dessus du veau, ensuite elle revient à ronger sa poularde : cela dure deux heures. Elle a sur son assiette des morceaux d'os rongées, du peaux sucées, et pendant ce temps, ou je m'ennuie, à la mort, ou je mange plus qu'il ne faudrait. C'est une curiosité de lui voir manger un biscuit ; cela dure une demi-heure, et le total, c'est qu'elle mange comme un loup : il est vrai qu'elle fait un exercice enragé. Je suis fâchée que vous ayez de commun avec elle l'impossibilité de rester une minute en repos."—Vol. iii. pp. 39—41.

The rest of her company do not come any better off. The lady she praises most, seems to come near to the English character.

"Madame de Bancour a trente ans ; elle n'est pas vilaine ; elle est très douce et très polie, et ce n'est pas sa faute de n'être pas plus amusante ; c'est faute d'avoir rien vu : car elle a du bon sens, n'a nulle prétention, et est fort naturelle ; son ton de voix est doux, naïf et même un peu niais, dans le goût de Jeliot ; si elle avait vécu dans le monde, elle serait aimable : je lui fais conter sa vie ; elle est occupée de ses devoirs, sans austérité ni ostentation ; si elle ne m'ennuyait pas, elle me plairait assez."—Vol. iii. p. 26.

The following are some of her wailings over her banishment.

"Il me prend des étonnemens funestes d'être ici : c'est comme la pensée de la mort ; si je ne m'en distrayais, j'en mourrais réellement. Vous ne sauriez vous figurer la tristesse de ce séjour ; mais si fait, puisque vous êtes à Plombières : mais non ; c'est que ce n'est point le lieu, c'est la compagnie dont il est impossible de faire aucun usage. Heureusement depuis que je suis ici, j'ai un certain hébêtement qui ferait que je n'entendrais pas le plus petit raisonnement : je végète."—"Je ne crois pas qu'aucun remède puisse être bon lorsqu'on s'ennuie autant que je fais : ce n'est pas que je supporte mon mal patiemment ; mais jamais je ne suis bien-aise, et ce n'est que parce que je végète que je suis tranquille : quand dix heures arrivent je suis ravie, je vois la fin de la journée avec délices. Si je n'avais pas mon lit et mon fauteuil, je serais cent fois plus malheureuse."—Vol. iii. pp. 96—98.

The following, though short, is a good specimen of the tone in which she treats her lover.

"Je crois que vous me regrettez, c'est-à-dire, que vous pensez beaucoup à moi. Mais (comme de raison) vous vous divertissez fort bien : vous êtes comme les quiétistes, vous faites tout en moi, pour moi et par moi ; mais le fait est que vous faites tout sans moi et que vos journées se passent gaiement, que vous jouissez d'une certaine liberté qui vous plaît, et vous êtes fort aise que pendant ce temps-là je travaille à me bien porter. Mes nuits ne sont pas trop bonnes, et je crois que c'est que je mange un peu trop : hier je me suis retranché le bœuf, aujourd'hui je compte réformer la quantité de pain."—"N'allez point vous corriger sur rien, j'aime que vous me parliez ormeaux, ruisseaux, moineaux, etc., et ce m'est une occasion très-agréable de vous donner des démentis, de vous confondre, de vous tourmenter, c'est je crois ce qui contribue le plus à me faire passer mes eaux."—Vol. iii. pp. 126, 127. 129.

We have scarcely left ourselves room to give any of the gentleman's part of this correspondence. It is very pleasingly and gaily sustained by him,—though he deals mostly in the tittle-tattle of Paris, and appears a little vain of his own currency and distinction. We extract the following paragraphs, just as they turn up to us.

"Je ne crois pas que l'on puisse être heureux en province quand on a passé sa vie à Paris ; mais heureux qui n'a jamais connu Paris, et qui n'ajoute pas nécessairement à cette vie les maux chimériques, qui sont les plus grands ! car on peut guérir un seigneur qui gémit de ce qu'il a été grêlé, en lui faisant voir qu'il se trompe, et que sa vigne est couverte de raisin ; mais la grêle métaphysique ne peut être combattue. La nature, ou la providence n'est pas si injuste qu'on le veut dire ; n'y mettons rien du nôtre, et nous serons moins à plaindre ; et puis regardons le terme qui approche, le marteau qui va frapper l'heure, et pensons que tout cela va disparaître.

"Ah ! l'inconcevable Pont de Veyle ! il vient de donner une parade chez M. le duc d'Orléans : cette scène que vous connaissez du vendeur d'orviétan. Au lieu du Forcalquier, c'était le petit Gauffin qui faisait le Giles ; et Pont de Veyle a distribué au moins deux cents boîtes avec un couplet pour tout le monde : il est plus jeune que quand vous l'avez vu la première fois ; *il s'amuse de tout ; n'aime rien ;* et n'a conservé de la mémoire de la défunte que la haine pour la musique française."—Vol. i. pp. 110, 111.

At the end of the letters, there are placed a variety of *portraits*, or characters of the most distinguished persons in Madame du Deffand's society, written by each other—sometimes with great freedom, and sometimes with much flattery—but almost always with wit and penetration. We give the following by Madame du Deffand as a specimen, chiefly because it is shorter than most of the others.

"Madame la Duchesse d'Aiguillon a la bouche enfoncé, le nez de travers, le regard fol et hardi,—et malgré cela elle est belle. L'éclat de son teint l'emporte sur l'irregularité de ces traits.

"Sa taille est grossière, sa gorge, ses bras sont énormes ; cependant elle n'a point l'air pesant ni épais : la force supplée en elle à la légèreté.

"Son esprit a beaucoup de rapport à sa figure : il est pour ainsi dire aussi mal dessiné que son visage et aussi éclatant : l'abondance, l'activité, l'impetuosité en sont les qualités dominantes. Sans goût, sans grace, et sans justesse, elle étonne, elle surprend, mais elle ne plaît ni n'interesse.

"On pourrait comparer Madame la Duchesse d'Aiguillon à ces statues faites pour le cintre, et qui paraissent monstrueuses étant dans le parvis. Sa figure ni son esprit ne veulent point être vus ni examinés de trop près ; une certaine distance est nécessaire à sa beauté : des juges peu éclairés et peu délicats sont les seuls qui puissent être favorables à son esprit.

"Semblable à la trompette du jugement, elle est faite pour resusciter les morts ; ce sont les impuissans qui doivent l'aimer, ce sont les sourds qui doivent l'entendre."—Vol. iii. pp. 154—156.

There are three characters of Madame du Deffand herself, all very flattering. That by the President Henault is the least so. It ends as follows.

"Cependant, pour ne pas marquer trop de prévention et obtenir plus de croyance, j'ajouterai que l'âge, sans lui ôter ses talens, l'avait rendue jalouse et méfiante, cédant à ses premiers mouvemens, maladroite pour conduire les hommes dont elle disposait naturellement ; enfin de l'humeur inégale, injuste, ne cessant d'être aimable qu'aux yeux des personnes auxquelles il lui importait de plaire, et, pour finir, la personne par laquelle j'ai été le plus heureux et le plus malheureux, parce qu'elle est ce que j'ai le plus aimé."—Vol. iii. p. 188.

He is infinitely more partial to a Madame de Flamarens, whose character he begins with great elegance as follows.

"Madame de Flamarens a le visage le plus touchant et le plus modeste qui fut jamais ; c'est un genre de beauté que la nature n'a attrapé qu'une fois : il y a dans ses traits quelque chose de rare et de mystérieux, qui aurait fait dire, dans les temps fabuleux, qu'une immortelle, sous cette forme, ne s'était pas assez déguisée !"—Vol. iii. p. 196.

We take our leave now of these volumes : and of the brilliant circle and brilliant days of Madame du Deffand. Such a society probably never will exist again in the world :—nor can we say we are very sorry for it. It was not very moral, we are afraid ; and we have seen, that the most distinguished members of it were not very happy. When we say that it must have been in the highest degree delightful to those who sought only for amusement, we wish it to be understood, not only that amusement does not constitute happiness, but that it can afford very little pleasure to those who have not other sources of happiness. The great extent of the accomplished society of Paris, and the familiarity of its intercourse, seems to have gradually brought almost all its members to spend their whole lives in public. They had no notion, therefore, of domestic enjoyments ; and their affections being dissipated among so many competitors, and distracted by such an incessant variety of small occupations, came naturally to be weakened and exhausted ; and a certain heartless gaiety to be extended indiscriminately to the follies and the misfortunes of their associates. Bating some little fits of gallantry, therefore, there could be no devotedness of attachment ; and no profound sympathy for the sufferings of the most intimate friends. Every thing, we find accordingly, was made a subject for epigrams ; and those who did not make jests at their friends' calamities, were glad, at any rate, to forget them in the society of those who did. When we recollect, too, that the desertion of all the high duties of patriots and statesmen, and the insulting and systematic degradation of the great body of the people were necessary conditions of the excellence of this society, we cannot hesitate in saying, that its brilliancy was maintained at far too great a cost, and that the fuel which was wasted in its support, would have been infinitely better applied in diffusing a gentler light, and a more genial heat, through the private dwellings of the land.

We have occupied ourselves so long with Madame du Deffand and her associates, that we can afford but a small portion of our attention for Mademoiselle de Lespinasse. A very extraordinary person we will allow her to have been ; and a most extraordinary publication she has left us to consider. On a former occasion, we took some notice of the account which Marmontel had given of her character and conduct, and expressed our surprise that any one, who had acted the unprincipled and selfish part which he imputes to her, should be thought worthy, either of the admiration he expresses, or of the friendship and patronage of so many distinguished characters, or of the devoted attachment of such a man as D'Alembert. After reading these letters, we see much reason to doubt of the accuracy of Marmontel's representation ; but, at the same time, find great difficulty in settling our own opinion of the author. Marmontel describes her as having *first* made a vain attempt upon the heart of M. de Guibert, the celebrated author of the Tactics,—and *then* endeavoured to indemnify herself by making a conquest of M. de Mora, the son of the Spanish ambassador, upon whose death she is stated to have died of mortification ; and, in both cases, she is represented as having been actuated more by a selfish and paltry ambition, than by any feeling of affection. The dates, and the tenor of the letters before us, enable us to detect many inaccuracies in this statement ; while they throw us into new perplexity as to the true character of the writer. They begin in 1773, after M. de Mora had been recalled to Spain by his relations, and when her whole soul seems to be occupied with anguish for this separation ; and they are all addressed to M. de Guibert, who had then recently recommended himself to her, by the tender interest he took in her affliction. From the very beginning, however, there is more of love in them, than we can well reconcile with the subsistence of her first engrossing passion ; and, long before the death of M. Mora, she expresses the most vehement, unequivocal, and passionate attachment to M. Guibert. Sometimes she has fits of remorse for this ; but, for the most part, she seems quite unconscious, either of inconsistency or impropriety ; and M. Guibert is, in the same letter, addressed in terms of the most passionate adoration, and made the confident of her unspeakable, devoted, and unalterable love for

M. Mora. So she goes on,—most furiously and outrageously in love with them both at the same time,—till the death of M. Mora, in 1774. This event, however, makes no difference in her feelings or expressions; she continues to love his memory, just as ardently as his living successor in her affection; and her letters are divided, as before, between expressions of heart-rending grief and unbounded attachment—between her *besoin de mourir* for M. Mora, and her delight in living for M. Guibert. There are still more inexplicable things in those letters. None of Guibert's letters are given,—so that we cannot see how he responded to all these raptures; but, from the very first, or almost from the first, she complains bitterly of his coldness and dissipation; laments that he has a heart incapable of tenderness; and that he feels nothing but gratitude or compassion for a being whom he had fascinated, exalted, and possessed with the most ardent and unbounded passion. We cannot say that we see any clear traces of her ever having hoped, or even wished that he should marry her. On the contrary, she recommends several wives to him; and at last he takes one, with her approbation and consent, while the correspondence goes on in the same tone as before. The vehemence and excess of her passion continue to the last of the letters here published, which come down to within a few weeks of her death, in 1776.

The account which we have here given appears ridiculous: and there are people, and wise people, who, even after looking into the book, will think Mademoiselle de Lespinasse deserving of nothing but ridicule, and consign her and her ravings to immeasurable contempt. Gentle spirits, however, will judge more gently; and there are few, we believe, who feel interest enough in the work to read it through, who will not lay it down with emotions of admiration and profound compassion. Even if we did not know that she was the chosen companion of D'Alembert, and the respected friend of Turgot, Condillac, Condorcet, and the first characters in France, there are, in the strange book before us, such traces of a powerful, generous, and ardent mind, as necessarily to command the respect even of those who may be provoked with her inconsistencies, and wearied out with the vehemence of her sorrow. There is something so natural too, so eloquent, and so pathetic in her expression—a tone of ardour and enthusiasm so infectious, and so much of the true and agonizing voice of heart-struck wretchedness, that it burdens us with something of the weight of a real sorrow; and we are glad to make ourselves angry at her unaccountableness, in order to get rid of the oppression. It ought to be recollected also, that during the whole course of the correspondence, this poor young woman was dying of a painful and irritating disease. Tortured with sickness, or agitated with opium, her blood never seems in all that time to have flowed peaceably in her veins, and her nerves and her passions seem to have reacted upon each other in a series of cruel agitations. Why she is so very wretched, and so very angry, we do not indeed always understand; but there is no mistaking the language and real emotion; and while there is something wearisome, perhaps, in the uniformity of a vehemence of which we do not clearly see the cause, there is something truly *déchirant* in the natural and piteous iteration of her eloquent complainings, and something captivating and noble in the fire and rapidity with which she pours out her emotions. The style is as original and extraordinary as the character of its author. It is quite natural, and even negligent—altogether without gaiety or assumed dignity—and yet full of elegance and spirit, and burning with the flames of a heart abandoned to passion, and an imagination exalted by enthusiasm. It is not easy to fall into the measure of such a composer, in running over a miscellany of amusement; but we cannot avoid adding a few extracts, if it were only to make what we have been saying intelligible, to some at least of our readers.

"Je me sentois une répugnance mortelle à ouvrir votre lettre: si je n'avois craint de vous offenser, j'allois vous la renvoyer. Quelque chose me disoit qu'elle irriteroit mes maux, et je voulois me ménager. La souffrance continuelle de mon corps affaisse mon ame: j'ai encore eu la fièvre; je n'ai pas fermé l'œil; je n'en puis plus. De grace, par pitié, ne tourmentez plus une vie qui s'éteint, et dont tous les instans sont dévoués à la douleur et aux regrets. Je ne vous accuse point, je n'exige rien, vous ne me devez rien: car, en effet, je n'ai pas eu un mouvement, pas un sentiment auquel j'ai consenti; et quand j'ai eu le malheur d'y céder, j'ai toujours détesté la force, ou la foiblesse, qui m'entraînoit. Vous voyez que vous ne me devez aucune reconnaissance, et que je n'ai le droit de vous faire aucun reproche. Soyez donc libre, retournez à ce que vous aimez, et à ce qui vous convient plus que vous ne croyez peut-être. Laissez-moi à ma douleur; laissez-moi m'occuper sans distraction du seul objet que j'ai adoré, et dont le souvenir m'est plus cher que tout ce qui reste dans la nature. Mon Dieu! je ne devrois pas le pleurer; j'aurois dû le suivre: c'est vous qui me faites vivre, qui faites le tourment d'une créature que la douleur consume, et qui emploie ce qui lui reste de forces à invoquer la mort. Ah! vous en faites trop, et pas assez pour moi. Je vous le disois bien il y a huit jours, vous me rendez difficile, exigeante: en donnant tout, on veut obtenir quelque chose. Mais, encore une fois, je vous pardonne, et je ne vous hais point: ce n'est pas par générosité que je vous pardonne, ce n'est pas par bonté que je ne vous hais pas; c'est que mon ame est lasse, qu'elle meurt de fatigue. Ah! mon ami, laissez-moi, ne me dites plus que vous m'aimez: ce baume devient du poison; vous calmez et déchirez ma plaie tour à tour. Oh! que vous me faites mal! que la vie me pèse! que je vous aime pourtant, et que je serois désolée de mettre de la tristesse dans votre ame! Mon ami, elle est trop partagée, trop dissipée, pour que le vrai plaisir y puisse pénétrer. Vous voulez que je vous voie ce soir; et bien, venez donc!"—Vol. ii. pp. 206—208.

"Combien de fois aurois-je pu me plaindre; combien de fois vous ai-je caché mes larmes! Ah! je le vois trop bien: on ne sauroit ni retenir, ni ramener un cœur qui est entraîné par un autre penchant; je me le dis sans cesse, quelquefois je me crois guérie; vous paroissez, et tout est détruit. La réflexion, mes résolutions, le malheur, tout perd sa force au premier mot que vous prononcez. Je ne vois plus d'asile que la mort, et jamais aucun malheureux ne l'a invoquée avec plus d'ardeur. Je retiens la moitié de mon ame: sa chaleur, son mouvement vous importuneroit, et vous éteindroit tout-à-fait; le feu qui n'échauffe pas, incommode. Ah! si vous saviez, si vous lisiez comme j'ai fait jouir une ame forte et passionnée, du plaisir d'être aimée! *Il* comparoit ce qui l'avoit aimé, ce qui l'aimoit encore, et il me disoit sans cesse: 'Oh! elles ne sont pas dignes d'être vos écolières; votre ame a été chauffée par le soleil de Lima, et mes compatriotes semblent être nées sous les glaces de la Laponie.' Et c'étoit de Madrid qu'il me mandoit cela! Mon ami, il ne me louoit pas; il jouissoit; et je ne crois point me louer, quand je vous dis qu'en vous aimant à la folie, je ne vous donne que ce que je ne puis pas garder ou retenir."—Vol. ii. pp. 215—217.

"Oh, mon Dieu! que l'on vit *fort* lorsqu'on est mort à tout, excepté à un objet qui est l'univers pour nous, et qui s'empare tellement de toutes nos facultés, qu'il n'est plus possible de vivre dans d'autres temps que dans le moment où l'on est! Eh! comment voulez-vous que je vous dise si je vous aimerai dans *trois mois?* Comment pourrois-je, avec ma pensée, me distraire de mon sentiment? Vous voudriez que, lorsque je vous vois, lorsque votre présence charme mes sens et mon ame, je pusse vous rendre compte de l'effet que je recevrai de votre mariage; mon ami, je n'en sais rien,—mais rien du tout. S'il me guérissoit, je vous le dirois, et vous êtes assez juste pour ne m'en pas blâmer. Si, au contraire, il portoit le désespoir dans mon ame, je ne me plaindrois pas, et je souffrirois bien peu de temps. Alors vous seriez assez sensible et assez délicat pour approuver un parti qui ne vous coûteroit que des regrets passagers, et dont votre nouvelle situation vous distrairoit bien vîte; et je vous assure que cette pensée est consolante pour moi: je m'en sens plus libre. Ne me demandez donc plus ce que je ferai lorsque vous aurez engagé votre vie à une autre. Si je n'avois que de la vanité et de l'amour-propre, je serois bien plus éclairée sur ce que j'éprouverai alors. Il n'y a guère de méprise aux calculs de l'amour-propre; il prévoit assez juste: la passion n'a point d'avenir; ainsi en vous disant: je vous aime, je vous dis tout ce que je sais et tout ce que je sens.—Oh! mon ami, je me sens capable de tout, excepté de plier: j'aurois la force d'un martyr, pour satisfaire ma passion ou celle de la personne qui m'aimeroit: mais je ne trouve rien en moi qui me réponde de pouvoir jamais faire le sacrifice de mon sentiment. La vie n'est rien en comparaison, et vous verrez si ce ne sont là que les discours d'une tête exaltée. Oui, peut-être ce sont là les pensées d'une ame exaltée, mais à laquelle appartiennent les actions fortes. Seroit-ce à la raison qui est si prévoyante, si foible dans ses vues, et même si impuissante dans ses moyens, que ces pensées pourroient appartenir? Mon ami, je ne suis point raisonnable, et c'est peut-être à force d'être passionnée que j'ai mis toute ma vie tant de raison à tout ce qui est soumis au jugement et à l'opinion des indifférens. Combien j'ai usurpé d'éloges sur ma modération, sur ma noblesse d'ame, sur mon désintéressement, sur les sacrifices prétendus que je faisois à une mémoire respectable et chère, et à la maison d'Alb. . . .! Voilà comme le monde juge, comme il voit! Eh, bon Dieu! sots que vous êtes, je ne mérite pas vos louanges: mon ame n'étoit pas faite pour les petits intérêts qui vous occupent; toute entière au bonheur d'aimer et d'être, aimé il ne m'a fallu ni force, ni honnêteté pour supporter la pauvreté, et pour dédaigner les avantages de la vanité. J'ai tant joui, j'ai si bien senti le prix de la vie, que s'il falloit recommencer, je voudrois que ce fût aux mêmes conditions. Aimer et souffrir—le ciel, l'enfer,—voilà à quoi je me dévouerois, voilà ce que je voudrois sentir, voilà le climat que je voudrois habiter; et non cet état tempéré dans lequel vivent tous les sots et tous les automates dont nous sommes environnés."—Vol. ii. pp. 228—233.

All this is raving no doubt; but it is the raving of real passion, and of a lofty and powerful spirit. It is the eloquent raving of the heart; and, when we think that this extraordinary woman wrote all this, not in the days of impatient youth, when the heart is strong for suffering, and takes a strange delight in the vehemence even of its painful emotions, but after years of misery, and with death before her eyes—advancing by gradual but visible steps, it is impossible not to feel an indescribable emotion of pity, resentment, and admiration. One little word more.

"Oh! que vous pesez sur mon cœur, lorsque vous voulez me prouver qu'il doit être content du vôtre! Je ne me plaindrois jamais, mais vous me forcez souvent à crier, tant le mal que vous me faites est aigu et profond! Mon ami, j'ai été aimée, je le suis encore, et je meurs de regret en pensant que ce n'est pas de vous. J'ai beau me dire que je ne méritai jamais le bonheur que je regrette; mon cœur cette fois fait taire mon amour-propre: il me dit que, si je dus jamais être aimée, c'étoit de celui qui auroit assez de charme à mes yeux, pour me distraire de M. de M. . . ., et pour me retenir à la vie, après l'avoir perdu. Je n'ai fait que languir depuis votre départ; je n'ai pas été une heure sans souffrance: le mal de mon ame passe à mon corps; j'ai tous les jours la fièvre, et mon médecin, qui n'est pas le plus habile de tous les hommes, me répète sans cesse que je suis consumée de chagrin, que mon pouls, que ma respiration annoncent une douleur active; et il s'en va toujours en me disant: *nous n'avons point de remède pour l'ame.* Il n'y en a plus pour moi: ce n'est pas guérir que je voudrois, mais me calmer, mais retrouver quelques momens de repos pour me conduire à celui que la nature m'accordera bientôt."—Vol. iii. pp. 146, 147.

"Je n'ai plus assez de force pour mon ame—elle me tue. Vous ne pouvez plus rien sur moi, que me faire souffrir. Ne tachez donc plus à me consoler, et cessez de vouloir me faire le victime de votre *morale*, après m'avoir fait celle de votre légèreté.—Vous ne m'avez pas vue, parce que la journée n'a que douze heures, et que vous aviez de quoi les remplir par des intérêts et des plaisirs qui vous sont, et qui doivent vous être plus chers que mon malheur. Je ne réclame rien, je n'exige rien, et je me dis sans cesse que la source de mon bonheur et de mon plaisir est perdu pour jamais."—Vol. iii. p. 59.

We cannot leave our readers with these painful impressions; and shall add just one word or two of what is gayest in these desolating volumes.

"M. Grimm est de retour; je l'ai accablé de questions. Il peint la Czarine, non pas comme une souveraine, mais comme une femme aimable, pleine d'esprit, de saillies, et de tout ce qui peut séduire et charmer. Mais dans tout ce qu'il me disoit, je reconnoissois plutôt cet art charmant d'une courtisane grecque, que la dignité et l'éclat de l'Impératrice d'un grand empire."—Vol. ii. p. 105.

"Avant dîner je vais voir rue de Cléry des automates; qui sont prodigieux, à ce qu'on dit. Quand j'allois dans le monde, je n'aurois pas eu cette curiosité: deux ou trois soupers en donnent satiété; mais ceux de la rue de Cléry valent mieux: ils agissent et ne parlent point. Venez-y, en allant au Marais, et je vous dirai là si j'ai la loge de M. le duc d'Aumont. Madame de Ch. . . ne vous croit point coupable de négligence: elle m'a demandé aujourd'hui si votre retraite duroit encore. Ce que les femmes veulent seulement, c'est d'être prévenues. Presque personne n'a besoin d'être aimé, et cela est bien heureux: car c'est ce qui se fait le plus mal à Paris. Ils osent dire qu'ils aiment; et ils sont calmes et dissipés! c'est assurément bien connoître le sentiment et la passion. Pauvres gens! il faut les louer comme les Liliputiens: ils sont bien jolis, bien gentils, bien aimables. Adieu, mon ami."—Vol. ii. pp. 197, 198.

We have left ourselves no room to make any reflections; except, only, that the French fashion of living, and almost of dying, in public, is nowhere so strikingly exemplified, as in the letters of this victim of passion and of fancy. While her heart is torn with the most agonizing passions, and her thoughts turned hourly on suicide, she dines out, and makes visits every day; and, when she is visibly within a few weeks of her end, and is wasted with coughs and spasms, she still has her *salon* filled twice a day with company, and drags herself out to supper with all the countesses of her acquaintance. There is a great deal of French character, indeed, in both the works of which we now take our leave;—a great deal to admire, and to wonder at—but very little, we think, to envy.

(August, 1825.)

Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship: a Novel. From the German of GOETHE. 3 vols. 12mo. pp. 1030. Edinburgh: 1824.

THERE are few things that at first sight appear more capricious and unaccountable, than the diversities of national taste; and yet there are not many, that, to a certain extent at least, admit of a clearer explanation. They form evidently a section in the great chapter of National Character; and, proceeding on the assumption, that human nature is everywhere fundamentally the same, it is not perhaps very difficult to indicate, in a general way, the circumstances which have distinguished it into so many local varieties.

These may be divided into two great classes,—the one embracing all that relates to the newness or antiquity of the society to which they belong, or, in other words, to the stage which any particular nation has attained in that great progress from rudeness to refinement, in which all are engaged;—the other comprehending what may be termed the accidental causes by which the character and condition of communities may be affected; such as their government, their relative position as to power and civilization to neighbouring countries, their prevailing occupations, determined in some degree by the capabilities of their soil and climate, and more than all perhaps, as to the question of taste, the still more accidental circumstance of the character of their first models of excellence, or the kind of merit by which their admiration and national vanity had first been excited.

It is needless to illustrate these obvious sources of peculiarity at any considerable length. It is not more certain, that all primitive communities proceed to civilization by nearly the same stages, than that the progress of taste is marked by corresponding gradations, and may, in most cases, be distinguished into periods, the order and succession of which is nearly as uniform and determined. If tribes of savage men always proceed, under ordinary circumstances, from the occupation of hunting to that of pasturage, from that to agriculture, and from that to commerce and manufactures, the sequence is scarcely less invariable in the history of letters and art. In the former, verse is uniformly antecedent to prose—marvellous legends to correct history—exaggerated sentiments to just representations of nature. Invention, in short, regularly comes before judgment, warmth of feeling before correct reasoning—and splendid declamation and broad humour before delicate simplicity or refined wit. In the arts again, the progress is strictly analagous—from mere monstrosity to ostentatious displays of labour and design, first in massive formality, and next in fantastical minuteness, variety, and flutter of parts;—and then, through the gradations of startling contrasts and overwrought expression, to the repose and simplicity of graceful nature.

These considerations alone explain much of that contrariety of taste by which different nations are distinguished. They not only start in the great career of improvement at different times, but they advance in it with different velocities—some lingering longer in one stage than another—some obstructed and some helped forward, by circumstances operating on them from within or from without. It is the unavoidable consequence, however, of their being in any one particular position, that they will judge of their own productions and those of their neighbours, according to that standard of taste which belongs to the place they then hold in this great circle;—and that a whole people will look on their neighbours with wonder and scorn, for admiring what their own grandfathers looked on with equal admiration,—while they themselves are scorned and vilified in return, for tastes which will infallibly be adopted by the grandchildren of those who despise them.

What we have termed the accidental causes of great differences in beings of the same nature, do not of course admit of quite so simple an exposition. But it is not in reality more difficult to prove their existence and explain their operation. Where great and degrading despotisms have been early established, either by the aid of superstition or of mere force, as in most of the states of Asia, or where small tribes of mixed descent have been engaged in perpetual contention for freedom and superiority, as in ancient Greece—where the ambition and faculties of individuals have been chained up by the institution of castes and indelible separations, as in India and Egypt, or where all men practise all occupations and aspire to all honours, as in Germany or Britain—where the sole occupation

of the people has been war, as in infant Rome, or where a vast pacific population has been for ages inured to mechanical drudgery, as in China—it is needless to say, that very opposite notions of what conduces to delight and amusement must necessarily prevail; and that the Taste of the nation must be affected both by the sentiments which it has been taught to cultivate, and the capacities it has been led to unfold.

The influence of early models, however, is perhaps the most considerable of any; and may be easily enough understood. When men have been accustomed to any particular kind of excellence, they naturally become good judges of it, and account certain considerable degrees of it indispensable,—while they are comparatively blind to the merit of other good qualities to which they had been less habituated, and are neither offended by their absence, nor at all skilful in their estimation. Thus those nations who, like the English and the Dutch, have been long accustomed to great cleanliness and order in their persons and dwellings, naturally look with admiration on the higher displays of those qualities, and are proportionally disgusted by their neglect; while they are apt to undervalue mere pomp and stateliness, when destitute of these recommendations: and thus also the Italians and Sicilians, bred in the midst of dirt and magnificence, are curiously alive to the beauties of architecture and sculpture, and make but litle account of the more homely comforts which are so highly prized by the others. In the same way, if a few of the first successful adventurers in art should have excelled in any particular qualities, the taste of their nation will naturally be moulded on that standard—will regard those qualities almost exclusively as entitled to admiration, and will not only consider the want of them as fatal to all pretensions to excellence, but will unduly despise and undervalue other qualities, in themselves not less valuable, but with which their national models had not happened to make them timeously familiar. If, for example, the first great writers in any country should have distinguished themselves by a pompous and severe regularity, and a certain elaborate simplicity of design and execution, it will naturally follow, that the national taste will not only become critical and rigorous as to those particulars, but will be proportionally deadened to the merit of vivacity, nature, and invention, when combined with irregularity, homeliness, or confusion. While, if the great patriarchs of letters had excelled in variety and rapidity of invention, and boldness and truth of sentiment, though poured out with considerable disorder and incongruity of manner, those qualities would quickly come to be the national criterion of merit, and the correctness and decorum of the other school be despised, as mere recipes for monotony and tameness.

These, we think, are the plain and certain effects of the peculiar character of the first great popular writers of all countries. But still we do not conceive that they depend altogether on any thing so purely accidental as the temperament or early history of a few individuals. No doubt the national taste of France and of England would at this moment have been different, had *Shakespeare* been a Frenchman, and Boileau and Racine written in English. But then, we do not think that Shakespeare *could* have been a Frenchman; and we conceive that his character, and that of other original writers, though no doubt to be considered on the whole as casual, must yet have been modified to a great extent by the circumstances of the countries in which they were bred. It is plain that no original force of genius could have enabled Shakespeare to write as he had done, if he had been born and bred among the Chinese or the Peruvians. Neither do we think that he could have done so, in any other country but England—free, sociable, discursive, reformed, familiar England—whose motley and mingling population not only presented "every change of many-coloured life" to his eye, but taught and permitted every class, from the highest to the lowest, to know and to estimate the feelings and the habits of all the others—and thus enabled the gifted observer not only to deduce the true character of human nature from this infinite variety of experiments and examples, but to speak to the sense and the hearts of each, with that truly universal tongue, which every one feels to be peculiar, and all enjoy as common.

We have said enough, however, or rather too much, on these general views of the subject—which in truth is sufficiently clear in those extreme cases, where the contrariety is great and universal, and is only perplexing when there is a pretty general conformity both in the causes which influence taste and in the results. Thus, we are not at all surprised to find the taste of the Japanese or the Iroquois very different from our own—and have no difficulty in both admitting that our human nature and human capacities are substantially the same, and in referring this discrepancy to the contrast that exists in the whole state of society, and the knowledge, and the opposite qualities of the objects to which we have been respectively accustomed to give our admiration. That nations living in times or places altogether remote, should disagree in taste, as in every thing else, seems to us quite natural. They are only the nearer cases that puzzle. And, that great European countries, peopled by the same mixed races, educated in the admiration of the same classical models—venerating the same remains of antiquity—engaged substantially in the same occupations—communicating every day, on business, letters, and society—bound up in short in one great commonwealth, as against the inferior and barbarous parts of the world, should yet differ so widely—not only as to the comparative excellence of their respective productions, but as to the constituents of excellence in all works of genius or skill, does indeed sound like a paradox, the solution of which every one may not be able to deduce from the preceding observations.

The great practical equation on which we in this country have been hitherto most frequently employed, has been between our own standard of taste and that which is recognized among our neighbours of France:—And certainly, though feelings of rivalry have somewhat aggravated its *apparent*, beyond its real amount, *there is* a great and substantial difference to be accounted for,—in the way we have suggested—or in some other way. Stating that difference as generally as possible, we would say, that the French, compared with ourselves, are more sensitive to faults, and less transported with beauties—more enamoured of art, and less indulgent to nature—more charmed with overcoming difficulties, than with that power which makes us unconscious of their existence—more averse to strong emotions, or at least less covetous of them in their intensity—more students of taste, in short, than adorers of genius—and far more disposed than any other people, except perhaps the Chinese, to circumscribe the rules of taste to such as they themselves have been able to practise, and to limit the legitimate empire of genius to the provinces they have explored. There has been a good deal of discussion of late years, in the face of literary Europe, on these debatable grounds; and we cannot but think that the result has been favourable, on the whole, to the English, and that the French have been compelled to recede considerably from many of their exclusive pretensions—a result which we are inclined to ascribe, less to the arguments of our native champions, than to those circumstances in the recent history of Europe, which have compelled our ingenious neighbours to mingle more than they had ever done before with the surrounding nations—and thus to become better acquainted with the diversified forms which genius and talent may assume.

But while we are thus fairly in the way of settling our differences with France, we are little more than beginning them, we fear, with Germany; and the perusal of the extraordinary volumes before us, which has suggested all the preceding reflections, has given us, at the same time, an impression of such radical, and apparently irreconcilable disagreement as to principles, as we can scarcely hope either to remove by our reasonings, or even very satisfactorily to account for by our suggestions.

This is allowed, by the general consent of all Germany, to be the very greatest work of their very greatest writer. The most original, the most varied and inventive,—the most characteristic, in short, of the author, and of his country. We receive it as such accordingly, with implicit faith and suitable respect; and have perused it in consequence with very great attention and no common curiosity. We have perused it, indeed, only in the translation of which we have prefixed the title: But it is a translation by a professed admirer; and by one who is proved by his Preface to be a person of talents, and by every part of the work to be no ordinary master, at least of one of the languages with which he has to deal. We need scarcely say, that we profess to judge of the work only according to our own principles of judgment and habits of feeling; and, meaning nothing less than to dictate to the readers or the critics of Germany what they should think of their favourite authors, propose only to let them know, in all plainness and modesty, what we, and we really believe most of our countrymen, actually think of this *chef-d'œuvre* of Teutonic genius.

We must say, then, at once, that we cannot enter into the spirit of this German idolatry; nor at all comprehend upon what grounds the work before us could ever be considered as an admirable, or even a commendable performance. To us it certainly appears, after the most deliberate consideration, to be eminently absurd, puerile, incongruous, vulgar, and affected;—and, though redeemed by considerable powers of invention, and some traits of vivacity, to be so far from perfection, as to be, almost from beginning to end, one flagrant offence against every principle of taste, and every just rule of composition. Though indicating, in many places, a mind capable both of acute and profound reflection, it is full of mere silliness and childish affectation;—and though evidently the work of one who had seen and observed much, it is throughout altogether unnatural, and not so properly improbable, as affectedly fantastic and absurd—kept, as it were, studiously aloof from general or ordinary nature—never once bringing us into contact with real life or genuine character—and, where not occupied with the professional squabbles, paltry jargon, and scenical profligacy of strolling players, tumblers, and mummers (which may be said to form its staple), is conversant only with incomprehensible mystics and vulgar men of whim, with whom, if it were at all possible to understand them, it would be a baseness to be acquainted. Every thing, and every body we meet with, is a riddle and an oddity; and though the tissue of the story is sufficiently coarse, and the manners and sentiments infected with a strong tinge of vulgarity, it is all kept in the air, like a piece of machinery at the minor theatres, and never allowed to touch the solid ground, or to give an impression of reality, by the disclosure of known or living features. In the midst of all this, however, there are, every now and then, outbreakings of a fine speculation, and gleams of a warm and sprightly imagination—an occasional wild and exotic glow of fancy and poetry—a vigorous heaping up of incidents, and touches of bright and powerful description.

It is not very easy certainly to account for these incongruities, or to suggest an intelligible theory for so strange a practice. But in so far as we can guess, these peculiarities of German taste are to be referred, in part, to the comparative newness of original composition among that ingenious people, and to the state of European literature when they first ventured on the experiment—and in part to the state of society in that great country itself, and the comparatively humble condition of the greater part of those who write, or to whom writing is there addressed.

The Germans, though undoubtedly an imaginative and even enthusiastic race, had neglected their native literature for two hundred years—and were chiefly known for their learning and industry. They wrote huge Latin treatises on Law and Theology—and put forth bulky editions and great tomes of annotations on the classics. At last, however, they grew tired of being respected as the learned drudges of Europe, and reproached with their consonants and commentators; and determined, about fifty years ago, to show what metal they were made of, and to give the world a taste of their quality, as men of genius and invention. In this attempt the first thing to be effected was at all events to avoid the imputation of being scholastic imitators of the classics. *That* would have smelt too much, they thought, of the old shop; and in order to prove their claims to originality, it was necessary to go a little into the opposite extreme,—to venture on something decidedly modern, and to show at once their independence on their old masters, and their superiority to the pedantic rules of antiquity. With this view some of them betook themselves to the French models—set seriously to study how to be gay—*appendre à être vif*—and composed a variety of petites pieces and novels of polite gallantry, in a style—of which we shall at present say nothing. This manner, however, ran too much counter to the general character of the nation to be very much followed—and undoubtedly the greater and better part of their writers turned rather to us, for hints and lessons to guide them in their ambitious career. There was a greater original affinity in the temper and genius of the two nations—and, in addition to that consideration, our great authors were indisputably at once more original and less classical than those of France. England, however, we are sorry to say, could furnish abundance of bad as well as of good models—and even the best were perilous enough for rash imitators. As it happened, however, the worst were most generally selected—and the worst parts of the good. Shakespeare was admired—but more for his flights of fancy, his daring improprieties, his trespasses on the borders of absurdity, than for the infinite sagacity and rectifying good sense by which he redeemed those extravagancies, or even the profound tenderness and simple pathos which alternated with the lofty soaring or dazzling imagery of his style. Altogether, however, Shakespeare was beyond their rivalry; and although Schiller has dared, and not ingloriously, to emulate his miracles, it was plainly to other merits and other rivalries that the body of his ingenious countrymen aspired. The ostentatious absurdity—the affected oddity—the pert familiarity—the broken style, and exaggerated sentiment of Tristram Shandy—the mawkish morality, dawdling details, and interminable agonies of Richardson—the vulgar adventures, and homely, though, at the same time, fantastical speculations of John Buncle and others of his forgotten class, found far more favour in their eyes. They were original, startling, unclassical, and puzzling. They excited curiosity by not being altogether intelligible—effectually excluded monotony by the rapidity and violence of their transitions, and promised to rouse the most torpid sensibility, by the violence and perseverance with which they thundered at the heart. They were the very things, in short, which the German originals were in search of;—and they were not slow, therefore, in adopting and improving on them. In order to make them thoroughly their own, they had only to exaggerate their peculiarities—to mix up with them a certain allowance of their old visionary philosophy, misty metaphysics, and superstitious visions—and to introduce a few crazy sententious theorists, to sprinkle over the whole a seasoning of rash speculation on morality and the fine arts.

The style was also to be relieved by a variety of odd comparisons and unaccountable similes—borrowed, for the most part, from low and revolting objects, and all the better if they did not exactly fit the subject, or even introduced new perplexity into that which they professed to illustrate.

This goes far, we think, to explain the absurdity, incongruity, and affectation of the works of which we are speaking. But there is yet another distinguishing quality for which we have not accounted—and that is a peculiar kind of vulgarity which pervades all their varieties, and constitutes, perhaps, their most repulsive characteristic. We do not know very well how to describe this unfortunate peculiarity, except by saying that it is the vulgarity of pacific, comfortable burghers, occupied with stuffing, cooking, and providing for their coarse personal accommodations. There certainly never were any men of genius who condescended to attend so minutely to the *non-naturals* of their heroes and heroines as the novelists of modern Germany. Their works smell, as it were, of groceries—of brown papers filled with greasy cakes and slices of bacon,—and fryings in frowsy back parlours. All the interesting recollections of childhood turn on remembered tidbits and plunderings of savoury store-rooms. In the midst of their most passionate scenes there is always a serious and affectionate notice of the substantial pleasures of eating and drinking. The raptures of a tête-a-tête are not complete without a bottle of nice wine and a "trim collation." Their very sages deliver their oracles over a glass of punch; and the enchanted lover finds new apologies for his idolatry in taking a survey of his mistress' "combs, soap, and towels, with the traces of their use." These baser necessities of our nature, in short, which all other writers who have aimed at raising the imagination or touching the heart have kept studiously out of view, are ostentatiously brought forward, and fondly dwelt on by the pathetic authors of Germany.

We really cannot well account for this extraordinary taste. But we suspect it is owing to the importance that is really attached to those solid comforts and supplies of necessaries, by the greater part of the readers and writers of that country. Though there is a

great deal of freedom in Germany, it operates less by raising the mass of the people to a potential equality with the nobles, than by securing to them their inferior and plebeian privileges; and consists rather in the immunities of their incorporated tradesmen, which may enable them to become rich as such, than in any general participation of national rights, by which they may aspire to dignity and elegance, as well as opulence and comfort. Now, the writers, as well as the readers in that country, belong almost entirely to the plebeian and vulgar class. Their learned men are almost all wofully poor and dependent; and the comfortable burghers, who buy entertaining books by the thousand at the Frankfort fair, probably agree with their authors in nothing so much as the value they set on those homely comforts to which their ambition is mutually limited by their condition; and enter into no part of them so heartily as those which set forth their paramount and continual importance.

It is time, however, that we should proceed to give some more particular account of the work which has given occasion to all these observations. Nor indeed have we anything more of a general nature to premise, except that we really cannot join in the censure which we have found so generally bestowed on it for its alleged grossness and immorality. It is coarse, certainly, in its examples, and by no means very rigorous in its ethical precepts. But it is not worse in those respects than many works on which we pride ourselves at home—Tom Jones, for example, or Roderick Random. There are passages, no doubt, that would shock a delicate young lady; but to the bulk of male readers, for whom we suppose it was chiefly intended, we do not apprehend that it will either do any great harm, or give any great offence.

Wilhelm Meister is the son of a plodding merchant, in one of the middling towns of Germany, who, before he is out of his apprenticeship, takes a passion for play-going; which he very naturally follows up by engaging in an intrigue with a little pert actress, who performed young officers and other male parts with great success. The book opens with a supper at her lodgings; where he tells her a long silly story of his passion for puppet-shows in his childhood—how he stole a set of puppets out of a pantry of his mother's, into which he had slipped to filch sugar-plums—how he fitted up a puppet-show of his own, in a garret of his father's house, and enacted David and Goliah, to the wonder and delight of the whole family, and various complaisant neighbours, who condescended to enact audience—how a half-pay lieutenant assisted him in painting the figures and nailing up the boards—and how out of all this arose his early taste for playhouses and actresses. This goodly stuff extends through fifty mortal pages—all serious, solemn, and silly, far beyond the pitch of the worst gilt thing ever published by Mr Newberry. As this is one of the most characteristic parts of the work, we must verify the account we have ventured to give of it by a few extracts. Wilhelm is describing the dress of the prophet Samuel in his Punch's Opera of Goliah, and telling "how the taffeta of the cassock had been taken from a gown of his grandmother's," when a noise is heard in the street, and the old maid Barbara informs them that

"'The disturbance arose from a set of jolly companions, who were just then sallying out of the Italian Tavern, hard by, where they had been busy discussing *fresh oysters*, a cargo of which had just arrived, and by no means sparing their champagne. 'Pity,' Mariana said, 'that we did not think of it in time; we might have had some entertainment to ourselves.' 'It is not yet too late,' said Wilhelm, giving Barbara a louis d'or: 'get us what we want; then come and take a share with us.' The old dame made speedy work; ere long a trimly-covered table, with a neat collation, stood before the lovers. They made Barbara sit with them; *they ate and drank*, and enjoyed themselves. On such occasions, there is never want of enough to say. Mariana soon took up little Jonathan again, and the old dame turned the conversation upon Wilhelm's favourite topic. 'You were telling us,' she said, 'about the first exhibition of a puppet-show on Christmas-eve: I remember you were interrupted, just as the ballet was going to begin.' 'I assure you,' said Wilhelm, 'it went off quite well. And certainly the strange caperings of these Moors and Mooresses, these shepherds and shepherdesses, these dwarfs and dwarfesses, will never altogether leave my recollection while I live,'" &c. &c.

We spare our readers some dozen pages of doll-dressing and joinery, and come to the following choice passage.

"'In well adjusted and regulated houses,' continued Wilhelm, 'children have a feeling not unlike what I conceive rats and mice to have; they keep a sharp eye on all crevices and holes, where they may come at *any forbidden dainty;* they enjoy it also with a fearful, stolen satisfaction, which forms no small part of the happiness of childhood. More than any other of the young ones, I was in the habit of looking out attentively to see if I could notice *any cupboard left open*, or key standing in its lock. The more reverence I bore in my heart for those closed doors, on the outside of which I had to pass by for weeks and months, catching only a furtive glance when our mother now and then opened the consecrated place to take something from it,—the quicker was I to make use of any opportunities which the forgetfulness of our housekeepers at times afforded me. Among all the doors, that of the *store-room* was, of course, the one I watched most narrowly. Few of the joyful anticipations in life can equal the feeling which I used to have, when my mother happened to call me, that I might help her to carry out any thing, after which I might pick up a few dried plums, either with her kind permission, or by help of my own dexterity. The accumulated treasures of this chamber took hold of my imagination by their magnitude; the very fragrance exhaled by so multifarious a collection of sweet-smelling *spices* produced such a craving effect on me, that I never failed, when passing near, to linger for a little, and regale myself at least on the unbolted atmosphere. At length, one Sunday morning, my mother, being hurried by the ringing of the church bells, forgot to take this precious key with her on shutting the door, and went away leaving all the house in a deep sabbath stillness. No sooner had I marked this oversight, than gliding softly once or twice to and from the place, I at last approached very gingerly, opened the door, and felt myself, after a single step, in immediate contact with these manifold and long-wished-for means of happiness. I glanced over *glasses*, *chests*, and *bags*, and *drawers* and *boxes*, with a quick and doubtful eye, considering what I ought to take; turned finally to my dear withered plums, provided myself also with a few *dried apples*, and completed the forage with an orange-chip. I was quietly retreating with my plunder, when some little chests, lying piled over one another, caught my attention: the more so, as I noticed a wire with hooks at the end of it, sticking through the joint of the lid in one of them. Full of eager hopes, I opened this singular package; and judge of my emotions, when I found my glad world of heroes all sleeping safe within! I meant to pick out the topmost, and, having examined them, to pull up those below; but in this attempt the wires got very soon entangled, and I fell into a fright and flutter, more particularly as *the cook* just then began making some stir *in the kitchen, which lay close by;* so that I had nothing for it but to squeeze the whole together, the best way I could, and to shut the chest, having stolen from it nothing but a little written book, which happened to be lying above, and contained the whole drama of Goliah and David. With this booty I made good my retreat into the garret.'"—pp. 20—22.

This, we suppose, will be received as a sufficient specimen of the true German taste for comfits, cooking, and cockering. If any one should wish for a sample of pure childishness, or mere folly, there are pages on pages like the following.

"'It was natural that the operas, with their manifold adventures and vicissitudes, should attract me more than any thing beside. In these compositions, I found stormy seas; gods descending in chariots of cloud; and, what most of all delighted me, abundance of thunder and lightning. I did my best with pasteboard, paint, and paper: I could make night very prettily; my lightning was fearful to behold; only my thunder did not always prosper, which however was of less importance. In operas, moreover, I found frequent opportunities of introducing my David and Goliah, persons whom the regular drama would hardly admit. Daily I felt more attachment for the hampered spot where I enjoyed so many pleasures; and, I must confess, *the fragrance* which the puppets had acquired from *the store-room* added not a little to my satisfaction.

"'The decorations of my theatre were now in a tolerable state of completeness. I had always had the nack of drawing with compasses, and clipping pasteboard, and colouring figures; and here it served me in good stead. But the more sorry was I, on the other hand, when, as frequently happened, my stock of actors would not suffice for representing great affairs.—My sisters dressing and undressing their dolls, awoke in me the project of furnishing my heroes by and by with garments, which might also be put off and on. Accordingly, I slit the scraps of cloth from off their bodies; tacked the fragments together as well as possible; saved a particle of money to buy new ribbons and lace; begged many a rag of taffeta; and so formed, by degrees, a full theatrical wardrobe, in which hoop-petticoats for the ladies were especially remembered.—My troop was now fairly provided with dresses for the most important piece, and you might have expected that henceforth one exhibition would follow close upon the heels of another. But it happened with me, as it often happens with children; they embrace wide plans, make mighty preparations, then a few trials, and the whole undertaking is abandoned. I was guilty of this fault,'" &c. &c.

But we must get on with our story. While he is lulling his little actress to sleep by these edifying discourses, and projecting to go on the stage along with her, our mercantile hero is suddenly sent off by his father, to collect debts from their country customers. The ingenious author, however, cannot possibly let him go, without presenting his readers with an elaborate character of the worthy old trader and his partner. Old Meister, it seems, had

"A peculiar inclination for magnificence, for whatever catches the eye and possesses at the same time real worth and durability. In his house, he would have all things solid and massive; his stores must be copious and rich, all his plate must be heavy, the furniture of his table must be costly. On the other hand, his guests were seldom invited; for *every dinner* was a festival, which, both for its expense and for its inconvenience, could not often be repeated. The economy of his house went on at a settled uniform rate, and every thing that moved or had a place in it was just what yielded no one any real enjoyment.

"The elder Werner, in his dark and hampered house, led quite another sort of life. The business of the day, in his narrow counting-room, at his ancient desk, once done, Werner liked *to eat well* and if possible *to drink better.* Nor could he fully enjoy *good things* in solitude; with his family he must always see at table his friends and any stranger that had the slightest connection with his house. *His chairs* were of unknown age and antic fashion, but he daily invited some *to sit on them. The dainty victuals* arrested the attention of his guests, and none remarked that they were served up in common ware. His cellar held no great stock of wine; but the emptied niches were usually filled by more of a superior sort."—pp. 56, 57.

This must be admitted not to be the very best exemplification of the style noble. Nor is the outfit of the hero himself described in a vein more lofty.

"He must prepare," said Meister, "and set forth as soon as possible. Where shall we get a horse for him to suit this business?—We shall not seek far. The shopkeeper in H——, *who owes us somewhat*, but is withal a good man, has offered me a horse instead of payment. My son knows it, and tells me it is a serviceable beast. He may fetch it himself; let him go with the diligence; the day after to-morrow he is back again betimes; we have *his saddle-bags* and letters made ready in the mean time; he can set out Monday morning."

The following passage, however, is a fairer sample of the average merit of the work; and exhibits some traits of vivacity and eloquence, though debased by that affectation of singularity, and that predominating and characteristic vulgarity, of which we have already said so much. He is describing his hero's hours of fascination, in the playhouse, and elsewhere.

"For hours he would stand by the sooty light frame, inhaling the vapour of tallow lamps, looking out at his mistress; and when she returned and cast a kindly glance upon him, he was himself lost in ecstacy, and, though close upon laths and bare spars, he seemed transported into paradise. The stuffed bunches of wool denominated lambs, the water-falls of tin, the paper roses, and the one-sided huts of straw, awoke in him fair poetic visions of an old pastoral world. Nay, the very dancing girls, ugly as they were when seen at hand, did not always inspire him with disgust. They trod the same floor with Mariana. So true is it, that love, which alone can give their full charm to rose-bowers, myrtle-groves, and moonshine, can also communicate, even to shavings of wood and paper clippings, the aspect of animated nature. It is so *strong a spice*, that *tasteless*, or even *nauseous soups*, are by it rendered palatable!

"So potent a spice was certainly required to render tolerable, nay at last agreeable, the state in which he usually found her chamber, not to say herself.—Brought up in a substantial burgher's house, cleanliness and order were the element in

which he breathed; and inheriting as he did a portion of his father's taste for finery, it had always been his care, in boyhood, to furnish up his chamber, which he regarded as his little kingdom, in the stateliest fashion. He had got himself a carpet for the middle of his chamber, and a finer one for his table. He had also a white cap, which he wore straight up like a turban! and the sleeves of his night-gown he had caused to be cut short, in the mode of the Orientals. As a reason for this, he pretended, that long wide sleeves encumbered him in writing.

"In those times, how happy did he think the players, whom he saw possessed of so many splendid garments, trappings, and arms; and in the constant practice of a lofty demeanour, the spirit of which seemed to hold up a mirror of whatever, in the opinions, relations, and passions of men, was stateliest and most magnificent. Of a piece with this, thought Wilhelm, is also the player's domestic life; a series of dignified transactions and employments, whereof their appearance on the stage is but the outmost portion! Like as a mass of silver, long simmering about in the purifying furnace, at length gleams with a bright and beautiful tinge in the eye of the refiner, and shows him, at the same time, that the metal now is cleansed of all foreign mixture.

"Great, accordingly, was his surprise at first, when he found himself beside his mistress, and looked down, through the cloud that environed him, on tables, stools, and floor. The wrecks of a transient, light, and false decoration lay, like the glittering coat *of a skinned fish*, dispersed in wild disorder. The implements of personal cleanliness, combs, soap, *towels*, with *the traces of their use!* were not concealed. Music, portions of plays and pairs of shoes, washes and Italian flowers, pincushions, *hair-skewers*, *rouge-pots* and ribbons, books, and straw-hats; no article despised the neighbourhood of another; all were united by a common element, powder and dust. Yet as Wilhelm scarcely noticed in her presence aught except herself; nay, as all that had belonged to her, that she had touched, was dear to him, he came at last to feel, in this chaotic housekeeping, a charm which the proud pomp of his own habitation never had communicated. When, on this hand, he lifted aside her boddice, to get at the harpsicord; on that, threw her gown upon the bed, that he might find a seat: when she herself, with careless freedom, did not seek to hide from him *many a natural office! which, out of respect for the presence of a second person, is usually concealed;* he felt as if by all this he was coming nearer to her every moment, as if the communion betwixt them was fastening by invisible ties!"

In the midst of all these raptures, and just after he had been gallantly serenading her with the trumpets of a travelling showman, he detects his frail fair one in an intrigue with a rival; and falls into the most horrible agonies, the nature and violence of which the ingenious author illustrates by the following very obvious and dignified simile.

"As when by chance, in the preparation of *some artificial fire-works*, any part of the composition kindles before its time, and the skilfully bored and loaded barrels,—which, arranged, and burning after a settled plan, would have painted in the air a magnificently varying series of flaming images,—now hissing and roaring, promiscuously explode with a confused and dangerous crash; so, in our hero's case, did happiness and hope, pleasure and joys, realities and dreams, clash together with destructive tumult, all at once in his bosom."

He sets off, however, on his journey, and speedily gets into those more extensive theatrical connections, from which he can scarcely be said to escape till the end of the work. Nothing, indeed, can be more ludicrously unnatural than the luck he has in meeting with nothing but players, and persons connected with playhouses. On his very first sally, he falls in with a player who had run away with a young lady, whom he had captivated from the stage—and has scarcely had time to admire the mountain scenery among which he has to pass his first evening, when he is surprised to learn that the work-people in the adjacent village are about to act a play!—the whole process of which is described with as solemn a tediousness as his own original puppet-show. In the first town to which he descends, he meets first with a seducing company of tumblers and rope-dancers, reinforced by the valuable addition of a *Strong Man;* and in half an hour after makes acquaintance with a gay and bewitching damsel—who sends across the street to beg a nosegay she sees in his hands—and turns out, by the happiest accident in the world, to be a strolling actress, waiting there for the chance of employment. To give our readers an idea of the sort of descriptions with which the great writers in Germany now electrify their readers, we copy the following simple and impressive account of the procession of the tumbling party.

"Preceded by a drum, the manager advanced on horseback; he was followed by a female dancer mounted on a corresponding hack, and holding a child before her, all bedizened with ribbons and spangles. Next came the remainder of the troop on foot; some of them carrying children on their shoulders in dangerous postures, yet smoothly and lightly; among these the young, dark, black-haired figure again attracted Wilhelm's notice.—Pickleherring ran gaily up and down the crowded multitude, distributing his hand-bills with much practical fun; here smacking the lips of a girl, there breeching a boy, and awakening generally among the people an invincible desire to know more of him.—On the painted flags, the manifold science of the company was visibly delineated."

The new actress, to whom he is introduced by another of the fraternity whom he finds at his inn, is named Philina; and her character is sketched and sustained throughout the book with far more talent than could be expected from any thing we have hitherto cited. She is gay, forward, graceful, false, and good-natured; with a daring and capricious pleasantry, which, if it often strikes as unnatural, is frequently original and effective. Her debut, however, we must say, is in the author's most characteristic manner.

"She came out from her room in a pair of *tight* little slippers *with high heels*, to give them welcome. She had thrown a black mantle over her, above a white negligee, *not indeed superstitiously clean*, but which, for that very reason, gave her a more frank and *domestic air!* Her short dress did not hide a pair of the prettiest feet and ancles in the world.—'You are welcome,' she cried to Wilhelm, 'and I thank you for your charming flowers.' She led him into her chamber with the one hand, pressing the nosegay to her breast with the other. Being all seated, and got into a pleasant train of general talk, to which she had the art of giving a delightful turn, Laertes threw a handful of *gingerbread nuts* into her lap, and she immediately *began to eat them.*—'Look what a child this young gallant is!' she said: 'He wants to persuade you that I am fond of such confectionary; and it is himself that cannot live without *licking his lips* over something of the kind.'—'Let us confess,' replied Laertes, 'that, in this point, as in others, you and I go hand in hand. For example,' he continued, 'the weather is delightful to-day: what if we should take a drive into the country, and *eat our dinner* at the Mill?'"
—Vol. i. pp. 143, 144.

Even at the mill they are fortunate enough to meet with a dramatic representation—some miners in the neighbourhood having, by great good luck, taken it into their heads to set forth the utility of their craft in a sort of recitative dispute with some unbelieving countrymen, and to sing through a part of Werner's Lectures on Mineralogy—upon which very natural and probable occurrence our apprentice comments, in this incredible manner.

"'In this little dialogue,' said Wilhelm, when seated at table, 'we have a lively proof how *useful* the theatre might be to all ranks; what advantage even *the State* might procure from it, if the occupations, *trades*, and undertakings of men were all brought upon *the stage!* and presented on their praiseworthy side, in that point of view in which the State itself should honour and protect them! As matters stand, we exhibit only the ridiculous side of men.—Might it not be a worthy and pleasing task for a statesman to survey the natural and reciprocal influence of all classes on each other, and to guide some poet, gifted with sufficient humour, in such labours as these? In this way, I am persuaded, many very entertaining, both agreeable and *useful* pieces, might be executed.'"

Such is the true sublime of German speculation! and it is by writing such sheer nonsense as this that men in that country acquire the reputation of great genius—and of uniting with pleasant inventions the most profound suggestions of political wisdom! Can we be wrong in maintaining, after this, that there are diversities of national taste that can never be reconciled, and scarcely ever accounted for?

On another day they go in a boat, and agree, by way of pastime, to "extemporise a Play," by each taking an ideal character, and attempting to sustain it—and this, "because it forces each to strain his fancy and his wit to the uttermost," is pronounced to be a most "comfortable occupation,"—and is thus moralized upon by a reverend clergyman who had joined their party, and enacted a country parson with great success.

"'I think this practice very useful among actors, and even in the company of friends and acquaintances. It is the best mode of drawing men out of themselves, and leading them, by a circuitous path, back into themselves again.'"

Their evening occupation is not less intellectual and dramatic; though it ends, we must own, with rather too much animation. They all meet to read a new play; and

—"between the third and fourth act, *the punch* arrived, in an ample bowl; and there being much fighting and drinking in the piece itself, nothing was more *natural* than that, on every such occurrence, the company should transport themselves into the situation of the heroes, should flourish and strike along with them, and *drink* long life to their favourites among the *dramatis personæ*.

"Each individual of the party was inflamed with the most noble fire of national spirit. How it gratified this German company to be poetically entertained, according to their own character, *on stuff of their own manufacture!* In particular, the vaults and caverns, the ruined castles, the moss and hollow trees; but above all the nocturnal Gipsey-scenes, and the Secret Tribunal, produced a quite incredible effect.

"Towards the fifth act the approbation became more impetuous and louder; and at last, when the hero actually trampled down his oppressor, and the tyrant met his doom, the ecstasy increased to such a height, that all averred they had never passed such happy moments. Melina, whom *the liquor* had inspired, was the noisiest; and when the second bowl was empty, and midnight near, Laertes swore through thick and thin, that no living mortal was worthy ever more to put these glasses to his lips; and, so swearing, he pitched his own right over his head, through a window-pane, out into the street. The rest followed his example; and notwithstanding the protestations of the landlord, who came running in at the noise, *the punch-bowl itself*, never after this festivity to be polluted by unholy drink, was dashed into a thousand shreds. Philina, whose exhilaration was the least noticed, the other two girls by that time having laid themselves upon the sofa in no very elegant positions, maliciously encouraged her companions in their tumult.

"Meanwhile the town-guard had arrived, and were demanding admission to the house. Wilhelm, much heated by his reading, though he had drank but little, had enough to do with the landlord's help to content these people by money and good words, and afterwards to get the various members of his party sent home in that unseemly case."

Most of our readers probably think they have had enough of this goodly matter. But we cannot spare them a taste of the manner of courtship and flirtation that prevailed among these merry people. Philina one day made a garland of flowers for her own hair—and then another, which she placed on the brows of our hero.

"'And I, it appears, must go empty!' said Laertes.—'Not by any means; you shall not have reason to complain,' replied Philina, taking off the garland from her own head, and putting it on his.—'If we were rivals,' said Laertes, 'we might now dispute very warmly which of us stood higher in thy favour.'—'And the more fools you,' said she, whilst she bent herself towards him, and offered him *her lips to kiss:* and then immediately turned round, threw her arm about Wilhelm, and bestowed a kind salute on him also. 'Which of them *tastes best?*' said she archly.—'Surprisingly!' exclaimed Laertes: 'it seems as if nothing else had ever such a tang of wormwood in it.'—'As little wormwood,' she replied, 'as any gift that a man may enjoy without envy and without conceit. But now,' cried she, 'I should like to have an hour's dancing, and after that we must look to our vaulters.'"

Another evening, as Wilhelm was sitting pensively on the bench at the inn door,

"Philina came singing and skipping along through the front door. She sat down by him; nay, we might almost say, *on* him, so close did she press herself towards him; she leant upon his shoulders, began playing with his hair, patted him, and gave him the best words in the world. She begged of him to stay with them, and not leave her alone in that company, or she must die of *ennui:* she could not live any longer in the same house with Melina, and had come over to lodge in the other inn for that very reason.—He tried in vain to satisfy her with denials; to make her understand that he neither could nor would remain any longer. She did not cease her entreaties; nay, suddenly she threw her arm about his neck, and *kissed him*

with the liveliest expression of fondness.—'Are you mad, Philina?' cried Wilhelm, endeavouring to disengage himself; 'to make *the open street* the scene of such caresses, which I nowise merit! Let me go; I cannot and I will not stay.'—'And I will hold thee fast,' said she, 'and kiss thee here on the open street, and kiss thee till thou promise what I want. I shall die of laughing,' she continued: 'By this familiarity the good people here must take me for thy wife of four weeks' standing; and husbands that witness this touching scene will commend me to their wives as a pattern of child-like simple tenderness.'—Some persons were just then going by; she caressed him in the most graceful way; and he, to avoid giving scandal, was constrained to play the part of the patient husband. Then she made faces at the people, when their backs were turned; and, in the wildest humour, continued to commit all sorts of improprieties, till at last he was obliged to promise that he would not go that day, or the morrow, or the next day.—'You are a true clod!' said she, quitting him; 'and I am but a fool to spend so much kindness on you.'"—Vol. i. pp. 208, 209.

But we are tired of extracting so much trash, and must look out for something better. Would any one believe, that the same work which contains all these *platitudes* of vulgarity should have furnished our great novelist with one of his most fantastical characters, and Lord Byron with one of the most beautiful passages in his poetry? Yet so it is. The character of Fenella, in Peveril of the Peak, is borrowed almost entire from the Mignon of the work before us—and the prelude to the Bride of Abydos, beginning, "O know you the land where the cypress and myrtle?" is taken, with no improvement, from a little wild air which she sings. It is introduced here, too, with more propriety, and effect than in the work of the noble author; for she is represented as having been stolen from Italy; and the song, in this its original form, shadows out her desire to be restored to that delightful land and the stately halls of her ancestors,—retracing her way by the wild passes of the Alps. It is but fair to the poetical powers of Goethe to give this beautiful song, as it is here, apparently, very ably translated.

"Know'st thou the land where the lemon-trees bloom?
Where the gold orange glows in the deep thicket's gloom?
Where a wind ever soft from the blue heaven blows,
And the groves are of laurel and myrtle and rose?
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
My dearest and kindest, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the house, with its turreted walls,
Where the chambers are glancing, and vast are the halls?
Where the figures of marble look on me so mild,
As if thinking: 'Why thus did they use thee, poor child?'
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
My guide and my guardian, with thee would I go.

Know'st thou the mountain, its cloud-cover'd arch,
Where the mules among mist o'er the wild torrent march?
In the clefts of it, dragons lie coil'd with their brood;
The rent crag rushes down, and above it the flood.
Know'st thou it?
Thither! O thither,
Our way leadeth: Father! O come let us go!"
Vol. i. p. 229.

The mystery that hangs over the original condition of Fenella in Rushin Castle, is discarded, indeed, as to Mignon, from the first; for she is first exhibited to us as *actually tumbling!*—and is rescued by our hero from the scourge of the master tumbler, who was dissatisfied with her performance. But the *fonds* of the character is the same. She is beautiful and dwarfish, unaccountable, and full of sensibility, and is secretly in love with her protector, who feels for her nothing but common kindness and compassion. She comes at last, to be sure, to be rather more mad than Fenella, and dies the victim of her hopeless passion. The following is the description, something overworked perhaps, and not quite intelligible, but, on the whole, most powerful and impressive, of this fairy creature's first indication of her love to her youthful deliverer.

"Nothing is more touching than the first disclosure of a love which has been nursed in silence, of a faith grown strong in secret, and which at last comes forth in the hour of need, and reveals itself to him who formerly has reckoned it of small account. The bud, which had been closed so long and firmly, was now ripe, to burst its swathings, and Wilhelm's heart could never have been readier to welcome the impressions of affection.

"She stood before him, and noticed his disquietude. 'Master!' she cried, 'if thou art unhappy, what will become of Mignon?' 'Dear little creature,' said he, taking her hands, 'thou too art part of my anxieties. I must go.' She looked at his eyes, glistening with restrained tears, and knelt down with vehemence before him. He kept her hands; she laid her head upon his knees, and remained quite still. He played with her hair, patted her, and spoke kindly to her. She continued motionless for a considerable time. At last he felt a sort of palpitating movement in her, which began very softly, and then by degrees with increasing violence diffused itself over all her frame. 'What ails thee, Mignon?' cried he; 'what ails thee?' She raised up her little head, looked at him, and all at once laid her hand upon her heart, with the countenance of one repressing the utterance of pain. He raised her up, and she fell upon his breast; he pressed her towards him, and kissed her. She replied not by any pressure of the hand, by any motion whatever. She held firmly against her heart; and all at once gave a cry, which was accompanied by spasmodic movements of the body. She started up, and immediately fell down before him, as if broken in every joint. It was an excruciating moment! 'My child!' cried he, raising her up, and clasping her fast; 'My child, what ails thee?' The palpitations continued, spreading from the heart over all the lax and powerless limbs; she was merely hanging in his arms! All at once she again became quite stiff, like one enduring the sharpest corporeal agony; and soon with a new vehemence all her frame once more became alive; and she threw herself about his neck, like a bent spring that is closing; while in her soul, as it were a strong rent took place, and at the same moment a stream of tears flowed from her shut eyes into his bosom. He held her fast. She wept! and no tongue can express the force of these tears. Her long hair had loosened, and was hanging down before her; it seemed as if her whole being was melting incessantly into a brook of tears! Her rigid limbs were again become relaxed; her inmost soul was pouring itself forth! In the wild confusion of the moment, Wilhelm was afraid she would dissolve in his arms, and leave nothing there for him to grasp. He held her faster and faster. 'My child!' cried he, 'my child!' Her tears continued flowing. At last she raised herself; a faint gladness shone upon her face. 'My father!' cried she, 'thou wilt not forsake me? Wilt be my father? I am thy child.'"

We cannot better illustrate the strange inconsistency of our author's manner, than by subjoining to this highly passionate and really beautiful scene, his account of the *egg dance*, which this little creature performs a few days after, for her friend's entertainment.

"She came into his room one evening carrying a little carpet below her arm, which she spread out upon the floor. She then brought four candles, and placed one upon each corner of the carpet. A little basket of eggs, which she next carried in, made her purpose clearer. Carefully measuring her steps, she then walked to and fro on the carpet, spreading out the eggs in certain figures and positions; which done, she called in a man that was waiting in the house, and could play on the violin. He retired with his instrument into a corner; she tied a band about her eyes, gave a signal, and, like a piece of wheel-work set a-going, she began moving the same instant as the music, accompanying her beats and the notes of the tune with the strokes of a pair of castanets.

"Lightly, nimbly, quickly, and with hairsbreadth accuracy, she carried on the dance. She skipped so sharply and surely along between the eggs, and trode so closely down beside them, that you would have thought every instant she must trample one of them in pieces, or kick the rest away in her rapid turns. By no means! She touched no one of them, though winding herself through their mazes with all kinds of steps, wide and narrow, nay even with leaps, and at last half kneeling.—Constant as the movement of a clock, she ran her course; and the strange music, at each repetition of the tune gave a new impulse to the dance, recommencing and again rushing off as at first.

"The dance being ended, she rolled the eggs together softly with her foot into a little heap, left none behind, harmed none; then placed herself beside it, taking the bandage from her eyes, and concluding her performance with a little bow."

Soon after this, the whole player party are taken to the castle of a wealthy Count, to assist him in entertaining a great Prince and his numerous attendants, from whom he was expecting a visit. Our hero is prevailed on to go also, and takes Mignon along with him—and though treated with some indignity, and very ill lodged and attended, condescends to compose a complimentary piece in honour of the illustrious stranger, and to superintend, as well as to take a part in, all the private theatricals. By degrees, however, he steals into the favour of the more distinguished guests—is employed to read to the Countess, and at last is completely fascinated with her elegance and beauty—while, as it turns out, he has unconsciously made some impression on her innocent heart. He is not a little assisted in his designs, whatever they may have been, by a certain intriguing Baroness, who dresses him out, on one occasion, in the Count's clothes, when that worthy person was from home, intending to send the Countess in upon him, by telling her that her lord was suddenly returned. But this scheme is broken up by the unexpected verification of her fable; for the Count actually returns at the moment; and, on stepping into his dressing-room, is so much terrified at seeing *himself* sitting quietly in an arm-chair by the fire, that he runs out in a great fright, and soon after becomes a visionary, and joins the insane flock of Swedenborg. A critical scene, however, is at last brought on accidentally—and though the transaction recorded is by no means quite correct, we cannot help inserting the account of it, as a very favourable specimen of the author's most animated and most natural style. Wilhelm had been engaged in reading, as usual, to the Countess and her female party, when they are interrupted by the approach of visitors. The Baroness goes out to receive them;

"And the Countess, while about to shut her writing-desk, which was standing open, took up her casket, and put some other rings upon her finger. 'We are soon to part,' said she, keeping her eyes upon the casket: 'accept a memorial of a true friend, who wishes nothing more earnestly, than that you may always prosper.' She then took out a ring, which, underneath a crystal, bore a little plate of woven hair, beautifully set with diamonds. She held it out to Wilhelm, who, on taking it, knew neither what to say nor do, but stood as if rooted to the ground. The Countess shut her desk, and sat down upon the sofa. 'And I must go empty?' said Philina, kneeling down at the Countess' right hand. 'Do but look at the man! he carries such a store of words in his mouth, when no one wants to hear them; and now he cannot stammer out the poorest syllable of thanks. Quick, sir! Express your services, by way of pantomime at least; and if to-day you can invent nothing; then, for Heaven's sake, be my imitator!' Philina seized the right hand of the Countess, and kissed it warmly. Wilhelm sank upon his knee, laid hold of the left, and pressed it to his lips. The Countess seemed embarrassed, yet without displeasure. 'Ah!' cried Philina; 'so much splendour of attire I may have seen before; but never one so fit to wear it. What bracelets, but also what a hand! What a neck-dress, but also what a bosom!' 'Peace, little cozener!' said the Countess. 'Is this his Lordship then?' said Philina, pointing to a rich medallion, which the Countess wore on her left side, by a particular chain. 'He is painted in his bridal dress,' replied the Countess. 'Was he then so young?' inquired Philina; I know it is but a year or two since you were married.' 'His youth must be placed to the artist's account,' replied the lady. 'He is a handsome man,' observed Philina. 'But was there never,' she continued, placing her hand upon the Countess' heart, 'never any other image that found its way in secret hither?' 'Thou art very bold, Philina!' cried she; 'I have spoiled thee. Let me never hear such another speech.' 'If you are angry, then am I unhappy,' said Philina, springing up, and hastening from the room.

"Wilhelm still held that lovely hand in both of his. His eyes were fixed upon the bracelet-clasp; he noticed, with extreme surprise, that his initials were traced on it, in lines of brilliants. 'Have I then,' he modestly inquired, 'you own hair in this precious ring?' 'Yes,' replied she in a faint voice; then suddenly collecting herself, she said, and pressed his hand: 'Arise, and fare you well!' 'Here is my name,' cried he, 'by the most curious chance!' He pointed to the bracelet-clasp. 'How?' cried the Countess; 'it is the cipher of a female friend!' 'They are the initials of my name. Forget me not. Your image is engraven on my heart, and will never be effaced. Farewell! I must be gone.' He kissed her hand, and meant to rise; but as in dreams, some strange thing fades and changes into something stranger, and the succeeding wonder takes us by surprise; so, without knowing how it happened, he found the Countess in his arms! Her

lips were resting upon his, and their warm mutual kisses were yielding them that blessedness, which mortals sip from the topmost sparkling foam on the freshly poured cup of love!

"Her head lay upon his shoulder; the disordered ringlets and ruffles were forgotten. She had thrown her arm around him; he clasped her with vivacity; and pressed her again and again to his breast. O that such a moment could but last forever! And wo to envious fate that shortened even this brief moment to our friends! How terrified was Wilhelm, how astounded did he start from this happy dream, when the Countess, with a shriek, on a sudden tore herself away, and hastily pressed her hand against her heart. He stood confounded before her; she held the other hand upon her eyes, and, after a moment's pause, exclaimed: 'Away! leave me! delay not!' He continued standing. 'Leave me!' she cried; and taking off her hand from her eyes, she looked at him with an indescribable expression of countenance; and added, in the most tender and affecting voice: 'Fly, if you love me.' Wilhelm was out of the chamber, and again in his room, before he knew what he was doing. Unhappy creatures! What singular warning of chance or of destiny tore them asunder?'"

These questionable doings are followed up by long speculations on the art of playing, and the proper studies and exercises of actors. But in the end of these, which are mystical and prosing enough, we come suddenly upon what we do not hesitate to pronounce the most able, eloquent, and profound exposition of the character of Hamlet, as conceived by our great dramatist, that has ever been given to the world. In justice to the author, we shall give a part of this admirable critique. He first delineates him as he was before the calamities of his family.

"'Soft, and from a noble stem, this royal flower had sprung up under the immediate influences of majesty: the idea of moral rectitude with that of princely elevation, the feeling of the good and dignified with the consciousness of high birth, had in him been unfolded simultaneously. He was a prince, by birth a prince; and he wished to reign, only that good men might be good without obstruction. Pleasing in form, polished by nature, courteous from the heart, he was meant to be the pattern of youth and the joy of the world.

"'Without any prominent passion, his love for Ophelia was a still presentiment of sweet wants. His zeal in knightly accomplishments was not entirely his own; it needed to be quickened and inflamed by praise bestowed on others for excelling in them. He was calm in his temper, artless in his conduct, neither pleased with idleness, nor too violently eager for employment. The routine of a university he seemed to continue when at court. He possessed more mirth of humour than of heart; he was a good companion, pliant, courteous, discreet, and able to forget and forgive an injury; yet never able to unite himself with those who overstept the limits of the right, the good, and the becoming.'"

He then considers the effects of the misfortunes of his house on such a disposition. The first is the death of his father, by which his fair hopes of succession are disappointed.

"He is now poor in goods and favour, and a stranger in the scene which from youth he had looked upon as his inheritance. His temper here assumes its first mournful tinge. He feels that now he is not more, that he is less, than a private nobleman; he offers himself as the servant of every one; he is not courteous and condescending, he is needy and degraded.

"'The second stroke that came upon him wounded deeper, bowed still more. It was the marriage of his mother. The faithful tender son had yet a mother, when his father passed away. He hoped, in the company of his surviving and noble-minded parent, to reverence the heroic form of the departed; but his mother too he loses! and it is something worse than death that robs him of her. The trustful image, which a good child loves to form of his parents, is gone. With the dead there is no help—on the living no hold! She also is a woman, and her name is Frailty, like that of all her sex.

"'Figure to yourselves this youth,' cried he, 'this son of princes; conceive him vividly, bring his state before your eyes, and then observe him when he learns that his father's spirit walks! Stand by him in the terrors of the night, when the venerable ghost itself appears before him. A horrid shudder passes over him; he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him; he follows it, and hears. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge, and the piercing oft-repeated prayer, Remember me!

"'And when the ghost has vanished, *who* is it that stands before us? A young hero panting for vengeance? A prince by birth, rejoicing to be called to punish the usurper of his crown? No! Trouble and astonishment take hold of the solitary young man: he grows bitter against smiling villains, swears that he will not forget the spirit, and concludes with the expressive ejaculation:

> The time is out of joint: O! cursed spite,
> That ever I was born to set them right!

"'In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to Hamlet's whole procedure. To me it is clear that Shakespeare meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul *unfit* for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to me to be composed. An oak-tree is planted in a costly jar, which should have borne only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered! A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him; the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He winds, and turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils; is ever put in mind, ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind.'"

There is nothing so good as this in any of our own commentators—nothing at once so poetical, so feeling, and so just. It is inconceivable that it should have been written by the chronicler of puppet-shows and gluttonous vulgarities.

The players, with our hero at their head, now travel across the country, rehearsing, lecturing, squabbling, and kissing as usual. There is war however on their track; and when seated pleasantly at dinner in a wood on their journey, they are attacked by some armed marauders, robbed of their goods, and poor Wilhelm left wounded and senseless on the field. What follows, though not very original in conception, is described with effect and vivacity.

"On again opening his eyes, he found himself in the strangest posture. The first thing that pierced the dimness which yet swam before his vision, was Philina's face bent down over his. He felt himself weak; and making a movement to rise, he discovered that he was in Philina's lap; into which, indeed, he again sank down. She was sitting on the sward. She had softly pressed towards her the head of the fallen young man; and made for him an easy couch, as far as this was in her power. Mignon was kneeling with dishevelled and bloody hair at his feet, which she embraced with many tears. Philina let him know that this true-hearted creature, seeing her friend wounded, and in the hurry of the instant, being able to think of nothing which would staunch the blood, had taken her own hair that was flowing round her head, and tried to stop the wounds with it; but had soon been obliged to give up the vain attempt; that afterwards they had bound with moss and dry mushrooms, Philina herself giving up her neck-kerchief for that purpose.

"After a few moments, a young lady issued from the thickets, riding on a gray courser, and accompanied by an elderly gentleman and some cavaliers. Grooms, servants, and a troop of hussars, closed up the rear. Philina stared at this phenomenon, and was about to call, and entreat the Amazon for help; when the latter, turning her astonished eyes on the group, instantly checked her horse, rode up to them, and halted. She inquired eagerly about the wounded man, whose posture in the lap of this light-minded Samaritan seemed to strike her as peculiarly strange. 'Is it your husband?' she inquired of Philina. 'Only a friend,' replied the other, with a tone that Wilhelm liked extremely ill. He had fixed his eyes upon the soft, elevated, calm, sympathizing features of the stranger: he thought he had never seen aught nobler or more lovely. Her shape he could not see: it was hid by a man's great-coat, which she seemed to have borrowed from some of her attendants, to screen her from the chill evening air."—Vol. ii. pp. 38—43.

A surgeon in this compassionate party examines his wounds, and the lovely young woman, after some time

—"turned to the old gentleman, and said, 'Dear uncle, may I be generous at your expense?' She took off the great-coat, with the visible intention to give it to the stript and wounded youth.

"Wilhelm, whom the healing look of her eyes had hitherto held fixed, was now, as the surtout fell away, astonished at her lovely figure. She came near, and softly laid the coat above him. At this moment, as he tried to open his mouth, and stammer out some words of gratitude, the lively impression of her presence worked so strongly on his senses, already caught and bewildered, that all at once it appeared to him as if her head were encircled with rays; and a glancing light seemed by degrees to spread itself over all her form! At this moment the surgeon, endeavouring to extract the ball from his wound, gave him a sharper twinge; the angel faded away from the eyes of the fainting patient: he lost all consciousness; and, on returning to himself, the horsemen and coaches, the fair one with her attendants, had vanished like a dream.

"He, meanwhile, wrapt up in his warm surtout, was lying peacefully upon the litter. An electric warmth seemed to flow from the fine wool into his body: in short, he felt himself in the most delightful frame of mind. The lovely being, whom this garment lately covered, had affected him to the very heart. He still saw the coat falling down from her shoulders: saw that noble form, begirt with radiance, stand beside him; and his soul hied over rocks and forests on the footsteps of his departed benefactress.—Vol. ii. pp. 45—47.

The party afterwards settles in a large town, under the charge of a regular manager. There are endless sqabbles and intrigues, and interminable dissertations on acting. Our hero performs Hamlet with great applause, and gets tipsy with the whole company at a riotous supper after it—the rehearsals, the acting, and the said supper being all described with great spirit and animation. We may extract the end of the latter.

"Amid the pleasures of the entertainment, it had not been noticed that the children and the Harper were away. Ere long they made their entrance, and were blithely welcomed by the company. They came in together, very strangely decked: Felix was beating a triangle, Mignon a tambourine; the old man had his large harp hung round his neck, and was playing on it whilst he carried it before him. They marched round and round the table, and sang a multitude of songs. *Eatables* were handed to them; and the guests believed they could not do a greater kindness to the children, than by giving them as much *sweet wine* as they chose to drink. For the company themselves had not by any means neglected a stock *of savoury flasks*, presented by the two amateurs, which had arrived this evening in baskets. The children tripped about and sang; Mignon in particular was frolicsome beyond what any one had ever seen her. She beat the tambourine with the greatest liveliness and grace: now, with her finger pressed against the parchment, she hummed across it quickly to and fro; now rattled on it with her knuckles, now with the back of her hand; nay sometimes, with alternating rhythm, she struck it first against her knee and then against her head; and anon twirling it in her hand, she made the shells jingle by themselves; and thus, from the simplest instrument, elicited a great variety of tones. The company, as much as they had laughed at her at first, were in fine obliged to curb her. But persuasion was of small avail; for she now sprang up, and raved, and shook her tambourine, and capered round the table. With her hair flying out behind her, with her head thrown back, and her limbs as it were cast into the air, she seemed like one of those antique Mænades, whose wild and all but impossible positions still strike us with astonishment when seen on classic monuments, &c.

"It was late; and Aurelia, perhaps the only one retaining self-possession in the party, now stood up, and signified that it was time to go. By way of termination, Serlo gave a firework, or what resembled one: for he could imitate the sound of crackers, rockets, and fire-wheels with his mouth, in a style of nearly inconceivable correctness. You had only to shut your eyes, and the deception was complete. On reaching the open air, almost all of them observed that *they had drank too liberally*. They glided asunder without taking leave.

"The instant Wilhelm gained his room, he stripped, and, extinguishing his candle, hastened into bed. Sleep was overpowering him without delay, when a noise, that seemed to issue from behind the stove, aroused him. In the eye of his heated fancy, the image of the harnessed king was hovering near him: he sat up that he might address the spectre; but he felt himself encircled with soft arms, and his mouth was shut with kisses, which he had not force to push away!"—Vol. ii. pp. 205—209.

In this division of the story we hear a great deal of an Aurelia—a sister of the manager's—an actress of course—but a woman of talent and sentiment—who had been perfidiously left by her lover—and confided all the bitterness of her heart to our hero. There is a good deal of eloquence in some of these dialogues—and a nearer approach to nature, than in any other part of the work. This is a sample of them.

"'One more forsaken woman in the world!' you will say. You are a man. You are thinking: 'What a noise she makes, the fool, about a necessary evil, which certainly as death awaits women when such is the fidelity of men!' Oh, my friend! if my fate were common, I would gladly undergo

a common evil. But it is so singular: why cannot I present it to you in a mirror, why not command some one to tell it you? Oh, had I, had I been seduced, surprised, and afterwards forsaken! there would then be comfort in despair: but I am far more miserable; I have been my own deceiver; I have wittingly betrayed myself; and this, this is what shall never be forgiven me.'

"'I hate the French language,' she added, from the bottom of my soul. During the period of our kindliest connection, he wrote in German, and what genuine, powerful, cordial German! It was not till he wanted to get quit of me, that he began seriously to write in French. I marked, I felt what he meant. What he would have blushed to utter in his mother tongue, he could by this means write with a quiet conscience. It is the language of reservations, equivocations, and lies: it is a *perfidious* language! Heaven be praised! I cannot find another word to express this *perfide* of theirs in all its compass. Our poor *treulos*, the *faithless* of the English, are innocent as babes beside it. *Perfide* means faithless with enjoyment, with insolence and malice. How enviable is the culture of a nation that can figure out so many shades of meaning by a single word! French is exactly the language of the world; worthy to become the universal language, that all may have it in their power to cheat, and cozen, and betray each other! His French letters were always smooth and pleasant while you read them. If you chose to believe it, they sounded warmly, even passionately; but if you examined narrowly, they were but phrases, accursed phrases! He has spoiled my feeling to the whole language, to French literature, even to the beautiful delicious expressions of noble souls which may be found in it. I shudder when a French word is spoken in my hearing.'"

What follows is still more in the raving style—and we suppose is much more admired in Germany.

"She sunk in thought; then after a brief pause, she exclaimed with violence: 'You are accustomed to have all things fly into your arms. No, you cannot feel; no *man* is in a case to feel the worth of a woman that can reverence herself. By all the holy angels, by all the images of blessedness which a pure and kindly heart creates, there is not any thing more heavenly than the soul of a woman that gives herself to the man she loves! We are cold, proud, high, clear-sighted, wise, while we deserve the name of women; and all these qualities we lay down at your feet, the instant that we love, that we hope to excite a return of love. Oh! how have I cast away my entire existence wittingly and willingly! But now will I despair, purposely despair. There is no drop of blood within me but shall suffer, no fibre that I will not punish. Smile, I pray you; laugh at this theatrical display of passion.'

"Wilhelm was far enough from any tendency to laugh. This horrible, half-natural, half-fictitious condition of his friend afflicted him but too deeply. She looked him intently in the face, and asked: 'Can you say that you never yet betrayed a woman, that you never tried with thoughtless gallantry, with false asseverations, with cajoling oaths, to wheedle favour from her?' 'I can,' said Wilhelm, 'and indeed without much vanity; my life has been so simple and sequestered, I have had but few enticements to attempt such things. And what a warning, my beautiful, my noble friend, is this melancholy state in which I see you! Accept of me a vow, which is suited to my heart, &c.; no woman shall receive an acknowledgment of love from my lips, to whom I cannot consecrate my life.' She looked at him with a wild indifference; and drew back some steps as he offered her his hand. ''Tis of no moment!' cried she: 'so many women's tears more or fewer! the ocean will not swell by reason of them! And yet,' continued she, 'among thousands *one* woman saved! that still is something: among thousands one honest man discovered; this is not to be refused. Do you know then what you promise?' 'I know it,' answered Wilhelm with a smile, and holding out his hand. 'I accept it then,' said she, and made a movement with her right hand, as if meaning to take hold of his: but instantly she darted it into her pocket, pulled out her dagger as quick as lightning, and scored with the edge and point of it across his hand! He hastily drew back his arm but the blood was already running down.

"'One must mark you men rather sharply, if one means you to take heed,' cried she with a wild mirth, which soon passed into a quick assiduity. She took her handkerchief, and bound his hand with it to staunch the fast-flowing blood. 'Forgive a half-crazed being,' cried she, 'and regret not these few drops of blood. I am appeased, I am again myself. On my knees will I crave your pardon: leave me the comfort of healing you.'"—Vol. ii. pp. 128—132.

Alternating with these agonies, we have many such scenes as the following.

"'''Tis a pity, I declare,' said Serlo to Philina, 'that we have no ballet; else I would make you dance me a *pas de duex* with your first, and another with your second husband: the harper might be lulled to sleep by the measure; and your bits of feet and ancles would look so pretty, tripping to and fro upon the side stage.' 'Of my ancles you do not know much,' replied she snappishly; 'and as to my bits of feet,' cried she, hastily reaching below the table, *pulling off her slippers*, and holding them out to Serlo; 'here are the cases of them, and I give you leave to find me nicer ones.' 'It were a serious task,' said he, looking at the elegant half-shoes. 'In truth, one does not often meet with any thing so dainty.' They were of Parisian workmanship; Philina had obtained them as a present from the countess, a lady whose foot was celebrated for its beauty. 'A charming thing!' cried Serlo; 'my heart leaps at the sight of them.' 'What gallant throbs!' replied Philina. 'There is nothing in the world beyond a pair of slippers,' said he; 'of such pretty manufacture, in their proper time and place———' Philina took her slippers from his hands, crying, 'You have squeezed them all! They are far too wide for me!' She played with them, and rubbed the soles of them together. 'How hot it is!' cried she, clapping the sole upon her cheek, then again rubbing, and holding it to Serlo. He was innocent enough to stretch out his hand to feel the warmth. 'Clip! clap!' cried she, giving him a smart rap over the knuckles with the heel, that he screamed and drew back his hand; 'I will teach you how to use my slippers better.' 'And I will teach you also how to use old folk like children,' cried the other; then sprang up, seized her, and plundered many a kiss, every one of which she artfully contested with a show of serious reluctance. In this romping, her long hair goot loase, and floated round the group; *the chair overset;* and Aurelia, inwardly indignant at such rioting, arose in great vexation."—Vol. ii. pp. 166, 167.

This said Aurelia has a little boy called Felix—and dying at last of her sorrow, leaves a letter for her betrayer, which she had engaged our hero to deliver to him in person. But between the giving and execution of this mandate, the ingenious author has interpolated a separate piece, which he has entitled "the confessions of a fair Saint"—and which has no other apparent connection with the story, than that poor Aurelia's physician had lent it to her to read in her last moments. Though eminently characteristic of the author

it need not detain us long. The first part is full of vulgarity and obscurity—the last absolutely unintelligible. This fair saint lived in her youth among a set of people whom she calls German courtiers, and says, with singular delicacy,

"I look upon it as a providential guidance, that none of these many handsome, rich, and well-dressed men could take my fancy. They were rakes, and did not hide it; this scared me back: their speech was frequently adorned with double meanings; this offended me, and made me act with coldness towards them. Many times their improprieties surpassed belief! and I did not prevent myself from being rude. *Besides*, my ancient counsellor had once in confidence contrived to tell me, that, with the greater part of these lewd fellows, *health* as well as virtue was in danger! I now shuddered at the sight of them; I was afraid, if one of them in any way approached too near me. I would not touch their cups or glasses, even the chairs they had been sitting on! Thus morally and physically I remained apart from them."

She then falls in love with a certain Narciss, with whom her first acquaintance was formed at a ball, where, "after having jigged it for a while in the crowd, he came into the room where I was, in consequence of *a bleeding at the nose*, with which he had been overtaken, and began to speak about a multitude of things!" In spite of this promising beginning, however, the mutual flame is not caught till they meet again at a dinner, where,

"Even at table, we had many things to suffer; for several of the gentlemen *had drank too much:* and after rising from it, they insisted on a game at *forfeits*. It went on with great vivacity and tumult. Narciss had lost a forfeit: they ordered him, by way of penalty, to whisper something pleasant in the ear of every member of the company. It seems, he staid too long beside my neighbour, the lady of a captain. The latter on a sudden struck him such a *box with his fist*, that the powder flew about my eyes and blinded me! When I had cleared my sight, and in some degree recovered from my terror, I saw that both of them had drawn their swords. Narciss was bleeding; and the other, mad with wine, and rage, and jealousy, could scarcely be held back by all the company: I seized Narciss, led him by the arm up stairs; and as I did not think my friend even here in safety from his frantic enemy, I shut the door and bolted it."

After this they are soon betrothed; but she grows Methodistical, and he cold,—and their engagement flies off;—And then she becomes pious in good earnest, and is by turns a *Hallean* and a *Herrnhuther*, and we do not know how many other things, and raves through seventy or eighty pages, of which we have not courage to attempt any analysis.

We now get rid in a great degree of plays and players, and emerge into the region of mysticism. Wilhelm goes to the country to deliver Aurelia's letter to Lothario; but finds that worthy Baron so busy preparing to fight a duel, that he cannot find an opportunity to discharge himself of his mission. He remains, however, in the castle, and soon finds himself in the midst of several peremptory and omniscient people, who make what they please of him. In discourse, they happen to make mention of a certain Count, a brother-in-law of Lothario's, who had grown melancholy, and talked of joining the Herrnhuthers, with his beautiful wife. Wilhelm immediately inquires what Count they are speaking of.

"'One whom you know very well,' said Jarno 'You yourself are the ghost that have chased the unhappy wiseacre into piety; you are the villain who have brought his pretty wife to such a state that she inclines accompanying him.' 'And she is Lothario's sister?' cried our friend. 'No other!'—'And Lothario knows?'—'The whole.' 'O let me fly!' cried Wilhelm: 'How shall I appear before him? What can he say to me?' 'That no man should cast a stone at his brother; that when one composes long speeches, with a view to shame his neighbours, he should speak them to a looking-glass.' 'Do you know that also?' 'And many things beside,' said Jarno with a smile."

From this moment our hero gives up the idea of reproaching the Baron with his perfidy to Aurelia, and offers his services to decoy away from him another love-sick damsel who is then in the house, and whose hysterics, it is thought, might retard the cure of the wound he has just received in his duel. He takes her away, accordingly, under some false pretext, to a certain Theresa, another deserted love of Lothario, and who is distinguished by a singular passion for housekeeping and all manner of economical employments. The conception of this character, which is dwelt on at great length, is one of the most glaring absurdities and affectations in the book. The author has actually endeavoured, in serious earnest, to exalt the common qualifications of a domestic drudge, or notable housewife, into heroic virtues, and to elaborate his favourite heroine out of these base materials. The whole scene is tinged, even beyond the average standard of the book, with the apparently opposite faults of vulgarity and extravagance. This is the debut.

"She entered Wilhelm's room, inquiring if he wanted any thing. 'Pardon me,' said she, 'for having lodged you in a chamber which *the smell of paint* still renders disagreeable: my little dwelling is but just made ready; you are handselling this room, which is appointed for my guests; also, you will have many things to pardon. My *cook has run away* from me, at this unseasonable time; and a serving-man has bruised his hand. I might be forced to manage all myself; and if it were so, we must just put up with it. One is plagued with nobody so much as with one's servants: not one of them will serve you, scarcely even serve himself.' She said a good deal more on different matters: in general she seemed to like to speak.

They then take a walk together, and, on their return,

"Wilhelm testified his admiration at her skill in husbandry concerns. 'Decided inclination, early opportunity, external impulse, and continued occupation in a useful business,' said she, 'make many things, which were at first far harder, possible in life.' On returning home, she sent him to her little garden. Here he scarce could turn himself, so narrow were the walks, so thickly was it sown and planted. On looking over to the court, he could not keep from smiling: the *firewood* was lying there, as accurately sawed, split, and piled, as if it had been part of the building, and had been intended to abide there constantly. The *tubs* and implements, all clean, were standing in their places: the house was *painted white and red;* it was *really pleasant* to behold! Whatever can be done by handicraft, that knows not beautiful proportions, but that labours for convenience, cheerfulness, and durability, appeared united on the spot."

She then *puts on men's clothes!* which, indeed, she generally wore as most handy; and they have another walk, in the course of which she tells him her story. She was nobly born. But

"'From my earliest youth, *the kitchen*, the store-room, the granaries, the field, were my selected element! Cleanliness and order in the house seemed, even while I was playing in it, to be my peculiar instinct, my peculiar object. This tendency gave pleasure to my father; and he by degrees afforded it the most suitable employment. When we were by ourselves, when walking through the fields, when I was helping to examine his accounts, I could perceive what happiness he was enjoying.'"

Her mother took great delight in a private theatre—"But I," she observed, "very seldom staid among the audience; however, *I always snuffed their candles*, and *prepared the supper*, —and put the wardrobe in order." After her father's death, her mother wastes the property, and she goes as a kind of steward or manager, into the family of a neighbouring lady, whom "she faithfully assisted in *struggling* with her steward and domestics."

"'I am neither of a niggardly nor grudging temper; but we women are accustomed to insist, more earnestly than men, that *nothing shall be wasted*. Embezzlement of all sorts is intolerable to us. Here I was in my element once more.'"

This is enough, we suppose, for the character of Theresa. But the accomplished Lothario falls in love with this angel, and here are the grounds on which he justifies his preference.

"'What is the highest happiness of mortals, if not to execute what we consider right and good; to be really masters of the means conducive to our aims? And where should or can our first and nearest aims be but *within the house?* All those indispensable, and still to be renewed *supplies*, where do we expect, do we require to find them, if it is not in the place where we arise and where we go to sleep, where *kitchen* and *cellar*, and every species of accommodation for ourselves and ours is to be always ready? What unvarying activity is needed to conduct this constantly recurring series in unbroken living order! It is when a woman has attained this inward mastery, that she truly makes the husband whom she loves a master: her attention will acquire all sorts of knowledge for her; her activity will turn them all to profit. Thus is she dependent upon no one; and she procures her husband genuine independence, that which is interior and domestic: whatever he possesses he beholds secured; what he earns, well employed.'" &c.

They are engaged accordingly to be married; but the match is broken off by an unlucky discovery, that this gay Lothario had formerly had a love affair with Theresa's mother, when she was travelling abroad under a feigned name! We are rather surprised, we confess, at the notable fair one's delicacy, in considering this as a bar to their union—for her notions on the subject of conjugal fidelity must be owned to be sufficiently liberal, having intimated, in reference to her lover's subsequent intrigues with Aurelia and others, that

"Even if he had been her husband, she would have had sufficient spirit to endure a matter of this kind, if *it had not troubled her domestic order:* at least she often used to say, that a wife, who properly conducted her economy, should take no umbrage at *such little fancies of her husband*, but be always certain that he would return."

Our hero returns to the castle quite enchanted with this paragon of women—and his rising flame is fed by the conversation which takes place with regard to her. After amusing themselves with each telling confidentially their pretty love adventures, the accomplished Lothario holds forth in this edifying and decided manner.

"'It is true,' observed Lothario, 'there can scarcely any feeling in the world be more agreeable, than when the heart, after a pause of indifference, again opens to love for some *new* object. Yet I would for ever have renounced *that* happiness, had fate been pleased to unite me with Theresa. What a heaven had I figured for myself beside Theresa! Not the heaven of an enthusiastic bliss; but of a *sure* life on earth: *order* in prosperity, courage in adversity, *care* for the smallest, and a spirit capable of comprehending and *managing* the greatest. You may well forgive me,' added he, and turned to Wilhelm with a smile, 'that I forsook Aurelia for Theresa: with the one I could expect a calm and cheerful life, with the other not a happy hour.' 'I will confess,' said Wilhelm, 'that in coming hither, I had no small anger in my heart against you; that I proposed to censure with severity your conduct to Aurelia.' 'It was really censurable,' said Lothario: 'I should not have exchanged my friendship for her with the sentiment of love; I should not, in place of the respect which she deserved, have intruded an attachment she was neither calculated to excite nor maintain. Alas! *she was not lovely when she loved!* the greatest misery which can befall a woman.'"

And in this cavalier manner is the subject dismissed. He denies, however, that Felix is his child, or Aurelia's either; and avers that he was brought to her by the old woman Barbara, by whom the boy was generally attended. On this hint Wilhelm flies back to the town, finds out Barbara, in whom he at length recognises the attendant of his first love, Mariana, and learns from her that the boy Felix is the offspring of their early connexion, and that the unhappy mother died in consequence of his desertion, not only heart-broken but innocent! He is long incredulous, and appoints the ancient crone to come to him again at night, and abide all his interrogations.—The scene which follows, we think, is very powerfully executed, and is the only part almost of the book which produces any thing of a pathetic effect.

"Midnight was past, when something rustled at the half-open door, and Barbara came in with a little basket. 'I am to tell you the story of our woes,' said she; 'and I must believe that you will sit unmoved at the recital; that you are waiting for me but to satisfy your curiosity; that you will now, as you did formerly, retire within your cold selfishness, while our hearts are breaking. But look you here! *Thus*, on that happy evening, did I bring you the bottle of champagne! *thus* did I place the three glasses on the table! and as you then began, with soft nursery tales, to cozen us and lull us asleep, so will I now with stern truths instruct you and keep you waking.'

"Wilhelm knew not what to say, when the crone in fact let go the cork, and filled three glasses to the brim. 'Drink!' cried she, having emptied at a draught her foaming glass. 'Drink, ere the spirit of it pass! This third glass shall froth away untasted, to the memory of my unhappy Mariana! How red were her lips, when she *then* drank your health! Ah! and now for ever pale and cold!' 'Sibyl! Fury!' Wilhelm cried, springing up, and striking the table with his fist. 'Softly, Mein Herr!' replied the crone; 'you shall not ruffle me. Your debts to us are deep and dark: the railing of a debtor does not anger one. But you are right: the simplest narrative will punish you sufficiently. Hear, then, the struggle and the victory of Mariana striving to continue yours.'"

She then tells a long story, explaining away the indications of perfidy, on the strength of which he had quitted her; and the scene ends in this very dramatic and truly touching manner.

"'Good, dear Barbara!' cried Wilhelm, springing up, and seizing the old woman by the hand, 'we have had enough of mummery and preparation! Thy indifferent, thy calm, contented tone betrays thee. Give me back my Mariana! She is living! she is near at hand! Not in vain didst thou choose this late lonely hour to visit me; not in vain hast thou prepared me by thy most delicious narrative. Where is she? where hast thou hid her? I believe all, I will promise to believe all. Thy object is attained. Where hast thou hid her? Let me light thee with this candle,—let me once more see her fair and kindly face!'

"He had pulled old Barbara from her chair: she stared at him; tears started to her eyes; wild pangs of grief took hold of her. 'What luckless error,' cried she, leaves you still a moment's hope? Yes, I have hidden her—but beneath the ground! neither the light of the sun nor any social taper shall again illuminate her kindly face. Take the boy Felix to her grave, and say to him: "There lies thy mother, whom thy father doomed unheard." The heart of Mariana beats no longer with impatience to behold you. Not in a neighbouring chamber is she waiting the conclusion of my narrative, or fable; the dark chamber has received her, to which no bridegroom follows, from which none comes to meet a lover." She cast herself upon the floor beside a chair, and wept bitterly."

She then shows him some of the poor girl's letters, which he had refused to receive, and another which she had addressed to him on her deathbed. One of the former is as follows.

"'Thou regardest me as guilty—and so I am; but not as thou thinkest. Come to me! It involves the safety of a soul, it involves a life, two lives, one of which must ever be dear to thee. This, too, thy suspicion will discredit; yet I will speak it in the hour of death: the child which I carry underneath my heart, is thine. Since I began to love thee, no other man has even pressed my hand: O that thy love, that thy uprightness, had been the companions of my youth!'"

After this he sends the boy and Mignon to his new love, Theresa, and goes back himself to Lothario, by whom, and his energetic friends, the touching tale he had to tell "is treated with indifference and levity." And now comes the mystery of mysteries. After a great deal of oracular talk, he is ordered, one morning at sunrise, to proceed to a part of the castle to which he had never before found access; and when he gets to the end of a dark hot passage, he hears a voice call "Enter!" and he lifts a tapestry and enters!—

"The hall, in which he now stood, appeared to have at one time been a chapel; instead of the altar he observed a large table raised some steps above the floor, and covered with a green cloth hanging over it. On the top of this, a drawn curtain seemed as if it hid a picture; on the sides were spaces beautifully worked, and covered in with fine wire netting, like the shelves of a library; only here, instead of books, a multitude of rolls had been inserted. Nobody was in the hall. The rising sun shone through the window, right on Wilhelm, and kindly saluted him as he came in.

"'Be seated!' cried a voice, which seemed to issue from the altar. Wilhelm placed himself in a small arm-chair, which stood against the tapestry where he had entered. There was no seat but this in the room; Wilhelm was obliged to take it, though the morning radiance dazzled him; the chair stood fast, he could only keep his hand before his eyes.

"But now the curtain, which hung down above the altar, went asunder with a gentle rustling; and showed, within a picture-frame, a dark empty aperture. A man stept forward at it, in a common dress; saluted the astonished looker-on, and said to him: 'Do you not recognise me?'"

We have not room, however, for the detail of all this mummery. A succession of figures, known and unknown, present themselves;—among others, the ghost of Hamlet. At last, after a pause,

"The Abbé came to view, and placed himself behind the green table. 'Come hither!' cried he to his marvelling friend. He went, and mounted up the steps. On the green cloth lay a little roll. 'Here is your *Indenture*,' said the Abbé; 'take it to heart; it is of weighty import.' Wilhelm lifted, opened it, and read:

"INDENTURE.—

"Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, occasion transient. To act is easy, to think is hard; to act according to our thought is troublesome. Every beginning is cheerful; the threshold is the place of expectation. The boy stands astonished, his impressions guide him; he learns sportfully, seriousness comes on him by surprise. Imitation is born with us; what should be imitated is not easy to discover. The excellent is rarely found, more rarely valued. The height charms us, the steps to it do not; with the summit in our eye, we love to walk along the plain. It is but a part of art that can be taught; the artist needs it all. Who knows it half, speaks much and is always wrong; who knows it wholly, inclines to act, and speaks seldom or late. The former have no secrets and no force; the instruction they can give is like baked bread, savoury and satisfying for a single day; but flour cannot be sown, and seed-corn ought not to be ground. Words are good, but they are not the best. The best is not to be explained by words. The spirit in which we act is the highest matter. Action can be understood and again represented by the spirit alone. No one knows what he is doing, while he acts rightly; but of what is wrong we are always conscious. Whoever works with symbols only, is a pedant, a hypocrite, or a bungler. There are many such, and they like to be together. Their babbling detains the scholar; their obstinate mediocrity vexes even the best. The instruction, which the true artist gives us, opens up the mind; for where words fail him, deeds speak. The true scholar learns from the known to unfold the unknown, and approaches more and more to being a master.

"'Enough!' cried the Abbé; 'the rest in due time. Now, look round you among these cases.'

"Wilhelm went and read the titles of the rolls. With astonishment, he found *Lothario's Apprenticeship*, *Jarno's Apprenticeship*, and his own *Apprenticeship* placed there, with many others whose names he did not know. 'May I hope to cast a look into these rolls?' 'In this chamber, there is now nothing hid from you.' 'May I put a question?' 'Ask not,' said the Abbé. 'Hail to thee, young man! Thy apprenticeship is done; Nature has pronounced thee free.'"

When he afterwards inspects this roll, he

finds "his whole life delineated with large, sharp strokes, and a number of bland and general reflections!" We doubt whether there is any such nonsense as this, any where else in the universe.

After this illumination, the first step he takes, with the assent of these oracular sages, is to propose for Theresa, in a long letter. But while waiting for her answer, he is sent by Lothario to visit his sister, to whose care, it appears, poor Mignon had been transferred by Theresa. This sister he takes, of course, for the Countess from whom he had parted so strangely in the castle, and is a little embarrassed at the thought of meeting her. But he discovers on the road that there is *another* sister; and that she is the very healing angel who had given him the great coat when wounded in the forest, and had haunted his fancy ever since.

"He entered the house; he found himself in the most earnest, and, as he almost felt, the holiest place, which he had ever trod. A pendent dazzling lustre threw its light upon a broad and softly rising stair, which lay before him, and which parted into two divisions at a turn above. Marble statues and busts were standing upon pedestals, and arranged in niches; some of them seemed known to him. The impressions of our childhood abide with us, even in their minutest traces. He recognised a Muse which had formerly belonged to his grandfather."

He finds poor Mignon in a wretched state of health—and ascertains that it is a secret passion for him that is preying on her delicate form. In the mean time, and just as his romantic love for Natalia (his fair hostess) has resumed its full sway, she delivers him Theresa's letter of acceptance—very kind and confiding, but warning him not to lay out any of his money, till she can assist and direct him about the investment. This letter perplexes him a little, and he replies, with a bad grace, to the warm congratulations of Natalia—when, just at this moment Lothario's friend steps in most opportunely to inform them, that Theresa had been discovered not to be the daughter of her reputed mother!—and that the bar to her union with Lothario was therefore at an end. Wilhelm affects great magnanimity in resigning her to his prior claims—but is puzzled by the warmth of her late acceptance—and still more, when a still more ardent letter arrives, in which she sticks to her last choice, and assures him that "her dream of living with Lothario has wandered far away from her soul;" and the matter seems finally settled, when she comes post-haste in her own person, flies into his arms, and exclaims, "My friend—my love—my husband! Yes, for ever thine! amidst the warmest kisses"—and he responds, "O my Theresa!"—and kisses in return. In spite of all this, however, Lothario and his friends come to urge his suit; and, with the true German taste for impossibilities and protracted agonies, the whole party is represented as living together quite quietly and harmoniously for several weeks—none of the parties pressing for a final determination, and all of them occupied, in the interval, with a variety of tasks, duties, and dissertations. At last the elective affinities prevail. Theresa begins to cool to her new love; and, on condition of Natalia undertaking to comfort Wilhelm, consents to go back to her engagements with Lothario—and the two couples, and some more, are happily united.

This is the ultimate catastrophe—though they who seek it in the book will not get at it quite so easily—there being an infinite variety of other events intermingled or premised. There is the death of poor Mignon—and her musical obsequies in the Hall of the Past—the arrival of an Italian Marchese, who turns out to be her uncle, and recognises his brother in the old crazy harper, of whom, though he has borne us company all along, we have not had time to take notice—the return of Philina along with a merry cadet of Lothario's house, as sprightly and indecorous as ever—the saving of Felix from poisoning, by his drinking out of the bottle instead of the glass—and the coming in of the Count, whom Wilhelm had driven into dotage and piety by wearing his clothes—and the fair Countess, who is now discovered to have suffered for years from her momentary lapse in the castle—the picture of her husband having, by a most apt retribution, been pressed so hard to her breast in that stolen embrace, as to give pain at the time, and to afflict her with fears of cancer for very long after! Besides all this, there are the sayings of a very decided and infallible gentleman called Jarno—and his final and not very intelligible admission, that all which our hero had seen in the hall of the castle was "but the relics of a youthful undertaking, in which the greater part of the initiated were once in deep earnest, though all of them now viewed it with a smile."

Many of the passages to which we have now alluded are executed with great talent; and we are very sensible are better worth extracting than many of those we have cited. But it is too late now to change our selections—and we can still less afford to add to them. On the whole, we close the book with some feelings of mollification towards its faults, and a disposition to abate, if possible, some part of the censure we were impelled to bestow on it at the beginning. It improves certainly as it advances—and though nowhere probable, or conversant indeed either with natural or conceivable characters, the inventive powers of the author seem to strengthen by exercise, and come gradually to be less frequently employed on childish or revolting subjects. While we hold out the work therefore as a curious and striking instance of that diversity of national tastes, which makes a writer idolized in one part of polished Europe, who could not be tolerated in another, we would be understood as holding it out as an object rather of wonder than of contempt; and though the greater part certainly could not be endured, and indeed could not have been written in England, there are many passages of which any country might reasonably be proud, and which demonstrate, that if taste be local and variable, genius is permanent and universal.

(October, 1804.)

The Correspondence of SAMUEL RICHARDSON, *Author of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison; selected from the original Manuscripts bequeathed to his Family. To which are prefixed, a Biographical account of that Author, and Observations on his Writings.* By ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD. 6 vols. 8vo. Phillips, London: 1804.

THE public has great reason to be satisfied, we think, with Mrs. Barbauld's share in this publication. She has contributed a very well written Introduction; and she has suppressed about twice as many letters as are now presented to our consideration. Favourably as we are disposed to think of all for which she is directly responsible, the perusal of the whole six volumes has fully convinced us that we are even more indebted to her forbearance than to her bounty.

The fair biographer unquestionably possesses very considerable talents, and exercises her powers of writing with singular judgment and propriety. Many of her observations are acute and striking, and several of them very fine and delicate. Yet this is not, perhaps, the general character of her genius; and it must be acknowledged, that she has a tone and manner which is something formal and heavy; that she occasionally delivers trite and obvious truths with the pomp and solemnity of important discoveries, and sometimes attempts to exalt and magnify her subject by a very clumsy kind of declamation. With all those defects, however, we think the life and observations have so much substantial merit, that most readers will agree with us in thinking that they are worth much more than all the rest of the publication.

She sets off indeed with a sort of formal dissertation upon novels and romances in general; and, after obligingly recapitulating the whole history of this branch of literature, from the Theagenes and Chariclea of Heliodorus to the Gil Blas and Nouvelle Heloise of modern times, she proceeds to distinguish these performances into three several classes, according to the mode and form of narration adopted by the author. The first, she is pleased to inform us, is the narrative or epic form, in which the whole story is put into the mouth of the author, who is supposed, like the Muse, to know every thing, and is not obliged to give any account of the sources of his information; the second is that in which the hero relates his own adventures; and the third is that of epistolary correspondence, where all the agents in the drama successively narrate the incidents in which they are principally concerned. It was with Richardson, Mrs. Barbauld then informs us, that this last mode of novel writing originated; and she enters into a critical examination of its advantages and disadvantages, and of the comparative probability of a person dispatching a narrative of every interesting incident or conversation in his life to his friends by the post, and of his sitting down, after his adventures are concluded, to give a particular account of them to the public.

There is something rather childish, we think, in all this investigation; and the problem of comparative probability seems to be stated purely for the pleasure of the solution. No reader was ever disturbed, in the middle of an interesting story, by any scruple about the means or the inducements which the narrator may be presumed to have had for telling it. While he is engaged with the story, such an inquiry never suggests itself; and when it is suggested, he recollects that the whole is a fiction, invented by the author for his amusement, and that the best way of communicating it must be that by which he is most interested and least fatigued. To us it appears very obvious, that the first of the three modes, or the author's own narrative, is by far the most eligible; and for this plain reason, that it lays him under much less restraint than either of the other two. He can introduce a letter or a story whenever he finds it convenient, and can make use of the dramatic or conversation style as often as the subject requires it. In epistolary writing there must be a great deal of repetition and egotism; and we must submit, as on the stage, to the intolerable burden of an insipid confidant, with whose admiration of the hero's epistles the reader may not always be disposed to sympathize. There is one species of novel indeed (but only one), to which the epistolary style is peculiarly adapted; that is, the novel, in which the whole interest depends, not upon the adventures, but on the characters of the persons represented, and in which the story is of very subordinate importance, and only serves as an occasion to draw forth the sentiments and feelings of the agents. The Heloise of Rousseau may be considered as the model of this species of writing; and Mrs. Barbauld certainly overlooked this obvious distinction, when she asserted that the author of that extraordinary work is to be reckoned among the imitators of Richardson. In the Heloise, there is scarcely any narrative at all; and the interest may be said to consist altogether in the eloquent expression of fine sentiments and exalted passion. All Richardson's novels, on the other hand, are substantially narrative; and the letters of most of his characters contain little more than a minute journal of the conversations and transactions in which they were successively engaged. The style of Richardson might be perfectly copied, though the

epistolary form were to be dropped; but no imitation of the Heloise could be recognised, if it were not in the shape of letters.

After finishing her discourse upon Novels, Mrs. Barbauld proceeds to lay before her readers some account of the life and performances of Richardson. The biography is very scanty, and contains nothing that can be thought very interesting. He was the son of a joiner in Derbyshire; but always avoided mentioning the town in which he was born. He was intended at first for the church; but his father, finding that the expense of his education would be too heavy, at last bound him apprentice to a printer. He never was acquainted with any language but his own. From his childhood, he was remarkable for invention, and was famous among his schoolfellows for amusing them with tales and stories which he composed extempore, and usually rendered, even at that early age, the vehicle of some useful moral. He was constitutionally shy and bashful; and instead of mixing with his companions in noisy sports and exercises, he used to read and converse with the sedate part of the other sex, or assist them in the composition of their love-letters. The following passage, extracted by Mrs. Barbauld from one of the suppressed letters, is more curious and interesting, we think, than any thing in those that are published.

"As a bashful and not forward boy, I was an early favourite with all the young women of taste and reading in the neighbourhood. Half a dozen of them, when met to work with their needles, used, when they got a book they liked, and thought I should, to borrow me to read to them; their mothers sometimes with them; and both mothers and daughters used to be pleased with the observations they put me upon making.

"I was not more than thirteen, when three of these young women, unknown to each other, having an high opinion of my taciturnity, revealed to me their love-secrets in order to induce me to give them copies to write after, or correct, for answers to their lovers' letters; nor did any of them ever know that I was the secretary to the others. I have been directed to chide, and even to repulse, when an offence was either taken or given, at the very time that the heart of the chider or repulser was open before me, overflowing with esteem and affection; and the fair repulser, dreading to be taken at her word, directing *this* word, or *that* expression, to be softened or changed. One highly gratified with her lover's fervour and vows of everlasting love, has said, when I have asked her direction—I cannot tell you what to write; but (her heart on her lips) you cannot write too kindly. All her fear was only that she should incur slight for her kindness."—Vol. i. Introduction, p. xxxix. xl.

We add Mrs. Barbauld's observation on this passage, for the truth of the sentiment it contains, though more inelegantly written than any other sentence in her performance.

"Human nature is human nature in every class; the hopes and the fears, the perplexities and the struggles, of these low-bred girls in probably an obscure village, supplied the future author with those ideas which, by their gradual development, produced the characters of a Clarissa and a Clementina; nor was he probably happier, or amused in a more lively manner, when sitting in his grotto, with a circle of the best informed women in England about him, who in after times courted his society, than in reading to these girls in, it may be, a little back shop, or a mantua-maker's parlour with a brick floor."—p. xl. xli.

During his apprenticeship, he distinguished himself only by exemplary diligence and fidelity; though he informs us, that he even then enjoyed the correspondence of a gentleman, of great accomplishments, from whose patronage, if he had lived, he entertained the highest expectations. The rest of his worldly history seems to have been pretty nearly that of Hogarth's virtuous apprentice. He married his master's daughter, and succeeded to his business; extended his wealth and credit by sobriety, punctuality, and integrity; bought a residence in the country; and, though he did not attain to the supreme dignity of Lord Mayor of London, arrived in due time at the respectable situation of Master of the Worshipful Company of Stationers. In this course of obscure prosperity, he appears to have continued till he had passed his fiftieth year, without giving any intimation of his future celebrity, and even without appearing to be conscious that he was differently gifted from the other flourishing traders of the metropolis. He says of himself, we observe, in one of these letters—"My business, till within these few years, filled all my time. I had no leisure; nor, being unable to write by a regular plan, knew I that I had so much invention, till I almost accidentally slid into the writing of Pamela. And besides, little did I imagine that any thing I could write would be so kindly received by the world." Of the origin and progress of this first work he has himself left the following authentic account.

"Two booksellers, my particular friends, entreated me to write for them a little volume of letters, in a common style, on such subjects as might be of use to those country readers who were unable to indite for themselves. Will it be any harm, said I, in a piece you want to be written so low, if we should instruct them how they should think and act in common cases, as well as indite? They were the more urgent with me to begin the little volume for this hint. I set about it; and, in the progress of it, writing two or three letters to instruct handsome girls, who were obliged to go out to service, as we phrase it, how to avoid the snares that might be laid against their virtue; the above story recurred to my thought: and hence sprung Pamela."—Introd. p. liii.

This publication, we are told, which made its first appearance in 1740, was received with a burst of applause. Dr. Sherlock recommended it from the pulpit. Mr. Pope said it would do more good than volumes of sermons; and another literary oracle declared, that if all other books were to be burnt, Pamela and the Bible should be preserved! Its success was not less brilliant in the world of fashion. "Even at Ranelagh," Mrs. Barbauld assures us, "it was usual for the ladies to hold up the volumes to one another, to show they had got the book that every one was talking of." And, what will appear still more extraordinary, one gentleman declares, that he will give it to *his son* as soon as he can read, that he may have an early impression of virtue.—After faithfully reciting these and other testimonies of the

high estimation in which this work was once held by all ranks of people, Mrs. Barbauld subjoins some very acute and judicious observations both on its literary merits and its moral tendency. We cannot find room for the whole of this critique; but there is so much good sense and propriety in the following passage, that we cannot refrain from inserting it.

"So long as Pamela is solely occupied in schemes to escape from her persecutor, her virtuous resistance obtains our unqualified approbation; but from the moment she begins to entertain hopes of marrying him, we admire her guarded prudence, rather than her purity of mind. She has an end in view, an interested end; and we can only consider her as the conscious possessor of a treasure, which she is wisely resolved not to part with but for its just price. Her staying in his house a moment after she found herself at liberty to leave it, was totally unjustifiable: her repentant lover ought to have followed her to her father's cottage, and to have married her from thence. The familiar footing upon which she condescends to live with the odious Jewkes, shows also, that her fear of offending the man she hoped to make her husband, had got the better of her delicacy and just resentment; and the same fear leads her to give up her correspondence with honest Mr. Williams, who had generously sacrificed his interest with his patron in order to effect her deliverance. In real life, we should, at this period, consider Pamela as an interesting girl: but the author says, she married Mr. B. because he had won her affection: and we are bound, it may be said, to believe an author's own account of his characters. But again, it is quite natural that a girl, who had such a genuine love for virtue, should feel her heart attracted to a man who was endeavouring to destroy that virtue? Can a woman value her honour infinitely above her life, and hold in serious detestation every word and look contrary to the nicest purity, and yet be won by those very attempts against her honour to which she expresses so much repugnance? —His attempts were of the grossest nature; and previous to, and during those attempts, he endeavoured to intimidate her by sternness. He puts on the master too much, to win upon her as the lover. Can affection be kindled by outrage and insult? Surely, if her passions were capable of being awakened in his favour, during such a persecution, the circumstance would be capable of an interpretation very little consistent with that delicacy the author meant to give her. The other alternative is, that she married him for

'The gilt coach and dappled Flanders mares.'

Indeed, the excessive humility and gratitude expressed by herself and her parents on her exaltation, shews a regard to rank and riches beyond the just measure of an independent mind. The pious goodman Andrews should not have thought his virtuous daughter so infinitely beneath her licentious master, who, after all, married her to gratify his own passions.—Introd. pp. lxiii.—lxvi.

The first part of this work, which concludes with the marriage of the heroine, was written in three months; and was founded, it seems, on a real story which had been related to Richardson by a gentleman of his acquaintance. It was followed by a second part, confessedly very inferior to the first, and was ridiculed by Fielding in his Joseph Andrews; an offence for which he was never forgiven.

Within eight years after the appearance of Pamela, Richardson's reputation may be said to have attained its zenith, by the successive publication of the volumes of his Clarissa. We have great pleasure in laying before our readers a part of Mrs. Barbaul 's very judicious observations upon this popular and original performance. After a slight sketch of the story, she observes,

"The plot, as we have seen, is simple, and no underplots interfere with the main design—no digressions, no episodes. It is wonderful that, without these helps of common writers, he could support a work of such length. With Clarissa it begins,—with Clarissa it ends. We do not come upon unexpected adventures and wonderful recognitions, by quick turns and surprises: We see her fate from afar, as it were through a long avenue, the gradual approach to which, without ever losing sight of the object, has more of simplicity and grandeur than the most cunning labyrinth that can be contrived by art. In the approach to the modern country seat, we are made to catch transiently a side-view of it through an opening of the trees, or to burst upon it from a sudden turning in the road; but the old mansion stood full in the eye of the traveller, as he drew near it, contemplating its turrets, which grew larger and more distinct every step that he advanced; and leisurely filling his eye and his imagination with still increasing ideas of its magnificence. As the work advances, the character rises; the distress is deepened; our hearts are torn with pity and indignation; bursts of grief succeed one another, till at length the mind is composed and harmonized with emotions of milder sorrow; we are calmed into resignation, elevated with pious hope, and dismissed glowing with the conscious triumphs of virtue.—Introd. pp. lxxxiii. lxxxiv.

She then makes some excellent remarks on the conduct of the story, and on the characters that enliven it; on that of the heroine, she observes,

"In one instance, however, Clarissa certainly sins against the delicacy of her character, that is, in allowing herself to be made a show of to the loose companions of Lovelace. But, how does her character rise, when we come to the more distressful scenes; the view of her horror, when, deluded by the pretended relations, she re-enters the fatal house; her temporary insanity after the outrage, in which she so affectingly holds up to Lovelace the licence he had procured, and her dignified behaviour when she first sees her ravisher, after the perpetration of his crime! What finer subject could be presented to the painter, than the prison scene, where she is represented kneeling amidst the gloom and horror of that dismal abode; illuminating, as it were, the dark chamber, her face reclined on her crossed arms, her white garments floating round her in the negligence of woe; Belford contemplating her with respectful commiseration: Or, the scene of calmer but heart-piercing sorrow, in the interview Colonel Morden has with her in her dying moments! She is represented fallen into a slumber, in her elbow-chair, leaning on the widow Lovick, whose left arm is around her neck: one faded cheek resting on the good woman's bosom, the kindly warmth of which had overspread it with a faintish flush, the other pale and hollow, as if already iced over by death; her hands, the blueness of the veins contrasting their whiteness, hanging lifeless before her—the widow's tears dropping unfelt upon her face—Colonel Morden, with his arms folded, gazing on her in silence, her coffin just appearing behind a screen. What admiration, what reverence, does the author inspire us with for the innocent sufferer, the sufferings too of such a peculiar nature!

"There is something in virgin purity, to which the imagination willingly pays homage. In all ages, something saintly has been attached to the idea of unblemished chastity; but it was reserved for Richardson to overcome all circumstances of dishonour and disgrace, and to throw a splendour around the *violated virgin*, more radiant than she possessed in her first bloom. He has drawn the

triumph of mental chastity; he has drawn it uncontaminated, untarnished, and incapable of mingling with pollution.—The scenes which follow the death of the heroine, exhibit grief in an affecting variety of forms, as it is modified by the characters of different survivors. They run into considerable length, but we have been so deeply interested, that we feel it a relief to have our grief drawn off, as it were, by a variety of sluices, and we are glad not to be dismissed till we have shed tears, even to satiety."—Introd. pp. xciii.—xcvii.

This criticism we think is equally judicious and refined; and we could easily prolong this extract, in a style not at all inferior. With regard to the morality of the work, Mrs. Barbauld is very indignant at the notion of its being intended to exhibit a rare instance of female chastity.

She objects with some reason, to the number of interviews which Clarissa is represented to have had with Lovelace after the catastrophe; and adds, "If the reader, on casually opening the book, can doubt of any scene between them, whether it passes before or after the outrage, that scene is one too much."—The character of Lovelace, she thinks, is very much of a fancy piece; and affirms, that our national manners do not admit of the existence of an original. If he had been placed in France, she observes, and his gallantries directed to married women, it might have been more natural; "but, in England, Lovelace would have been run through the body, long before he had seen the face either of Clarissa or Colonel Morden."

Mrs. Barbauld gives us a copious account of the praise and admiration that poured in upon the author from all quarters, on the publication of this extraordinary work: he was overwhelmed with complimentary letters, messages, and visits. But we are most gratified with the enthusiasm of one of his female correspondents, who tells him that she is very sorry, "that he was not a *woman, and blest with the means of shining as Clarissa did;* for a person capable of drawing such a character, would certainly be able to act in the same manner, *if in a like situation!*"

After Clarissa, at an interval of about five years, appeared his Sir Charles Grandison. Upon this work, also, Mrs. Barbauld has made many excellent observations, and pointed out both its blemishes and beauties, with a very delicate and discerning hand. Our limits will not permit us to enter upon this disquisition: we add only the following acute paragraph.

"Sir Charles, as a Christian, was not to fight a duel; yet he was to be recognised as the finished gentleman, and could not be allowed to want the most essential part of the character, the deportment of a man of honour, courage, and spirit. And, in order to exhibit his spirit and courage, it was necessary to bring them into action by adventures and rencounters. His first appearance is in the rescue of Miss Byron, a meritorious action, but one which must necessarily expose him to a challenge. How must the author untie this knot? He makes him so very good a swordsman, that he is always capable of disarming his adversary without endangering either of their lives. But are a man's principles to depend on the science of his fencing-master? Every one cannot have the skill of Sir Charles; every one cannot be the *best* swordsman; and the man whose study it is to avoid fighting is not quite so likely as another to be the best."

Introd. pp. cxxvii. cxxviii.

Besides his great works, Richardson published only a paper in the Rambler (the 97th); an edition of Æsop's Fables, with Reflections; and a volume of Familiar Letters for the use of persons in inferior situations. It was this latter work which gave occasion to Pamela: it is excellently adapted to its object, and we think may be of singular use to Mr. Wordsworth and his friends in their great scheme of turning all our poetry into the language of the common people. In this view, we recommend it very earnestly to their consideration.

There is little more to be said of the transactions or events of Richardson's life. His books were pirated by the Dublin booksellers: at which he was very angry, and could obtain no redress. He corresponded with a great number of females; and gradually withdrew himself from the fatigues of business to his country residence at Parson's Green; where his life was at last terminated in 1761, by a stroke of apoplexy, at the age of seventy-two.

His moral character was in the highest degree exemplary and amiable. He was temperate, industrious, and upright; punctual and honourable in all his dealings; and with a kindness of heart, and a liberality and generosity of disposition, that must have made him a very general favourite, even if he had never acquired any literary distinction.—He had a considerable share of vanity, and was observed to talk more willingly on the subject of his own works than on any other. The lowness of his original situation, and the lateness of his introduction into polite society, had given to his manners a great shyness and reserve; and a consciousness of his awkwardness and his merit together, rendered him somewhat jealous in his intercourse with persons in more conspicuous situations, and made him require more courting and attention, than every one was disposed to pay. He had high notions of parental authority, and does not seem always quite satisfied with the share of veneration which his wife could be prevailed on to show for him. He was particularly partial to the society of females; and lived, indeed, as Mrs. Barbauld has expressed it, in a flower-garden of ladies. Mrs. Barbauld will have it, that this was in the way of his profession as an author; and that he frequented their society to study the female heart, and instruct himself in all the niceties of the female character. From the tenor of the correspondence now before us, however, we are more inclined to believe, with Dr. Johnson, that this partiality was owing to his love of continual superiority, and that he preferred the conversation of ladies, because they were more lavish of their admiration, and more easily engaged to descant on the perplexities of Sir Charles, or the distresses of Clarissa. His close application to business, and the sedentary habits of a literary life, had materially injured his health: He loved to complain, as most invalids do who have any hope of being

listened to, and scarcely writes a letter without some notice of his nervous tremors, his giddiness and catchings. "I had originally a good constitution," he says, in one place, "and hurt it by no intemperance, but that of application."

In presenting our readers with this imperfect summary of Mrs. Barbauld's biographical dissertation, we have discharged by far the most pleasing part of our task; and proceed to the consideration of the correspondence which it introduces, with considerable heaviness of spirit, and the most unfeigned reluctance. The letters are certainly authentic; and they were bought, we have no doubt, for a fair price from the legal proprietors: but their publication, we think, was both improper and injudicious, as it can only tend to lower a very respectable character, without communicating any gratification or instruction to others. We are told, indeed, in the preface, "that it was the employment of Mr. Richardson's *declining* years, to select and arrange the collection from which this publication has been made; and that he always looked forward to their publication at some distant period;" nay, "that he was not without thoughts of publishing them in his lifetime; and that, after his death, they remained in the hands of his last surviving daughter, upon whose decease they became the property of his grandchildren, and were purchased from them at a very liberal price by Mr. Phillips." We have no doubt that what Mrs. Barbauld has here stated to the public, was stated to her by her employers: But we cannot read any one volume of the letters, without being satisfied that the idea of such a publication could only come into the mind of Richardson, after his judgment was impaired by the infirmities of "*declining* years;" and we have observed some passages in those which are now published, that seem to prove sufficiently his own consciousness of the impropriety of such an exposure, and the absence of any idea of giving them to the world. In the year 1755, when nine-tenths of the whole collection must have been completed, we find him expressing himself in these words to his friend Mr. Edwards:

"I am employing myself at present in looking over and sorting and classing my correspondences and other papers. This, when done, will amuse me, by reading over again a very ample correspondence, and in comparing the sentiments of my correspondents, at the time, with the present, and improving from both. The many letters and papers I shall destroy will make an executor's work the easier; and if any of my friends desire their letters to be returned, they will be readily come at for that purpose. Otherwise they will amuse and direct *my children*, and teach them to honour their father's friends *in their closets* for the favours done him."

Vol. iii. pp. 113, 114.

Accordingly, they remained in the closet till the death of the *last of his children;* and then the whole collection is purchased by a bookseller, and put into the hands of an editor, who finds it expedient to suppress two-thirds of it!

Those who have looked into the volumes in question, will be at no loss to comprehend the reasons of the unqualified reprehension we are inclined to bestow on their publication. For the information of those who have not had an opportunity of seeing them, we may observe that, so far from containing any view of the literature, the politics, or manners of the times—any anecdotes of the eminent and extraordinary personages to whom the author had access—or any pieces of elegant composition, refined criticism, or interesting narrative, they consist almost entirely of compliments and minute criticisms on his novels, a detail of his ailments and domestic concerns, and some tedious prattling disputations with his female correspondents, upon the duties of wives and children; the whole so loaded with gross and reciprocal flattery, as to be ridiculous at the outset, and disgusting in the repetition. Compliments and the novels form indeed the staples of the whole correspondence: we meet with the divine Clarissa, and the more divine Sir Charles, in every page, and are absolutely stunned with the clamorous raptures and supplications with which the female train demand the conversion of Lovelace, and the death or restoration of Clementina. Even when the charming books are not the direct subject of the correspondence, they appear in eternal allusions, and settle most of the arguments by an authoritative quotation. In short, the Clarissa and Grandison are the scriptures of this congregation; and the members of it stick as close to their language upon all occasions, as any of our sectaries ever did to that of the Bible. The praises and compliments, again, which are interchanged among all the parties, are so extremely hyperbolical as to be ludicrous, and so incessant as to be excessively fatiguing. We shall trouble our readers with but a very few specimens.

The first series of letters is from Aaron Hill, a poet of some notoriety, it seems, in his day; but, if we may judge from these epistles, a very bad composer in prose. The only amusing things we have met with in this volume of his inditing, are his prediction of his own great fame, and the speedy downfal of Pope's; and his scheme for making English wine of a superior quality to any that can be imported. Of Pope he says, that he died "in the wane of his popularity; and that it arose originally only from meditated little personal assiduities, and a *certain bladdery swell of management.*" And a little after—

"But rest his memory in peace! It will very rarely be disturbed by that time he himself is ashes. It is pleasant to observe the justice of forced fame; she lets down those, at once, who got themselves pushed upward; and lifts none above the fear of falling, but a few who never teased her.

"What she intends to do with *me*, the Lord knows!"—Vol. i. p. 107.

In another place he adds, "For my part, I am *afraid* to be popular; I see so many who write to the living, and deserve not to live, that I content myself with a resurrection when dead:" And after lamenting the unpopularity of some of his writings, he says

"But there *will* arise a time in which they will be seen in a far different light. I *know it* on a surer hope than that of vanity." The wine project, which is detailed in many pages, requires no notice. As a specimen of the adulation with which Richardson was incensed by all his correspondents, we may add the following sentences.

"Where will your wonders end? or how could I be able to express the joy it gives me to discern your genius rising with the grace and boldness of a pillar! &c. Go on, dear sir (I see you will and must), to charm and captivate the world, and force a scribbling race to learn and practise one rare virtue—to be pleased with what disgraces them." —"There is a manner (so beyond the matter, extraordinary too as that is) in whatever you say or do, that makes it an impossibility to speak those sentiments which it is equally impossible not to conceive in reverence and affection for your goodness."

In allusion to the promise of Sir Charles, he says—

"I am greatly pleased at the hint you gave of a design to raise another Alps upon this Appenine: we can never see too many of his works who has no equal in his labours."

These passages, we believe, will satisfy most readers; but those who have any desire to see more, may turn up any page in the volume: It may be of some use, perhaps, as a great commonplace for the materials of "soft dedication."

The next series of letters is from Miss Fielding, who wrote *David Simple*, and Miss Collier, who assisted in writing *The Cry*. What modern reader knows any thing about the Cry, or David Simple? And if the elaborate performances of these ladies have not been thought worthy of public remembrance, what likelihood is there that their private and confidential letters should be entitled to any notice? They contain nothing, indeed, that can be interesting to any description of readers; and only prove that Richardson was indulgent and charitable to them, and that their gratitude was a little too apt to degenerate into flattery.

The letters of Mrs. Pilkington and of Colley Cibber appear to us to be still less worthy of publication. The former seems to have been a profligate, silly actress, reduced to beggary in her old age, and distressed by the misconduct of her ill-educated children. The compassionate heart of Richardson led him to pity and relieve her; and she repays him with paltry adulation, interlarded, in the bombastic style of the green room, with dramatic misquotations misapplied. Of the letters of Cibber, Mrs. B. says that "they show in every line the man of wit and the man of the world." We are sorry to dissent from so respectable an opinion; but the letters appear to us in every respect contemptible and disgusting; without one spark of wit or genius of any sort, and bearing all the traces of vanity, impudence, affectation, and superannuated debauchery, which might have been expected from the author. His first epistle is to Mrs. Pilkington (for the editor has more than once favoured us with letters that have no sort of relation to Richardson or his writings), and sets off in this manner:

"Thou frolicsome farce of fortune! What! Is there another act of you to come then? I was afraid, some time ago, you had made your last exit. Well! but without wit or compliment, I am glad to hear you are so tolerably alive," &c.

We can scarcely conceive that this pitiful slang could appear to Mrs. Barbauld like the pleasantry of a man of fashion. His letters to Richardson are, if any thing, rather more despicable. After reading some of the proof sheets of Sir Charles, he writes,

"Z——ds! I have not patience, till I know what has become of her. Why, you—I do not know what to call you!—Ah! ah! you may laugh if you please: but how will you be able to look me in the face, if the lady should ever be able to show *hers* again? What piteous, d——d, disgraceful pickle have you plunged her in? For God's sake send me the sequel; or—I dont know what to say!—"

The following is an entire letter:

"The delicious meal I made of Miss Byron on Sunday last has given me an appetite for another slice of her, off from the spit, before she is served up to the public table. If about five o'clock tomorrow afternoon will not be inconvenient, Mrs. Brown and I will come and piddle upon a bit more of her: but pray let your whole family, with Mrs. Richardson at the head of them, come in for their share. This, sir, will make me more and more yours," &c.

After these polite effusions, we have a correspondence with Mr. Edwards, the author of the Canons of Criticism, a good deal of which is occupied as usual with flattery and mutual compliments, and the rest with consultations about their different publications. Richardson exclaims, "O that you could resolve to publish your pieces in two pretty volumes!" And Mr. Edwards sends him long epistles in exaltation of Sir Charles and Clarissa. It is in this correspondence that we meet with the first symptom of that most absurd and illiberal prejudice which Richardson indulged against all the writings of Fielding. He writes to Mr. Edwards—

"Mr. Fielding has met with the disapprobation you foresaw he would meet with, of his Amelia. He is, in every paper he publishes under the title of the Common Garden, contributing to his own overthrow. He has been overmatched in his own way by people whom he had despised, and whom he thought he had vogue enough, from the success his spurious brat Tom Jones so unaccountably met with, to write down, but who have turned his own artillery against him, and beat him out of the field, and made him even poorly in his Court of Criticism give up his Amelia, and promise to write no more on the like subjects."—Vol. iii. pp. 33—34.

This, however, is but a small specimen of his antipathy. He says to his French translator, "Tom Jones is a dissolute book. *Its run is over*, even with us. Is it true that France had virtue enough to refuse to license such a profligate performance?" But the worst of all is the following—

"I have not been able to read any more than the first volume of Amelia. Poor Fielding! I could not help *telling his sister*, that I was equally surprised at, and concerned for, his continued lowness Had your brother, said I, been born in a stable, or been a runner at a sponging house, we should have thought him a genius, and wished he had had the advantage of a liberal education, and of being admitted into good company; but it is beyond my conception, that a man of family, and who had some learning, and who really is a writer, should descend so excessively low in all his pieces. Who can care for any of his people? A person of honour asked me, the other day, what he could mean, by saying, in his Covent Garden Journal, that he had followed Homer and Virgil in his Amelia? I answered, that he was justified in saying so, because he must mean Cotton's Virgil Travestied, where the women are drabs, and the men scoundrels."—Vol. vi. pp. 154, 155.

It is lamentable that such things should have been written confidentially; it was surely unnecessary to make them public.

After the dismissal of Mr. Edwards, we meet with two or three very beautiful and interesting letters from Mrs. Klopstock, the first wife of the celebrated German poet. They have pleased us infinitely beyond any thing else in the collection; but how far they are indebted for the charm we have found in them to the lisping innocence of the broken English in which they are written, or to their intrinsic merit, we cannot pretend to determine. We insert the following account of her courtship and marriage.

"After having seen him two hours, I was obliged to pass the evening in a company, which never had been so wearisome to me. I could not speak, I could not play; I thought I saw nothing but Klopstock. I saw him the next day, and the following, and we were very seriously friends. But the fourth day he departed. It was an strong hour the hour of his departure! He wrote soon after, and from that time our correspondence began to be a very diligent one. I sincerely believed my love to be friendship. I spoke with my friends of nothing but Klopstock, and showed his letters. They raillied at me, and said I was in love. I raillied them again, and said that they must have a very friendshipless heart, if they had no idea of friendship to a man as well as to a woman. Thus it continued eight months, in which time my friends found as much love in Klopstock's letters as in me. I perceived it likewise, but I would not believe it. At the last Klopstock said plainly that he loved; and I startled as for a wrong thing. I answered, that it was no love, but friendship, as it was what I felt for him; we had not seen one another enough to love (as if love must have more time than friendship!) This was sincerely my meaning, and I had this meaning till Klopstock came again to Hamburg. This he did a year after we had seen one another the first time. We saw, we were friends, we loved; and we believed that we loved: and, a short time after, I could even tell Klopstock that I loved. But we were obliged to part again, and wait two years for our wedding. My mother would not let me marry a stranger. I could marry then without her consentment, as by the death of my father my fortune depended not on her; but this was an horrible idea for me; and thank Heaven that I have prevailed by prayers! At this time knowing Klopstock, she loves him as her lifely son, and thanks God that she has not persisted. We married, and I am the happiest wife in the world. In some few months it will be four years that I am so happy, and still I dote upon Klopstock as if he was my bridegroom.

"If you knew my husband, you would not wonder. If you knew his poem, I could describe him very briefly, in saying he is in all respects what he is as a poet. This I can say with all wifely modesty . . . . . But I dare not to speak of my husband; I am all raptures when I do it. And as happy as I am in love, so happy am I in friendship, in my mother, two elder sisters, and five other women. How rich I am!"—Vol. iii. pp. 146—149.

One of the best letters is dated from Tunbridge in 1751. We shall venture on an extract.

"But here, to change the scene, to see Mr. Walsh at eighty (Mr. Cibber calls him papa), and Mr. Cibber at seventy-seven, hunting after new faces; and thinking themselves happy if they can obtain the notice and familiarity of a fine woman!—How ridiculous!—

"Mr. Cibber was over head and ears in love with Miss Chudleigh. Her admirers (such was his happiness!) were not jealous of him; but, pleased with that wit in him which they had not, were always for calling him to her. She said pretty things—for she was Miss Chudleigh. He said pretty things—for he was Mr. Cibber; and all the company, men and women, seemed to think they had an interest in what was said, and were half as well pleased as if they had said the sprightly things themselves; and mighty well contented were they to be second-hand repeaters of the pretty things. But once I faced the laureate squatted upon one of the benches, with a face more wrinkled than ordinary with disappointment. 'I thought,' said I, 'you were of the party at the tea treats—Miss Chudleigh is gone into the tea-room.'—'Pshaw!' said he, 'there is no coming at her, she is so surrounded by the toupets.' —And I left him upon the fret—But he was called to soon after; and in he flew, and his face shone again, and looked smooth.

"Another extraordinary old man we have had here, but of a very different turn; the noted Mr. Whiston, showing eclipses, and explaining other phenomena of the stars, and preaching the millennium and anabaptism (for he is now, it seems, of that persuasion) to gay people, who, if they have white teeth, hear him with open mouths, though perhaps shut hearts; and after his lecture is over, not a bit the wiser, run from him the more eagerly to C—r and W—sh, and to flutter among the loud-laughing young fellows upon the walks, like boys and girls at a breaking up."—Vol. iii. p. 316—319.

As Richardson was in the habit of flattering his female correspondents, by asking their advice (though he never followed it) as to the conduct of his works, he prevailed on a certain Lady Echlin to communicate a new catastrophe which she had devised for his Clarissa. She had reformed Lovelace, by means of a Dr. Christian, and made him die of remorse, though the last outrage is not supposed to be committed. How far Lady Echlin's epistles are likely to meet with readers, in this fastidious age, may be conjectured, from the following specimen.

"I heartily wish every Christain would read and wisely consider Mr. Skelton's fine and pious lessons. I admire the warmth of this learned gentleman's zeal; it is laudable and necessary, 'especially in an age like this, which, for its coldness (he observes) may be called the winter of Christianity.' A melancholy truth, elegantly expressed! I have only perused a small part of this divine piece, and am greatly delighted with what I have read. *Surely he is a heavenly man. I am also very fond of Dr. Clark: and excellent good Seed!* I thank you, sir, for introducing another wise charmer, not less worthy of every body's regard. He merits attention, and religiously commands it."—Vol. v. p. 40.

Next come several letters from the Reverend Mr. Skelton, mostly on the subject of the Dublin piracy, and the publication of some works of his own. He seems to have been a man of strong, coarse sense, but extremely irritable. Some delay in the publication of

his sermons draws from him the following amusing piece of fretfulness.

"Johnston kept them a month on the way; Wilson kept them three, and does nothing, only hints a sort of contemptuous censure of them to you, and huffs them out of his hands. The booksellers despise them, and I am forced to print them, when the season for sale is over, or burn them. God's will be done! If I had wrote against my Saviour, or his religion, my work would long ago have been bought, and reprinted, and bought again. Millar would have now been far advanced in his third edition of it! But why do I make these weak complaints? I know my work is calculated to serve the cause of God and truth, and by no means contemptibly executed. I am confident also, I shall, if God spares me life to give it the necessary introduction, sell it to advantage, and receive the thanks of every good man for it. I will therefore be in the hands of God, and not of Mr. Millar, whose indifference to my performances invite me not to any overtures."—Vol. v. p. 234, 235.

Although Richardson is not responsible for more than one fifth part of the dulness exhibited in this collection, still the share of it that may be justly imputed to him is so considerable, and the whole is so closely associated with his name, that it would be a sort of injustice to take our final leave of his works, without casting one glance back to those original and meritorious performances, upon which his reputation is so firmly established.

The great excellence of Richardson's novels consists, we think, in the unparalleled minuteness and copiousness of his descriptions, and in the pains he takes to make us thoroughly and intimately acquainted with every particular in the character and situation of the personages with whom we are occupied. It has been the policy of other writers to avoid all details that are not necessary or impressive, to hurry over all the preparatory scenes, and to reserve the whole of the reader's attention for those momentous passages in which some decisive measure is adopted, or some great passion brought into action. The consequence is, that we are only acquainted with their characters in their dress of ceremony, and that, as we never see them except in those critical circumstances, and those moments of strong emotion, which are but of rare occurrence in real life, we are never deceived into any belief of their reality, and contemplate the whole as an exaggerated and dazzling illusion. With such authors we merely make a visit by appointment, and see and hear only what we know has been prepared for our reception. With Richardson, we slip, invisible, into the domestic privacy of his characters, and hear and see every thing that is said and done among them, whether it be interesting or otherwise, and whether it gratify our curiosity or disappoint it. We sympathise with the former, therefore, only as we sympathise with the monarchs and statesmen of history, of whose condition as individuals we have but a very imperfect conception. We feel for the latter, as for our private friends and acquaintance, with whose whole situation we are familiar, and as to whom we can conceive exactly the effects that will be produced by every thing that may befal them. In this art Richardson is undoubtedly without an equal, and, if we except De Foe, without a competitor, we believe, in the whole history of literature. We are often fatigued, as we listen to his prolix descriptions, and the repetitions of those rambling and inconclusive conversations, in which so many pages are consumed, without any apparent progress in the story; but, by means of all this, we get so intimately acquainted with the characters, and so impressed with a persuasion of their reality, that when any thing really disastrous or important occurs to them, we feel as for old friends and companions, and are irresistibly led to as lively a conception of their sensations, as if we had been spectators of a real transaction. This we certainly think the chief merit of Richardson's productions: For, great as his knowledge of the human heart, and his powers of pathetic description, must be admitted to be, we are of opinion that he might have been equalled in those particulars by many, whose productions are infinitely less interesting.

That his pieces were all intended to be strictly moral, is indisputable; but it is not quite so clear, that they will uniformly be found to have this tendency. We have already quoted some observations of Mrs. Barbauld's on this subject, and shall only add, in general, that there is a certain air of irksome regularity, gloominess, and pedantry, attached to most of his virtuous characters, which is apt to encourage more unfortunate associations than the engaging qualities with which he has invested some of his vicious ones. The mansion of the Harlowes, which, before the appearance of Lovelace, is represented as the abode of domestic felicity, is a place in which daylight can scarcely be supposed to shine; and Clarissa, with her formal devotions, her intolerably early rising, her day divided into tasks, and her quantities of needle-work and discretion, has something in her much less winning and attractive than inferior artists have often communicated to an innocent beauty of seventeen. The solemnity and moral discourses of Sir Charles, his bows, minuets, compliments, and immoveable tranquillity, are much more likely to excite the derision than the admiration of a modern reader. Richardson's good people, in short, are too wise and too formal, ever to appear in the light of desirable companions, or to excite in a youthful mind any wish to resemble them. The gaiety of all his characters, too, is extremely girlish and silly, and is much more like the prattle of spoiled children, than the wit and pleasantry of persons acquainted with the world. The diction throughout is heavy, vulgar, and embarrassed; though the interest of the tragical scenes is too powerful to allow us to attend to any inferior consideration. The novels of Richardson, in short, though praised perhaps somewhat beyond their merits, will always be read with admiration; and certainly can never appear to greater advantage than when contrasted with the melancholy farrago which is here entitled his Correspondence.

(July, 1813.)

Correspondance, Littéraire, Philosophique et Critique. Addressée à un Souverain d'Allemagne, depuis 1770 *jusqu'à* 1782. Par le Baron de Grimm, et par Diderot. 5 tomes, 8vo. pp. 2250. Paris: 1812.

This is certainly a very entertaining book—though a little too bulky—and, the greater part of it, not very important. We are glad to see it, however; not only because we are glad to see any thing entertaining, but also because it makes us acquainted with a person, of whom every one has heard a great deal, and most people hitherto known very little. There is no name which comes oftener across us, in the modern history of French literature, than that of Grimm; and none, perhaps, whose right to so much notoriety seemed to most people to stand upon such scanty titles. Coming from a foreign country, without rank, fortune, or exploits of any kind to recommend him, he contrived, one does not very well see how, to make himself conspicuous for forty years in the best company of Paris; and at the same time to acquire great influence and authority among literary men of all descriptions, without publishing any thing himself, but a few slight observations upon French and Italian music.

The volumes before us help, in part, to explain this enigma; and not only give proof of talents and accomplishments quite sufficient to justify the reputation the author enjoyed among his contemporaries, but also of such a degree of industry and exertion, as entitle him, we think, to a reasonable reversion of fame from posterity. Before laying before our readers any part of this miscellaneous chronicle, we shall endeavour to give them a general idea of its construction—and to tell them all that we have been able to discover about its author.

Melchior Grimm was born at Ratisbon in 1723, of very humble parentage; but, being tolerably well educated, took to literature at a very early period. His first essays were made in his own country—and, as we understand, in his native language—where he composed several tragedies, which were hissed upon the stage, and unmercifully abused in the closet, by Lessing, and the other oracles of Teutonic criticism. He then came to Paris, as a sort of tutor to the children of M. de Schomberg, and was employed in the humble capacity of reader to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, when he was first brought into notice by Rousseau, who was smitten with his enthusiasm for music, and made him known to Diderot, the Baron d'Holbach, and various other persons of eminence in the literary world. His vivacity and various accomplishments soon made him generally acceptable; while his uniform prudence and excellent good sense prevented him from ever losing any of the friends he had gained. Rousseau, indeed, chose to quarrel with him for life, upon his sitting down one evening in a seat which he had previously fixed upon for himself; but with Voltaire and D'Alembert, and all the rest of that illustrious society, both male and female, he continued always on the most cordial footing; and, while he is reproached with a certain degree of obsequiousness toward the rich and powerful, must be allowed to have used less flattery toward his literary associates than was usual in the intercourse of those jealous and artificial beings.

When the Duke of Saxe-Gotha left Paris, Grimm undertook to send him regularly an account of every thing remarkable that occured in the literary, political, and scandalous chronicle of that great city; and acquitted himself in this delicate office so much to the satisfaction of his noble correspondent, that he nominated him, in 1776, his resident at the court of France, and raised him at the same time to the rank and dignity of a Baron. The volumes before us are a part of the despatches of this literary plenipotentiary; and are certainly the most amusing state papers that have ever fallen under our obversation.

The Baron de Grimm continued to exercise the functions of this philosophical diplomacy, till the gathering storm of the Revolution drove both ministers and philosophers from the territories of the new Republic. He then took refuge of course in the court of his master, where he resided till 1795; when Catharine of Russia, to whose shrine he had formerly made a pilgrimage from Paris, gave him the appointment of her minister at the court of Saxony—which he continued to hold till the end of the reign of the unfortunate Paul, when the partial loss of sight obliged him to withdraw altogether from business, and to return to the court of Saxe-Gotha, where he continued his studies in literature and the arts with unabated ardour, till he sunk at last under a load of years and infirmities in the end of 1807.—He was of an uncomely and grotesque appearance—with huge projecting eyes and discordant features, which he rendered still more hideous, by daubing them profusely with white and with red paint—according to the most approved *costume* of *petits-maîtres*, in the year 1748, when he made his *debût* at Paris.

The book embraces a period of about twelve years only, from 1770 to 1782, with a gap for 1775 and part of 1776. It is said in the title-page to be partly the work of Grimm, and partly that of Diderot,—but the contributions of the latter are few, and comparatively of little importance. It is written half in the style of a journal intended for the public, and half in that of private and confidential cor-

respondence; and, notwithstanding the retrenchments which the editor boasts of having made in the manuscript, contains a vast miscellany of all sorts of intelligence;—critiques upon all new publications, new operas, and new performers at the theatres;—accounts of all the meetings and elections at the academies,—and of the deaths and characters of all the eminent persons who demised in the period to which it extends;—copies of the epigrams, and editions of the scandalous stories that occupied the idle population of Paris during the same period—interspersed with various original compositions, and brief and pithy dissertations upon the general subjects that are suggested by such an enumeration. Of these, the accounts of the operas and the actors are (now) the most tedious,—the critical and biographical sketches the most lively,—and the general observations the most striking and important. The whole, however, is given with great vivacity and talent, and with a degree of freedom which trespasses occasionally upon the borders both of propriety and of good taste.

There is nothing indeed more exactly painted in these graphical volumes, than the character of M. Grimm himself;—and the beauty of it is, that as there is nothing either natural or peculiar about it, it may stand for the character of most of the wits and philosophers he frequented. He had more wit, perhaps, and more sound sense and information, than the greater part of the society in which he lived—But the leading traits belong to the whole class, and to all classes indeed, in similar situations, in every part of the world. Whenever there is a very large assemblage of persons who have no other occupation but to amuse themselves, there will infallibly be generated acuteness of intellect, refinement of manners, and good taste in conversation;—and, with the same certainty, all profound thought, and all serious affection, will be generally discarded from their society. The multitude of persons and things that force themselves on the attention in such a scene, and the rapidity with which they succeed each other and pass away, prevent any one from making a deep or permanent impression; and the mind, having never been tasked to any course of application, and long habituated to this lively succession and variety of objects, comes at last to require the excitement of perpetual change, and to find a multiplicity of friends as indispensable as a multiplicity of amusements. Thus the characteristics of large and polished society, come almost inevitably to be, wit and heartlessness—acuteness and perpetual derision. The same impatience of uniformity, and passion for variety, which gives so much grace to their conversation, by excluding tediousness and pertinacious wrangling, make them incapable of dwelling for many minutes on the feelings and concerns of any one individual; while the constant pursuit of little gratifications, and the weak dread of all uneasy sensations, render them equally averse from serious sympathy and deep thought. They speedily find out the shortest and most pleasant way to all truths, to which a short and a pleasant way can readily be discovered; and then lay it down as a maxim, that no others are worth looking after—and in the same way, they do such petty kindnesses, and indulge such light sympathies, as do not put them to any trouble, or encroach at all on their amusements,—while they make it a principle to wrap themselves up in those amusements from the assault of all more engrossing or importunate affections.

The turn for derision again arises naturally out of this order of things. When passion and enthusiasm, affection and serious occupation have once been banished by a short-sighted voluptuousness, the sense of ridicule is almost the only lively sensation that remains;—and the envied life of those who have nothing to do but to enjoy themselves, would be utterly listless and without interest, if they were not allowed to laugh at each other. Their quickness in perceiving ordinary follies and illusions too, affords great encouragement to this laudable practice;—and as none of them have so much passion or enthusiasm left, as to be deeply wounded by the shafts of derision, they fall lightly, and without rankling, on the lesser vanities, which supply in them those master springs of human action and feeling.

The whole style and tone of this publication affords the most striking illustration of these general remarks. From one end of it to the other, it is a display of the most complete heartlessness, and the most uninterrupted levity. It chronicles the deaths of half the author's acquaintance—and makes jests upon them all; and is much more serious in discussing the merits of an opera dancer, than in considering the evidence for the being of a God, or the first foundations of morality. Nothing, indeed, can be more just or conclusive, than the remark that is forced from M. Grimm himself, upon the utter carelessness and instant oblivion, that followed the death of one of the most distinguished, active, and amiable members of his coterie;—"tant il est vrai que ce qui nous appellons *la Societé*, est ce qu'il y a de plus leger, de plus ingrat, et de plus frivole au monde!"

Holding this opinion very firmly ourselves, it will easily be believed that we are very far from *envying* the brilliant persons who composed, or gave the tone to this exquisite society;—and while we have a due admiration for the elegant pleasantry, correct taste, and gay acuteness, of which they furnish, perhaps, the only perfect models, we think it more desirable, on the whole, to be the spectators, than the possessors of those accomplishments; and would no more wish to buy them at the price of our sober thinking, and settled affections, than we would buy the dexterity of a fiddler, or a ropedancer, at the price of our personal respectability. Even in the days of youth and high spirits, there is no solid enjoyment in living altogether with people who care nothing about us; and when we begin to grow old and unamuseable, there can be

nothing so comfortless as to be surrounded with those who think of nothing but amusement. The spectacle, however, is gay and beautiful to those who look upon it with a good-natured sympathy, or indulgence; and naturally suggests reflections that may be interesting to the most serious. A judicious extractor, we have no doubt, might accommodate both classes of readers, from the ample magazine that lies before us.

The most figuring person in the work, and indeed of the age to which it belongs, was beyond all question *Voltaire*,—of whom, and of whose character, it presents us with many very amusing traits. He receives no other name throughout the book, than "The Patriarch" of the Holy Philosophical Church, of which the authors, and the greater part of their friends, profess to be humble votaries and disciples. The infallibility of its chief, however, seems to have formed no part of the creed of this reformed religion; for, with all his admiration for the wit, and playfulness, and talent of the philosophic pontiff, nothing can exceed the freedoms in which M. Grimm indulges, both as to his productions, and his character. All his poetry, he says, after Tancred, is clearly marked with the symptoms of approaching dotage and decay; and his views of many important subjects he treats as altogether erroneous, shallow, and contemptible. He is particularly offended with him for not adopting the decided atheism of the *Systeme de la Nature*, and for weakly stopping short at a kind of paltry deism. "The Patriarch," says he, "still sticks to his *Remunerateur-Vengeur*, without whom he fancies the world would go on very ill. He is resolute enough, I confess, for putting down the god of knaves and bigots, but is not for parting with that of the virtuous and rational. He reasons upon all this, too, like a baby—a very smart baby it must be owned—but a baby notwithstanding. He would be a little puzzled, I take it, if he were asked what was *the colour* of his god of the virtuous and wise, &c. &c. He cannot conceive, he says, how mere motion, undirected by intelligence, should ever have produced such a world as we inhabit—and we verily believe him. Nobody can conceive it—but it is *a fact* nevertheless; and we see it—which is nearly as good." We give this merely as a specimen of the disciple's irreverence towards his master; for nothing can be more contemptible than the reasoning of M. Grimm in support of his own desolating opinions. He is more near being right, where he makes himself merry with the Patriarch's ignorance of natural philosophy. Every Achilles however, he adds, has a vulnerable heel—and that of the hero of Ferney is his Physics.*

M. Grimm, however, reveals worse infirmities than this in his great preceptor. There was a young Mademoiselle Raucour, it seems, who, though an actress, enjoyed an unblemished reputation. Voltaire, who had never seen her, chose one morning to write to the Marechal de Richelieu, by whom she was patronized, that she was a notorious prostitute, and ready to be taken into keeping by any one who would offer for her. This imputation having been thoughtlessly communicated to the damsel herself, produced no little commotion; and upon Voltaire's being remonstrated with, he immediately retracted the whole story, which it seems was a piece of pure invention; and confessed, that the only thing he had to object to Madlle. Raucour was, that he had understood they had put off the representation of a new play of his, in order to gratify the public with her appearance in comedy;—"and this was enough," says M. Grimm, "to irritate a child of seventy-nine, against another child of seventeen, who came in the way of his gratification!"

A little after, he tells another story which is not only very disreputable to the Patriarch, but affords a striking example of the monstrous evils that arise from religious intolerance, in a country where the whole population is not of the same communion. A Mons. de B. introduced himself into a protestant family at Montauban, and after some time, publicly married the only daughter of the house, in the church of her pastor. He lived several years with her, and had one daughter—dissipated her whole property—and at last deserted her, and married another woman at Paris—upon the pretence that his first union was not binding, the ceremony not having been performed by a Catholic priest. The Parliament ultimately allowed this plea; and farther directed, that the daughter should be taken from its mother, and educated in the true faith in a convent. The transaction excited general indignation; and the legality of the sentence, and especially the last part of it, was very much disputed, both in the profession and out of it;—when Voltaire, to the astonishment of all the world, thought fit to put forth a pamphlet in its defence! M. Grimm treats the whole matter with his usual coldness and pleasantry;—and as a sort of apology for this extraordinary proceeding of his chief, very coolly observes, "The truth is, that for some time past, the Patriarch has been suspected, and indeed convicted, of the most abominable cowardice. He defied the old Parliament in his youth with signal courage and intrepidity; and now he cringes to the new one, and even condescends to be its panegyrist, from an absurd dread of being persecuted by it on the very brink of the tomb. "Ah! Seigneur Pat-

* This is only true, however, with regard to natural history and chemistry; for as to the nobler part of physics, which depends on science, his attainments were equal perhaps to those of any of his age and country, with the exception of D'Alembert. Even his astronomy, however, though by no means "mince et raccourtie." had a tendency to confirm him in that paltry Deism, for which he is so unmercifully rated by M. Grimm. We do not know many quartains in French poetry more beautiful than the following, which the Patriarch indited *impromptu*, one fine summer evening—

"Tous ces vastes pays d'Azur et de Lumiere,
Tirés du sein du vide, et formés sans matiere,
Arrondis sans compas, et tournans sans pivot,
Ont à peine couté la depense d'un mot!"

riarche!" he concludes, in the true Parisian accent, "Horace was much more excusable for flattering Augustus, who had honoured him, though he destroyed the republic, than you are, for justifying, without any intelligible motive, a proceeding so utterly detestable, and upon which, if you had not courage to speak as became you, you were not called upon to say any thing." It must be a comfort to the reader to learn, that immediately after this sentence, a M. Vanrobais, an old and most respectable gentleman, was chivalrous enough, at the age of seventy, to marry the deserted widow, and to place her in a situation every way more respectable than that of which she had been so basely defrauded.

There is a great deal, in the first of these volumes, about the statue that was voted to Voltaire by his disciples in 1770.—Pigalle the sculptor was despatched to Ferney to model him, in spite of the opposition he affects to make in a letter to Madame Necker, in which he very reasonably observes, that in order to be modelled, a man ought to have a face—but that age and sickness have so reduced him, that it is not easy to point out whereabouts his had been; that his eyes are sunk into pits three inches deep, and the small remnant of his teeth recently deserted; that his skin is like old parchment wrinkled over dry bones, and his legs and arms like dry spindles;—in short, "qu'on n'a jamais sculpté un pauvre homme dans cet etat." Phidias Pigalle, however, as he calls him, goes upon his errand, notwithstanding all these discouragements; and finds him, according to M. Grimm, in a state of great vivacity. "He skips up stairs," he assures me, "more nimbly than all his subscribers put together, and is as quick as lightning in running to shut doors, and open windows; but, with all this, he is very anxious to pass for a poor man in the last extremities; and would take it much amiss if he thought that any body had discovered the secret of his health and vigour." Some awkward person, indeed, it appears, has been complimenting him upon the occasion; for he writes me as follows:—"My dear friend—though Phidias Pigalle is the most virtuous of mortals, he calumniates me cruelly; I understand he goes about saying that I am quite well, and as sleek as a monk!—Such is the ungrateful return he makes for the pains I took to force my spirits for his amusement, and to puff up my buccinatory muscles, in order to look well in his eyes!—Jean Jacques, to be sure, is far more puffed up than I am; but it is with conceit—from which I am free." In another letter he says,—"When the peasants in my village saw Pigalle laying out some of the instruments of his art, they flocked round us with great glee, and said, Ah! he is going to *dissect* him—how droll!—so one spectacle you see is just as good for some people as another."

The account which Pigalle himself gives of his mission, is extremely characteristic. For the first eight days, he could make nothing of his patient,—he was so restless and full of grimaces, starts, and gesticulations. He promised every night, indeed, to give him a long sitting next day, and always kept his word;—but then, he could no more sit still, than a child of three years old. He dictated letters all the time to his secretary; and, in the mean time, kept blowing peas in the air, making *pirouettes* round his chamber, or indulging in other feats of activity, equally fatal to the views of the artist. Poor Phidias was about to return to Paris in despair, without having made the slightest progress in his design; when the conversation happening by good luck to turn upon Aaron's golden calf, and Pigalle having said that he did not think such a thing could possibly be modelled and cast in less than six months, the Patriarch was so pleased with him, that he submitted to any thing he thought proper all the rest of the day, and the model was completed that very evening.

There are a number of other anecdotes, extremely characteristic of the vivacity, impatience, and want of restraint which distinguished this extraordinary person. One of the most amusing is that of the congé which he gave to the Abbé Coyer, who was kind enough to come to his castle at Ferney, with the intention of paying a long visit. The second morning, however, the Patriarch interrupted him in the middle of a dull account of his travels, with this perplexing question, "Do you know, M. L'Abbé, in what you differ entirely from Don Quixotte?" The poor Abbé was unable to divine the precise point of distinction; and the philosopher was pleased to add, "Why, you know the Don took all the inns on his road for castles,—but it appears to me that you take some castles for inns." The Abbé decamped without waiting for a further reckoning He behaved still worse to a M. de Barthe, whom he invited to come and read a play to him, and afterwards drove out of the house, by the yawns and frightful contortions with which he amused himself, during the whole of the performance.

One of his happiest repartees is said to have been made to an Englishman, who had recently been on a visit to the celebrated Haller, in whose praise Voltaire enlarged with great warmth, extolling him as a great poet, a great naturalist, and a man of universal attainments. The Englishman answered, that it was very handsome in M. De Voltaire to speak so well of Mr. Haller, inasmuch as he, the said Mr. Haller, was by no means so liberal to M. de Voltaire. "Ah!" said the Patriarch, with an air of philosophic indulgence, "I dare say we are both of us very much mistaken."

On another occasion, a certain M. de St. Ange, who valued himself on the graceful turn of his compliments, having come to see him, took his leave with this studied allusion to the diversity of his talents, "My visit today has only been to Homer—another morning I shall pay my respects to Sophocles and Euripides—another to Tacitus—and another to Lucian." "Ah, Sir!" replied the Patriarch, "I am wretchedly old,—could you not

contrive to see all these gentlemen together?" M. Mercier, who had the same passion for fine speeches, told him one day, "You outdo every body so much in their own way, that I am sure you will beat Fontenelle even, in longevity." "No, no, Sir!" answered the Patriarch, "Fontenelle was a Norman; and, you may depend upon it, contrived to trick Nature out of her rights."

One of the most prolific sources of witticisms that is noticed in this collection, is the Patriarch's elevation to the dignity of temporal father of the Capuchins in his district. The cream of the whole, however, may be found in the following letter of his to M. De Richelieu.

"Je voudrais bien, monseigneur, avoir le plaisir de vous donner ma bénédiction avant de mourir. L'expression vous paraîtra un peu forte: elle est pourtant dans la vérité. J'ai l'honneur d'être capucin. Notre général qui est à Rome, vient de m'envoyer mes patentes; mon titre est; *Frère Spirituel et Père Temporel des Capucins.* Mandez-moi laquelle de vos maîtresses vous voulez retirer du purgatoire: je vous jure sur ma barbe qu'elle n'y sera pas dans vingtquatre heures. Comme je dois me détacher des biens de ce monde, j'ai abandonné à mes parens ce qui m'est dû par la succession de feu madame la princesse de Guise, et par M. votre intendant; ils iront à ce sujet prendre vos ordres qu'ils regarderont comme un bienfait. Je vous donne ma bénédiction. Signé VOLTAIRE, Capucin indigne, et qui n'a pas encore eu de bonne fortune de capucin."—pp. 54, 55.

We have very full details of the last days of this distinguished person. He came to Paris, as is well known, after twenty-seven years' absence, at the age of eighty-four; and the very evening he arrived, he recited himself the whole of his Irene to the players, and passed all the rest of the night in correcting the piece for representation. A few days after, he was seized with a violent vomiting of blood, and instantly called stoutly for a priest, saying, that they should not throw him out on the dunghill. A priest was accordingly brought; and the Patriarch very gravely subscribed a profession of his faith in the Christian religion—of which he was ashamed, and attempted to make a jest, as soon as he recovered. He was received with unexampled honours at the Academy, the whole members of which rose together, and came out to the vestibule to escort him into the hall; while, on the exterior, all the avenues, windows, and roofs of houses, by which his carriage had to pass, were crowded with spectators, and resounded with acclamations. But the great scene of his glory was the theatre; in which he no sooner appeared, than the whole audience rose up, and continued for upwards of twenty minutes in thunders of applause and shouts of acclamation that filled the whole house with dust and agitation. When the piece was concluded, the curtain was again drawn up, and discovered the bust of their idol in the middle of the stage, while the favourite actress placed a crown of laurel on its brows, and recited some verses, the words of which could scarcely be distinguished amidst the tumultuous shouts of the spectators. The whole scene, says M. Grimm, reminded us of the classic days of Greece and Rome. But it became more truly touching at the moment when its object rose to retire. Weakened and agitated by the emotions he had experienced, his limbs trembled beneath him; and, bending almost to the earth, he seemed ready to expire under the weight of years and honours that had been laid upon him. His eyes, filled with tears, still sparkled with a peculiar fire in the midst of his pale and faded countenance. All the beauty and all the rank of France crowded round him in the lobbies and staircases, and literally bore him in their arms to the door of his carriage. Here the humbler multitude took their turn; and, calling for torches that all might get a sight of him, clustered round his coach, and followed it to the door of his lodgings, with vehement shouts of admiration and triumph. This is the heroic part of the scene;—but M. Grimm takes care also to let us know, that the Patriarch appeared on this occasion in long lace ruffles, and a fine coat of cut velvet, with a grey periwig of a fashion forty years old, which he used to comb every morning with his own hands, and to which nothing at all parallel had been seen for ages—except on the head of Bachaumont the novelist, who was known accordingly among the wits of Paris by the name of "Voltaire's wigblock."

This brilliant and protracted career, however, was fast drawing to a close.—Retaining to the last, that untameable spirit of activity and impatience which had characterized all his past life, he assisted at rehearsals and meetings of the Academy, with the zeal and enthusiasm of early youth. At one of the latter, some objections were started to his magnificent project, of giving an improved edition of their Dictionary;—and he resolved to compose a discourse to obviate those objections. To strengthen himself for this task, he swallowed a prodigious quantity of strong coffee, and then continued at work for upwards of twelve hours without intermission. This imprudent effort brought on an inflammation in his bladder; and being told by M. De Richelieu, that he had been much relieved in a similar situation, by taking, at intervals, a few drops of laudanum, he provided himself with a large bottle of that medicine, and with his usual impatience, swallowed the greater part of it in the course of the night. The consequence was, as might naturally have been expected, that he fell into a sort of lethargy, and never recovered the use of his faculties, except for a few minutes at a time, till the hour of his death, which happened three days after, on the evening of the 30th of May, 1778. The priest to whom he had made his confession, and another, entered his chamber a short time before he breathed his last. He recognized them with difficulty, and assured them of his respects. One of them coming close up to him, he threw his arm round his neck, as if to embrace him. But when M. le Curé, taking advantage of this cordiality, proceeded to urge him to make some sign or acknowledgment of his belief in

the Christian faith, he gently pushed him back, and said, "Alas! let me die in peace." The priest turned to his companion, and with great moderation and presence of mind, observed aloud, "You see his faculties are quite gone." They then quietly left the apartment; —and the dying man, having testified his gratitude to his kind and vigilant attendants, and named several times the name of his favourite niece Madame Denis, shortly after expired.

Nothing can better mark the character of the work before us, and of its author, than to state, that the despatch which contains this striking account of the last hours of his illustrious patron and friend, terminates with an obscene epigram of M. Rulhiere, and a gay critique on the new administration of the opera Buffa! There are various epitaphs on Voltaire, scattered through the sequel of the volume:—we prefer this very brief one, by a lady of Lausanne.

"*Ci-gît l'enfant gaté du monde qu'il gata.*"

Among the other proofs which M. Grimm has recorded of the celebrity of this extraordinary person, the incredible multitude of his portraits that were circulated, deserves to be noticed. One ingenious artist, in particular, of the name of Huber, had acquired such a facility in forming his countenance, that he could not only cut most striking likenesses of him out of paper, with scissars held behind his back, but could mould a little bust of him in half a minute, out of a bit of bread, and at last used to make his *dog* manufacture most excellent profiles, by making him bite off the edge of a biscuit which he held to him in three or four different positions!

There is less about *Rousseau* in these volumes, than we should expect from their author's early intimacy with that great writer. What there is, however, is candid and judicious. M. Grimm agrees with Madame de Staël, that Rousseau was nothing of a Frenchman in his character;—and accordingly he observes, that though the magic of his style and the extravagance of his sentiments procured him some crazy disciples, he never had any hearty partisans among the enlightened part of the nation. He laughs a good deal at his affectations and unpardonable animosities,—but gives, at all times, the highest praise to his genius, and sets him above all his contemporaries, for the warmth, the elegance, and the singular richness of his style. He says, that the general opinion at Paris was, that he had poisoned himself;—that his natural disposition to melancholy had increased in an alarming degree after his return from England, and had been aggravated by the sombre and solitary life to which he had condemned himself;—that mind, he adds, at once too strong and too weak to bear the burden of existence with tranquillity, was perpetually prolific of monsters and of phantoms, that haunted all his steps, and drove him to the borders of distraction. There is no doubt, continues M. Grimm, that for many months before his death he had firmly persuaded himself that all the powers of Europe had their eyes fixed upon him as a most dangerous and portentous being, whom they should take the first opportunity to destroy. He was also satisfied that M. de Choiseul had projected and executed the conquest of Corsica, for no other purpose but to deprive him of the honour of legislating for it; and that Prussia and Russia had agreed to partition Poland upon the same jealous and unworthy consideration. While the potentates of Europe were thus busied in thwarting and mortifying him abroad, the philosophers, he was persuaded, were entirely devoted to the same project at home. They had spies, he firmly believed, posted round all his steps, and were continually making efforts to rouse the populace to insult and murder him. At the head of this conspiracy, of the reality of which he no more doubted than of his existence, he had placed the Duc de Choiseul, his physician Tronchin, M. D'Alembert, and our author!—But we must pass to characters less known or familiar.

The gayest, and the most naturally gay perhaps of all the coterie, was the Abbé *Galiani*, a Neapolitan, who had resided for many years in Paris, but had been obliged, very much against his will, to return to his own country about the time that this journal commenced. M. Grimm inserts a variety of his letters, in all of which the infantine petulance and freedom of his character are distinctly marked, as well as the singular acuteness and clearness of his understanding. The first is written immediately after his exile from Paris in 1770.

"Madame, je suis toujours inconsolable d'avoir quitté Paris; et encore plus inconsolable de n'avoir reçu aucune nouvelle ni de vous, ni du paresseux philosophe. Est-il possible que ce monstre, dans son impassibilitié, ne sente pas à quel point mon honneur, ma gloire, dont je me fiche, mon plaisir et celui de mes amis, dont je me soucie beaucoup, sont intéressés dans l'affaire que je lui ai confiée, et combien je suis impatient d'apprendre qu'en fin la pacotille a doublé le cap et passé le terrible défilé de la révision: car, après cela, je serai tranquille sur le reste.

"Mon voyage a été très heureux sur la terre et sur l'onde; il a même été d'un bonheur inconcevable. Je n'ai jamais eu chaud, et toujours le vent en poupe sur le Rhône et sur la mer; il paraît que tout me pousse à m'éloigner de tout ce que j'aime au monde. L'héroïsme sera donc bien plus grand et bien plus mémorable, de vaincre les élémens, la nature, les dieux conspirés, et de retourner à Paris en dépit d'eux. Oui, Paris est ma patrie; on aura beau m'en exiler, j'y retomberai. Attendez-vous donc à me voir établi dans la rue Fromenteau, au quatrième, sur le derrière, chez la nommée . . . . ., fille majeure. Là demeurera le plus grand génie de notre âge, en pension à trente sous par jour; et il sera heureux. Quel plaisir que de délirer! Adieu. Je vous prie d'envoyer vos lettres toujours à l'hôtel de l'ambassadeur.

"Grimm est-il de retour de son voyage?"

Another to the Baron Holbach is nearly in the same tone.

"Que faites-vous, mon cher baron? Vous amusez-vous? La baronne se porte-t-elle bien? Comment vont vos enfans? La philosophie, dont vous êtes le premier maître d'hôtel, mange-t-elle toujours d'un aussi bon appétit?

"Pour moi, je m'ennuie mortellement ici; je ne vois personne, excepté deux ou trois Français. Je suis le Gulliver revenu du pays des Hoyinhyims, qui ne fait plus société qu'avec ses deux chevaux. Je vais rendre des visites de devoir aux femmes des deux ministres d'état et de finances; et puis je dors ou je rêve. Quelle vie! Rien n'amuse ici: point d'édits, point de réductions, point de retenues, point de suspensions de paiemens: la vie y est d'une uniformité tuante; on ne dispute de rien, pas même de religion. Ah! mon cher Paris! ah! que je te regrette!

"Donnez-moi quelques nouvelles littéraires, mais n'en attendez pas en revanche. Pour les grands événemens en Europe, je crois que nous en allons devenir le bureau. On dit, en effet, que la flotte Russe a enfin débarqué à Patras, que toute la Morée s'est révoltée et déclarée en faveur des débarqués, et que sans coup ferir ils s'en sont rendus maîtres, excepté des villes de Corinthe et de Napoli de Romanie: cela mérite confirmation. Quelle avanture! Nous serons limitrophes des Russes; et d'Otrante à Pétersbourg il n'y aura plus qu'un pas, et un petit trajet de mer: *Dux fœmina facti*. Une femme aura fait cela! Cela est trop beau pour être vrai."

The next is not such pure trifling.

"Vous avez reconnu Voltaire dans son sermon; moi je n'y reconnais que l'écho de feu M. de Voltaire. Ah! il rabâche trop à présent. Sa Catherine est une maîtresse femme, parce qu'elle est intolérante et conquerante; tous les grands hommes ont été intolérans, et il faut l'être. Si l'on rencontre sur son chemin un prince sot, il faut lui prêcher la tolérance, afin qu'il donne dans le piège, et que le parti écrasé ait le temps de se relever par la tolérance qu'on lui accorde, et d'écraser son adversaire à son tour. Ainsi le sermon sur la tolérance est un sermon fait aux sots ou aux gens dupes, ou à des gens qui n'ont aucun intérêt dans la chose: voilà pourquoi, quelquefois, un prince séculier doit écouter la tolérance; c'est lorsque l'affaire intéresse les prêtres sans intéresser les souverains. Mais en Pologne, les évêques sont tout à la fois prêtres et souverains, et, s'ils le peuvent, ils feront fort bien de chasser les Russes, et d'envoyer au diable tous les Dissidens; et Catherine fera fort bien d'écraser les évêques si cela lui réussit. Moi je n'en crois rien; je crois que les Russes écraseront les Turcs par contre-coup, et ne feront qu'agrandir et réveiller les Polonais, comme Philippe II. et la maison d'Autriche écrasèrent l'Allemagne et l'Italie, en voulant troubler la France qu'ils ne firent qu'ennoblir: voilà mes prophéties."

"Votre lettre du 8 juin n'est point gaie; il s'en faut même beaucoup: vous avouez vous-même que vous n'avez que quelques lueurs de gaieté; je crains que cela ne tienne au physique, et que vous ne vous portiez pas bien: voilà ce qui me fâche. Pour moi, je fais tout ce que je puis pour vous égayer, et ce n'est pas un petit effort pour moi: car je suis si ennuyé de mon existence ici, qu'en vérité je deviens homme d'affaires et homme grave de jour en jour davantage, et je finirai par devenir Nepolitain, tout comme un autre."

Another contains some admirable remarks on the character of Cicero, introduced in the same style of perfect ease and familiarity.

"On peut regarder Cicéron comme littérateur, comme philosophe et comme homme d'état. Il a été un des plus grands littérateurs qui aient jamais été; il savait tout ce qu'on savait de son temps, excepté la géométrie et autres sciences de ce genre. Il était médiocre philosophe: car il savait tout ce que les Grecs avaient pensé, et le rendait avec une clarté admirable, mais il ne pensait rien et n'avait pas la force de rien imaginer. Comme homme d'état, Cicéron, étant d'une basse extraction, et voulant parvenir, aurait dû se jeter dans le parti de l'opposition, de la chambre basse ou du peuple, si vous voulez. Cela lui était d'autant plus aisé, que Marius, fondateur de ce parti, était de son pays. Il en fut même tenté, car il débuta par attaquer Sylla et par se lier avec les gens du parti de l'opposition, à la tête desquels, après la mort de Marius, étaient Claudius, Catilina, César. Mais le parti des grands avait besoin d'un jurisconsulte et d'un savant; car les grands seigneurs, en général, ne savent ni lire ni écrire; il sentit donc qu'on aurait plus besoin de lui dans le parti des grands, et qu'il y jouerait un rôle plus brillant. Il s'y jeta, et dès-lors on vit un homme nouveau, un parvenu mêlé avec les patriciens. Figurez-vous en Angleterre un avocat dont la cour a besoin pour faire un chancelier, et qui suit par conséquent le parti du ministère. Cicéron brilla donc à côté de Pompée, etc., toutes les fois qu'il était question de choses de jurisprudence; mais il lui manquait la naissance, les richesses; et surtout n'étant pas homme de guerre, il jouait de ce côté-là un rôle subalterne. D'ailleurs, par inclination naturelle, il aimait le parti de César, et il était fatigué de la morgue des grands qui lui faisaient sentir souvent le prix des bienfaits dont on l'avait comblé. Il n'était pas pusillanime, il était incertain; il ne défendait pas des scélérats, il défendait les gens de son parti qui ne valaient guère mieux que ceux du parti contraire."

We shall add only the following.

"Le dialogue des tableaux du Louvre intéresse peu à cinq cents lieues de Paris; le baron de Gleichen et moi, nous en avons ri: personnes ne nous aurait entendus. Au reste, à propos des tableaux, je remarque que le caractère dominant des Français perce toujours; ils sont causeurs, raisonneurs, badins par essence. Un mauvais tableau enfante une bonne brochure; ainsi vous parlerez mieux des arts que vous ne les cultiverez jamais. Il se trouvera au bout du compte, dans quelques siècles, que vous aurez le mieux raisonné, le mieux discuté ce que toutes les autres nations auront fait de mieux. Chérissez donc l'imprimerie, c'est votre lot dans ce bas monde. Mais vous avez mis un impôt sur le papier. Quelle sottise! Plaisanterie à part, un impôt sur le papier est la faute en politique la plus forte que se soit commise en France depuis un siècle. Il valait mieux faire la banqueroute universelle, et laisser au Français le plaisir de parler à l'Europe à peu de frais. Vous avez plus conquis de pays par les livres que par les armes. Vous ne devez la gloire de la nation qu'à vos ouvrages, et vous voulez vous forcer à vous taire!"

"Ma belle dame, s'il servait à quelque chose de pleurer les morts, je viendrais pleurer avec vous la perte de notre Helvétius; mais la mort n'est autre chose que le regret des vivans; si nous ne le regrettons pas, il n'est pas mort: tout comme si nous ne l'avions jamais ni connu ni aimé, il ne serait pas né. Tout ce qui existe, existe en nous par rapport à nous. Souvenez-vous que le petit prophète faisait de la métaphysique lorsqu'il était triste; j'en fais de même à présent. Mais enfin le mal de la perte d'Helvétius est le vide qu'il laisse dans la ligne du bataillon. Serrons donc les lignes, aimons-nous davantage, nous qui restons, et il n'y paraîtra pas. Moi qui suis le major de ce malheureux régiment, je vous crie à tous: serrez les lignes, avancez, feu! On ne s'apercevra pas de notre perte. Ses enfans n'ont perdu ni jeunesse ni beauté par la mort de leur père; elles ont gagné la qualité d'héritières; pourquoi diable allez-vous pleurer sur leur sort? Elles se marieront, n'en doutez pas: *cet oracle est plus sûr que celui de Calchas*. Sa femme est plus à plaindre, à moins qu'elle ne rencontre un gendre aussi raisonnable que son mari, ce qui n'est pas bien aisé, mais plus aisé à Paris qu'ailleurs. Il y a encore bien des mœurs, des vertus, de l'héroïsme dans votre Paris; il y en a plus qu'ailleurs, croyez-moi: c'est ce qui me le fait regretter, et me le fera peut-être revoir un jour."

The notice of the death of *Helvetius*, contained in this last extract, leads us naturally

to turn to the passage in M. Grimm in which this event is commemorated; and we there find a very full and curious account of this zealous philosopher. Helvetius was of Dutch extraction; and his father having been chief physician to the Queen, the son was speedily appointed to the very lucrative situation of Farmer-general of the Finances. He was remarkably good tempered, benevolent, and liberal; and passed his youth in idle and voluptuous indulgence, keeping a sort of seraglio as a part of his establishment, and exercising himself with universal applause in the noble science of dancing, in which he attained such eminence, that he is said to have several times supplied the place of the famous Dupré in the ballets at the opera. An unhappy passion for literary glory came, however, to disturb this easy life. The paradoxes and effrontery of Maupertuis had brought science into fashion; and for a season, no supper was thought complete at Paris without a mathematician. Helvetius, therefore, betook himself immediately to the study of geometry: But he could make no hand of it; and fortunately the rage passed away before he had time to expose himself in the eyes of the initiated. Next came the poetical glory of Voltaire;—and Helvetius instantly resolved to be a poet—and did with great labour produce a long poem on happiness, which was not published however till after his death, and has not improved his chance for immortality. But it was the success of the President Montesquieu's celebrated Esprit des Loix, that finally decided the literary vocation of Helvetius. That work appeared in 1749; and in 1750 the Farmer-general actually resigned his office; married, retired into the country, spent ten long years in digesting his own book *De l'Esprit*, by which he fondly expected to rival the fame of his illustrious predecessor. In this, however, he was wofully disappointed. The book appeared to philosophers to be nothing but a paradoxical and laborious repetition of truths and difficulties with which all good thinkers had long been familiar; and it probably would have fallen into utter oblivion, had it not been for the injudicious clamour which was raised against it by the bigots and devotees of the court. Poor Helvetius, who had meant nothing more than to make himself remarkable, was as much surprised at the outcries of the godly, as at the silence of the philosophers; and never perfectly recovered the shock of this double disappointment. He still continued, however, his habits of kindness and liberality—gave dinners to the men of letters when at Paris, and hunted and compiled philosophy with great perseverance in the country. His temper was so good, that his society could not fail to be agreeable; but his conversation, it seems, was not very captivating; he loved to push every matter of discussion to its very last results; and reasoned at times so very loosely and largely, as to be in danger of being taken for a person very much overtaken with liquor. He died of gout in his stomach, at the age of fifty-six; and, as an author, is now completely forgotten.

Nobody knows a better or a more amiable figure in this book, than Madame Geoffrin. Active, reasonable, indulgent, and munificent beyond example for a woman in private life, she laid a sure claim to popularity by taking for her maxim the duty of "giving and forgiving;" and showed herself so gentle in her deportment to children and servants, that if she had not been overcome with an unlucky passion for intrigue and notoriety, she might have afforded one exception at least to the general heartlessness of the society to which she belonged. Some of the repartees recorded of her in these volumes, are very remarkable. M. de Rulhiere threatened to make public, certain very indiscreet remarks on the court of Russia, from the sale of which he expected great profits. Madame Geoffrin, who thought he would get into difficulties by taking such a step, offered him a very handsome sum to put his manuscript in the fire. He answered her with many lofty and animated observations on the meanness and unworthiness of taking money to suppress truth. To all which the lady listened with the utmost complacency; and merely replied, "Well! say yourself how much more you must have." Another *mot* of hers became an established canon at all the tables of Paris. The Comte de Coigny was wearying her one evening with some interminable story, when, upon somebody sending for a part of the dish before him, he took a little knife out of his pocket, and began to carve, talking all the time as before. "Monsieur le Comte," said Madame Goeffrin, a little out of patience, "at table there should only be large knives and short stories. In her old age she was seized with apoplexy; and her daughter, during her illness, refused access to the philosophers. When she recovered a little, she laughed at the precaution, and made her daughter's apology—by saying, "She had done like Godfrey of Bouillon—defended her tomb from the Infidels." The idea of her ending in devotion, however, occasioned much merriment and some scandal among her philosophical associates.

The name of *Marmontel* occurs very often in this collection; but it is not attended with any distinguished honours. M. Grimm accuses him of want of force or passion in his style, and of poverty of invention and littleness of genius. He says something, however, of more importance on occasion of the first representation of that writer's foolish little piece, entitled, "*Silvain*." The courtiers and sticklers for rank, he observes, all pretended to be mightily alarmed at *the tendency* of this little opera in one act; and the Duc de Noailles took the trouble to say, that its plain object was to show that a gentleman could do nothing so amiable as to marry his maid servant, and let his cottagers kill his game at their pleasure. It is really amusing, continues M. Grimm, to observe, how positive many people are, that all this is the result of a deep plot on the part of the Encyclopedistes, and that this silly farce is the fruit of a solemn conspiracy against the privileged orders, and in

support of the horrible doctrine of universal equality. If they would only condescend to consult me, however, he concludes, I could oblige them with a much simpler, though less magnificent solution of the mystery; the truth being, that the extravagance of M. Marmontel's little plot proceeds neither from his love of equality, nor from the commands of an anti-social conspiracy, but purely from the poverty of his imagination, and his want of talent for dramatic composition. It is always much more easy to astonish by extravagance, than to interest by natural representations; and those commonplaces, of love triumphing over pride of birth, and benevolence getting the better of feudal prejudices, are among the most vulgar resources of those who are incapable of devising incidents at once probable and pathetic.

This was written in the year 1770;—and while it serves to show us, that the imputation of conspiracies against the throne and the altar, of which succeeding times were doomed to hear so much, were by no means an original invention of the age which gave them the greatest encouragement, it may help also to show upon what slight foundation such imputations are usually hazarded. Great national changes, indeed, are never the result of conspiracies—but of causes laid deep and wide in the structure and condition of society,—and which necessarily *produce* those combinations of individuals, who seem to be the authors of the revolution when it happens to be ultimately brought about by their instrumentality. The Holy Church Philosophic of Paris, however, was certainly quite innocent of any such intention; and, we verily believe, had at no time any deeper views in its councils than are expressed in the following extract from its registers.

"Comme il est d'usage, dans notre sainte Eglise philosophique, de nous réunir quelquefois pour donner aux fidèles de salutaires et utiles instructions sur l'état actuel de la foi, les progrès et bonnes œuvres de nos frères, j'ai l'honneur de vous adresser les annonces et bans qui ont eu lieu à la suite de notre dernier sermon."

"Frère Thomas fait savoir qu'il a composé un *Essai sur les Femmes*, qui fera un ouvrage considérable. L'Eglise estime la pureté de mœurs et les vertus de frère Thomas; elle craint qu'il ne connaisse pas encore assez les femmes; elle lui conseille de se lier plus intimement, s'il se peut, avec quelques unes des héroïnes qu'il fréquente, pour le plus grand bien de son ouvrage; et, pour le plus grand bien de son style, elle le conjure de considérer combien, suivant la découverte de notre illustre patriarche, l'adjectif affaiblit souvent le substantif, quoiqu'il s'y rapporte en cas, en nombre et en genre.

"Sœur Necker fait savoir qu'elle donnera toujours à dîner les vendredis: l'Eglise s'y rendra, parce qu'elle fait cas de sa personne et de celle de son époux; elle voudrait pouvoir en dire autant de son cuisinier.

"Sœur de l'Espinasse fait savoir que sa fortune ne lui permet pas d'offrir ni à dîner, ni à souper, et qu'elle n'en a pas moins d'envie de recevoir chez elle les frères qui voudront y venir digérer. L'Eglise m'ordonne de lui dire qu'elle s'y rendra, et que, quand on a autant d'esprit et de mérite, on peut se passer de beauté et de fortune.

"Mère Geoffrin fait savoir qu'elle renouvelle les défenses et lois prohibitives des années précédentes, [illegible]t qu'il ne sera pas plus permis que par le passé de parler chez elle ni d'affaires intérieures ni d'affaires extérieures; ni d'affaires de la cour, ni d'affaires de la ville; ni de paix, ni de guerre; ni de religion, ni de gouvernement; ni de théologie, ni de métaphysique; ni de grammaire, ni de musique; ni, en général, d'aucune matière quelconque; et qu'elle commet dom Burigni, bénédictin de robe courte, pour faire taire tout le monde, à cause de sa dextérité, connue, et du grand crédit dont il jouit, et pour être grondé par elle, en particulier, de toutes les contraventions à ces défenses. L'Eglise, considérant que le silence, et notamment sur les matières dont est question, n'est pas son fort, promet d'obéir autant qu'elle y sera contrainte par forme de violence."

We hear a great deal, of course, of *Diderot*, in a work of which he was partly the author; and it is impossible to deny him the praise of ardour, originality, and great occasional eloquence. Yet we not only feel neither respect nor affection for Diderot—but can seldom read any of his lighter pieces without a certain degree of disgust. There is a tone of *blackguardism*—(we really can find no other word)—both in his indecency and his profanity, which we do not recollect to have met with in any other good writer; and which is apt, we think, to prove revolting even to those who are accustomed to the licence of this fraternity. They who do not choose to look into his *Religieuse* for the full illustration of this remark—and we advise no one to look there for any thing—may find it abundantly, though in a less flagrant form, in a little essay on women, which is inserted in these volumes as a supplement or corrective to the larger work of M. Thomas on that subject. We must say, however, that the whole tribe of French writers who have had any pretensions to philosophy for the last seventy years, are infected with a species of indelicacy which is peculiar, we think, to their nation; and strikes us as more shameful and offensive than any other. We do not know very well how to describe it, otherwise than by saying, that it consists in a strange combination of physical science with obscenity, and an attempt to unite the pedantic and disgusting details of anatomy and physiology, with images of voluptuousness and sensuality;—an attempt, we think, exceedingly disgusting and debasing, but not in the least degree either seductive or amusing. Maupertuis and Voltaire, and Helvetius and Diderot, are full of this. Buffon and d'Alembert are by no means free of it; and traces of it may even be discovered in the writings of Rousseau himself. We could pardon some details in the Emile—or the Confessions;—but we own it appears to us the most nauseous and unnatural of all things, to find the divine Julie herself informing her cousin, with much complacency, that she had at last discovered, that "quoique son cœur trop tendre avoit besoin d'amour, ses sens n'avoient plus besoin d'un amant."

The following epigram is a little in the taste we have been condemning;—but it has the merit of being excessively clever. Madame du Chatelet had long lived separate from her husband, and was understood to receive the homage of two lovers—Voltaire and

M. de St. Lambert. She died in childbirth; and the following dramatic elegy was circulated all over Paris the week after that catastrophe.

"*M. de Chatelet.*—Ah! ce n'est pas ma faute!

"*M. de Voltaire.*—Je l'avais predit!

"*M. de St. Lambert.*—Elle l'a voulu!"

Crebillon the younger is naturally brought to our recollection by the mention of wit and indecency. We have an account of his death, and a just and candid estimate of his merits, in one of the volumes before us. However frivolous and fantastic the style of his novels may appear, he had still the merit of inventing that style, and of adorning it with much ingenuity, wit, and character. The taste for his writings, it seems, passed away very rapidly and completely in France; and long before his death, the author of the *Sopha*, and *Les Egaremens du Cœur et de l'Esprit*, had the mortification to be utterly forgotten by the public. M. Grimm thinks this reverse of fortune rather unmerited; and observes, that in foreign countries he was still held in estimation, and that few French productions had had such currency in London as the *Sopha*. The reason perhaps may be, that the manners and characters which the French at once knew to be unnatural, might be mistaken by us for true copies of French originals. It is a little more difficult, however, to account for the fact, that the perusal of his works inspired a young lady of good family in this country with such a passion for the author, that she ran away from her friends, came to Paris, married him, and nursed and attended him with exemplary tenderness and affection to his dying day. But there is nothing but luck, good or bad—as M. Grimm sagely observes—in this world. The author of a licentious novel inspires a romantic passion in a lady of rank and fortune, who crosses seas, and abandons her family and her native country for his sake;—while the author of the *Nouvelle Heloise*, the most delicate and passionate of all lovers that ever existed, is obliged to clap up a match with his singularly stupid chambermaid!

Of all the loves, however, that are recorded in this chronicle, the loves of Madame du Deffant and M. de Ponte-de-Vesle, are the most exemplary; for they lasted upwards of fifty years without quarrel or intermission. The secret of this wonderful constancy is, at all events, worth knowing; and we give it in the words of an authentic dialogue between this venerable Acmé and Septimius.

"Pont-de-Vesle?—Madame?—Où êtes-vous?—Au coin de votre cheminée.—Couché les pieds sur les chenets, comme on est chez ses amis?—Oui, Madame.—Il faut convenir qu'il est peu de liaisons aussi anciennes que la nôtre.—Cela est vrai.—Il y a cinquante ans.—Oui, cinquante ans passés.—Et dans ce long intervalle aucun nuage, pas même l'apparence d'une brouillerie.—C'est ce que j'ai toujours admiré.—Mais, Pont-de-Vesle, cela ne viendrait-il point de ce qu'au fond nous avons toujours été fort indifférens l'un à l'autre?—Cela se pourrait bien, Madame."

The evening this veteran admirer died, she came rather late to a great supper in the neighbourhood; and as it was known that she made it a point of honour to attend on him, the catastrophe was generally suspected. She mentioned it, however, herself, immediately on coming in;—adding, that it was lucky he had gone off so early in the evening, as she might otherwise have been prevented from appearing. She then sate down to table, and made a very hearty and merry meal of it!

Besides Pont-de-Vesle, however, this celebrated lady had a lover almost as ancient, in the President Henault—whom also she had the misfortune to survive; though he had the complaisance, as well as his predecessor, to live to near ninety years for her sake. The poor president, however, fell into dotage, before his death; and one day, when in that state, Madame du Deffant having happened to ask him, whether he liked her or Madame de Castelmoron the best, he, quite unconscious of the person to whom he was speaking, not only declared his preference of the absent lady, but proceeded to justify it by a most feeling and accurate enumeration of the vices and defects of his hearer, in which he grew so warm and eloquent, that it was quite impossible either to stop him, or to prevent all who were present from profiting by the communication. When Madame de Chatelet died, Madame du Deffant testified her grief for the most intimate of her female acquaintance, by circulating all over Paris, the very next morning, the most libellous and venomous attack on her person, her understanding, and her morals. When she came to die herself, however, she met with just about as much sympathy as she deserved. Three of her dearest friends used to come and play cards every evening by the side of her couch—and as she chose to die in the middle of a very interesting game, they quietly played it out—and settled their accounts before leaving the apartment. We hope these little traits go near to justify what we ventured to say in the outset, of the tendency of large and agreeable society to *fortify* the heart;—at all events, they give us a pretty lively idea of the *liaisons* that united kindred souls at Paris. We might add to the number several anecdotes of the President Henault—and of the Baron d'Holbach, who told Helvetius, a little time before the death of the latter, that though he had lived all his life with irritable and indigent men of letters, he could not recollect that he had either quarrelled with, or done the smallest service to, any one among them.

There is a great deal of admirable criticism in this work, upon the writings and genius of almost all the author's contemporaries—Dorat, Piron, Millot, Bernard, Mirabeau, Moncrif, Colardeau, and many others, more or less generally known in this country; nor do we know any publication, indeed, so well calculated to give a stranger a just and comprehensive view of the recent literature of France. The little we can afford to extract, however, must be hung upon names more notorious.

The publication of a stupid journal of *Montaigne's* Travels in Italy gives M. Grimm an opportunity of saying something of the Essays of that most agreeable veteran. Nothing can be more just than the greater part of the following observations.

"Quoi-qu'il y-ait dans ses *Essais* une infinité de faits d'anecdotes et de citations, il n'est pas difficile de s'appercevoir que ses études n'étaient ni vastes ni profondes. Il n'avait guère lu que quelques poëtes latins, quelques livres de voyage, et son Sènèque et son Plutarque."

"De tous les auteurs qui nous restent de l'antiquité, Plutarque est, sans contredit, celui qui a recueilli le plus de vérités de fait et de spéculation. Ses œuvres sont une mine inépuisable de lumières et de connaissances: c'est vraiment l'Encyclopédie des anciens. Montaigne nous en a donné la fleur, et il y a ajouté les reflexions les plus fines, et surtout les résultats les plus secrets de sa propre expérience. Il me semble donc que si j'avais à donner une idée de ses *Essais*, je dirais en deux mots que c'est un commentaire que Montaigne fit sur lui-même en méditant les écrits de Plutarque. . .Je pense encore que je dirais mal: ce serait lui prêter un prôjet. . .Montaigne n'en avait aucun. En mettant la plume à la main, il paraît n'avoir songé qu'au plaisir de causer familièrement avec son lecteur. Il lui rend compte de ses lectures, de ses pensées, de ses reflexions, sans suite, sans dessein: il veut avoir le plaisir de penser tout haut, et il en jouit à son aise. Il cite souvent Plutarque, parce que Plutarque était son livre favori. La seule loi qu'il semble s'être prescrite, c'est de ne jamais parler que de ce qui l'intéressait vivement: de là l'énergie et la vivacité de ses expressions, la grace et l'originalité de son langage. Son esprit a cette assurance et cette franchise aimable que l'on ne trouve que dans ces enfans bien nés, dont la contrainte du monde et de l'éducation ne gêna point encore les mouvemens faciles et naturels."

After a still farther encomium on the sound sense of this favourite writer, M. Grimm concludes—

"Personne n'a-t-il donc pensé plus que Montaigne? Je l'ignore. Mais ce que je crois bien savoir, c'est que personne n'a dit avec plus de simplicité ce qu'il a senti, ce qu'il a pensé. On ne peut rien ajouter à l'éloge qu'il a fait lui-même de son ouvrage; *c' est ici un livre de bonne foi.* Cela est divin, et cela est exact."

"Qu'est-ce que toutes les connaissances humaines? le cercle en est si borné! . . . . Et depuis quatre mille ans, qu'a-t-on fait pour l'étendre? Montesquieu a dit quelque part, *qu'il travaillait à un livre de douze pages, qui contiendrait tout ce que nous savons sur la Métaphysique, la Politique et la Morale, et tout ce que de grands auteurs ont oublié dans les volumes qu'ils ont donnés sur ces sciences-là.* . . . . Je suis très sérieusement persuadé qu'il ne tenait qu'à lui d'accomplir ce grand projet."

Montesquieu, Buffon, and Raynal are the only authors, we think, of whom M. Grimm speaks with serious respect and admiration. Great praise is lavished upon Robertson's Charles V.—Young's Night Thoughts are said, and with justice, to be rather ingenious than pathetic; and to show more of a gloomy imagination than a feeling heart.—Thomson's Seasons are less happily stigmatized as excessively ornate and artificial, and said to stand in the same relation to the Georgics, that the Lady of Loretto, with all her tawdry finery, bears to the naked graces of the Venus de Medici.—Johnson's Life of Savage is extolled as exceedingly entertaining—though the author is laughed at, in the true Parisian taste, for not having made a jest of his hero.—Hawkesworth's Voyages are also very much commended; and Sir William Jones' letter to *Anquetil du Perron*, is said to be capable, with a few retrenchments, of being made worthy of the pen of the Patriarch himself.—Mrs. Montagu's Essay on Shakespeare is also applauded to the full extent of its merits; and, indeed, a very laudable degree of candour and moderation is observed as to our national taste in the drama.—Shakespeare, he observes, is fit for us, and Racine for them; and each should be satisfied with his lot, and would do well to keep to his own national manner. When we attempt to be regular and dignified, we are merely cold and stiff; and when they aim at freedom and energy, they become absurd and extravagant. The celebrity of Garrick seems to have been scarcely less at Paris than in London,—their greatest actor being familiarly designated "Le Garrick François." His powers of pantomime, indeed, were universally intelligible, and seem to have made a prodigious impression upon the theatrical critics of France. But his authority is quoted by M. Grimm, for the observation, that there is not the smallest affinity in the tragic declamation of the two countries;—so that an actor who could give the most astonishing effect to a passage of Shakespeare, would not, though perfectly master of French, be able to guess how a single line of Racine should be spoken on the stage.

We cannot leave the subject of the drama, however, without observing, with what an agreeable surprise we discovered in M. Grimm, an auxiliary in that battle which we have for some time waged, though not without trepidation, against the theatrical standards of France, and in defence of our own more free and irregular drama. While a considerable part of our own men of letters, carried away by the authority and supposed unanimity of the continental judges, were disposed to desert the cause of Shakespeare and Nature, and to recognize Racine and Voltaire, as the only true models of dramatic excellence, it turns out that the greatest Parisian critic, of that best age of criticism, was of opinion that the very idea of dramatic excellence had never been developed in France; and that, from the very causes which we have formerly specified, there was neither powerful passion nor real nature on their stage. After giving some account of a play of La Harpe's, he observes, "I am more and more confirmed in the opinion, that *true tragedy, such as has never yet existed in France*, must, after all, be written in prose; or at least can never accommodate itself to the pompous and rhetorical tone of our stately versification. The ceremonious and affected dignity which belongs to such compositions, is quite inconsistent with the just imitation of nature, and destructive of all true pathos. It may be very fine and very poetical; but it is not dramatic:—and accordingly I have no hesitation in maintaining, that all our celebrated tragedies belong to the *epic* and not to the *dramatic* division of poetry. The Greeks and Romans had a dramatic verse, which did not interfere with simplicity

or familiarity of diction; but as we have none, we must make up our minds to compose our tragedies in prose, if we ever expect to have any that may deserve the name. What then?" he continues; "must we throw our Racines and Voltaires in the fire?—by no means;—on the contrary, we must keep them, and study and admire them more than ever;—but with right conceptions of their true nature and merit—as masterpieces of poetry, and reasoning, and description;—as the first works of the first geniuses that ever adorned any nation under heaven:—But not as tragedies,—not as pieces intended to exhibit natural characters and passions speaking their own language, and to produce that terrible impression which such pieces alone can produce. Considered in that light, their coldness and childishness will be immediately apparent;—and though the talents of the artist will always be conspicuous, their misapplication and failure will not be less so. With the prospect that lies before us, the best thing, perhaps, that we can do is to go on, boasting of the unparalleled excellence we have attained. But how speedily should our boastings be silenced if the present race of *children* should be succeeded by a generation of *men!* Here is a theory," concludes the worthy Baron, a little alarmed it would seem at his own temerity, "which it would be easy to confirm and illustrate much more completely—if a man had a desire to be stoned to death before the door of the *Theatre François!* But, in the mean time, till I am better prepared for the honours of martyrdom, I must entreat you to keep the secret of my infidelity to yourself."

Diderot holds very nearly the same language. After a long dissertation upon the difference between real and artificial dignity, he proceeds,—"What follows, then, from all this—but that tragedy is still to be invented in France; and that the ancients, with all their faults, were probably much nearer inventing it than we have been?—Noble actions and sentiments, with simple and familiar language, are among its first elements;—and I strongly suspect, that for these two hundred years, we have mistaken the stateliness of Madrid for the heroism of Rome. If once a man of genius shall venture to give to his characters and to his diction the simplicity of ancient dignity, plays and players will be very different things from what they are now. But how much of this," he adds also in a fit of sympathetic terror, "could I venture to say to any body but you! I should be pelted in the streets, if I were but suspected of the blasphemies I have just uttered."

With the assistance of two such allies, we shall renew the combat against the Continental dramatists with fresh spirits and confidence; and shall probably find an early opportunity to brave the field, upon that important theme. In the mean time we shall only remark, that we suspect there is something more than an analogy between the government and political constitution of the two countries, and the character of their drama. The tragedy of the Continent is conceived in the very genius and spirit of absolute monarchy—the same artificial stateliness—the same slow moving of few persons—the same suppression of ordinary emotions, and ostentatious display of lofty sentiments, and, finally, the same jealousy of the interference of lower agents, and the same horror of vulgarity and tumult. When we consider too, that in the countries where this form of the drama has been established, the Court is the chief patron of the theatre, and courtiers almost its only supporters, we shall probably be inclined to think that this uniformity of character is not a mere accidental coincidence, but that the same causes which have stamped those attributes on the serious hours of its rulers, have extended them to those mimic representations which were originally devised for their amusement. In England, again, our drama has all along partaken of the mixed nature of our government,—persons of all degrees take a share in both, each in his own peculiar character and fashion: and the result has been, in both, a much greater activity, variety, and vigour, than was ever exhibited under a more exclusive system. In England, too, the stage has in general been dependent on the nation at large, and not on the favour of the Court;—and it is natural to suppose that the character of its exhibitions has been affected by a due consideration of that of the miscellaneous patron whose feelings it was its business to gratify and reflect.

After having said so much about the stage, we cannot afford room either for the quarrels or witticisms of the actors, which are reported at great length in these volumes—or for the absurdities, however ludicrous, of the "*Diou de Danse*" as old Vestris ycleped himself—or even the famous "*affaire du Menuet*" which distracted the whole court of France at the marriage of the late King. We can allow only a sentence indeed to the elaborate dissertation in which Diderot endeavours to prove that an actor is all the worse for having any feeling of the passions he represents, and is never so sure to agitate the souls of his hearers as when his own is perfectly at ease. We are persuaded that this is not correctly true;—though it might take more distinctions than the subject is worth, to fix precisely where the truth lies. It is plain we think, however, that a good actor must have *a capacity*, at least, of all the passions whose language he mimics,—and we are rather inclined to think, that he must also have a transient feeling of them, whenever his mimicry is very successful. That the emotion should be very short-lived, and should give way to trivial or comic sensations, with very little interval, affords but a slender presumption against its reality, when we consider how rapidly such contradictory feelings succeed each other, in light minds, in the real business of life. That real passion, again, never would be so graceful and dignified as the counterfeited passion of the stage, is either an impeachment of the accuracy of the copy, or a contradiction in terms. The real passion of a noble and dignified character must always be dignified and graceful,—and if Cæsar, when

actually bleeding in the Senate-house, folded his robe around him, that he might fall with decorum at the feet of his assassins, why should we say that it is out of nature for a player, both to sympathise with the passions of his hero, and to think of the figure he makes in the eyes of the spectators? Strong conception is, perhaps in every case, attended with a temporary belief of the reality of its objects;—and it is impossible for any one to copy with tolerable success the symptoms of a powerful emotion, without a very lively apprehension and recollection of its actual presence. We have no idea, we own, that the copy can ever be given without some participation in the emotion itself—or that it is possible to repeat pathetic words, and with the true tone and gestures of passion, with the same indifference with which a schoolboy repeats his task, or a juggler his deceptions. The feeling, we believe, is often very momentary; and it is this which has misled those who have doubted of its existence. But there are many strong feelings equally fleeting and undeniable. The feelings of the spectators, in the theatre, though frequently more keen than they experience anywhere else, are in general infinitely less durable than those excited by real transactions; and a ludicrous incident or blunder in the performance, will carry the whole house, in an instant, from sobbing to ungovernable laughter: And even in real life, we have every day occasion to observe, how quickly the busy, the dissipated, the frivolous, and the very youthful, can pass from one powerful and engrossing emotion to another. The daily life of Voltaire, we think, might have furnished Diderot with as many and as striking instances of the actual succession of incongruous emotions, as he has collected from the theatrical life of Sophie Arnoud, to prove that one part of the succession must necessarily have been fictitious.

There are various traits of the oppressions and abuses of the government, incidentally noticed in this work, which maintains, on the whole, a very aristocratical tone of politics. One of the most remarkable relates to no less a person than the Maréchal de Saxe. This great warrior, who is known never to have taken the field without a small travelling seraglio in his suite, had engaged a certain Madlle. Chantilly to attend him in one of his campaigns. The lady could not prudently decline the honour of the invitation, because she was very poor; but her heart and soul were devoted to a young pastry cook of the name of Favart, for whose sake she at last broke out of the Marshal's camp, and took refuge in the arms of her lover; who rewarded her heroism by immediately making her his wife. The history of the Marshal's lamentation on finding himself deserted, is purely ridiculous, and is very well told; but our feelings take a very different character, when, upon reading a little farther, we find that this illustrious person had the baseness and brutality to apply to his sovereign for a *lettre de cachet* to *force* this unfortunate woman from the arms of her lawful husband, and to compel her to submit again to his embraces,—and that the court was actually guilty of the incredible atrocity of granting such an order! It was not only granted, M. Grimm assures us, but executed,—and this poor creature was dragged from the house of her husband, and conducted by a file of grenadiers to the quarters of his highness, where she remained till his death, the unwilling and disgusted victim of his sensuality! It is scarcely possible to regret the subversion of a form of government, that admitted, if but once in a century, of abuses so enormous as this: But the tone in which M. Grimm notices it, as a mere *foiblesse* on the part of *le Grand Maurice*, gives us reason to think that it was by no means without a parallel in the contemporary history. In England, we verily believe, there never was a time in which it would not have produced insurrection or assassination.

One of the most remarkable passages in this philosophical journal, is that which contains the author's estimate of the advantages and disadvantages of philosophy. Not being much more of an optimist than ourselves, M. Grimm thinks that good and evil are pretty fairly distributed to the different generations of men; and that, if an age of philosophy be happier in some respects than one of ignorance and prejudice, there are particulars in which it is not so fortunate. Philosophy, he thinks, is the necessary fruit of a certain experience and a certain maturity; and implies, in nations as well as individuals, the extinction of some of the pleasures as well as the follies of early life. All nations, he observes, have begun with poetry, and ended with philosophy—or, rather, have passed through the region of philosophy in their way to that of stupidity and dotage. They lose the poetical passion, therefore, before they acquire the taste for speculation; and, with it, they lose all faith in those allusions, and all interest in those trifles which make the happiness of the brightest portion of our existence. If, in this advanced stage of society, men are less brutal, they are also less enthusiastic;—if they are more habitually beneficent, they have less warmth of affection. They are delivered indeed from the yoke of many prejudices; but at the same time deprived of many motives of action. They are more prudent, but more anxious—are more affected with the general interests of mankind, but feel less for their neighbours; and, while curiosity takes the place of admiration, are more enlightened, but far less delighted with the universe in which they are placed.

The effect of this philosophical spirit on the arts, is evidently unfavourable on the whole. *Their* end and object is delight, and that of philosophy is truth; and the talent that seeks to instruct, will rarely condescend to aim merely at pleasing. Racine and Molière, and Boileau, were satisfied with furnishing amusement to such men as Louis XIV., and Colbert, and Turenne; but the geniuses of the present day pretend to nothing less than enlightening their rulers; and the same young men

who would formerly have made their *debût* with a pastoral or a tragedy, now generally leave college with a new system of philosophy and government in their portfolios. The very metaphysical, prying, and expounding turn of mind that is nourished by the spirit of philosophy, unquestionably deadens our sensibility to those enjoyments which it converts into subjects of speculation. It busies itself in endeavouring to understand those emotions which a simpler age was contented with enjoying;—and seeking, like Psyche, to have a distinct view of the sources of our pleasures, is punished, like her, by their instant annihilation.

Religion, too, continues M. Grimm, considered as a source of enjoyment or consolation in this world, has suffered from the progress of philosophy, exactly as the fine arts and affections have done. It has no doubt become infinitely more rational, and less liable to atrocious perversions; but then it has also become much less enchanting and ecstatic—much less prolific of sublime raptures, beatific visions, and lofty enthusiasm. It has suffered, in short, in the common disenchantment; and the same cold spirit which has chased so many lovely illusions from the earth, has dispeopled heaven of half its marvels and its splendours.

We could enlarge with pleasure upon these just and interesting speculations; but it is time we should think of drawing this article to a close; and we must take notice of a very extraordinary transaction which M. Grimm has recorded with regard to the final publication of the celebrated *Encyclopedie*. The *redaction* of this great work, it is known, was ultimately confided to *Diderot;* who thought it best, after the disturbances that had been excited by the separate publication of some of the earlier volumes, to keep up the whole of the last ten till the printing was finished; and then to put forth the complete work at once. A bookseller of the name of *Breton*, who was a joint proprietor of the work, had the charge of the mechanical part of the concern; but, being wholly illiterate, and indeed without pretensions to literature, had of course no concern with the correction, or even the perusal of the text. This person, however, who had heard of the clamours and threatened prosecutions which were excited by the freedom of some articles in the earlier volumes, took it into his head, that the value and security *of the property* might be improved, by a prudent castigation of the remaining parts; and accordingly, after receiving from Diderot the last proofs and revises of the different articles, took them home, and, with the assistance of another tradesman, scored out, altered, and suppressed, at their own discretion, all the passages which they in their wisdom apprehended might give offence to the court, or the church, or any other persons in authority—giving themselves, for the most part, no sort of trouble to connect the disjointed passages that were left after these mutilations—and sometimes soldering them together with masses of their own stupid vulgarity.

After these precious ameliorations were completed, they threw of the full impression; and, to make all sure and irremediable, consigned both the manuscript and the original proofs to the flames! Such, says M. Grimm, is the true explanation of that mass of impertinences, contradictions, and incoherences, with which all the world has been struck, in the last ten volumes of this great compilation. It was not discovered till the very eve of the publication; when Diderot having a desire to look back to one of his own articles, printed some years before, with difficulty obtained a copy of the sheets containing it from the warehouse of M. Breton—and found, to his horror and consternation, that it had been garbled and mutilated, in the manner we have just stated. His rage and vexation on the discovery, are well expressed in a long letter to Breton, which M. Grimm has engrossed in his register. The mischief however was irremediable, without an intolerable delay and expense; and as it was impossible for the editor to take any steps to bring Breton to punishment for this "horrible forfait," without openly avowing the intended publication of a work which the court only tolerated by affecting ignorance of its existence, it was at last resolved, with many tears of rage and vexation, to keep the abomination secret—at least till it was proclaimed by the indignant denunciations of the respective authors whose works had been subjected to such cruel mutilation. The most surprising part of the story however is, that none of these authors ever made any complaint about the matter. Whether the number of years that had elapsed since the time when most of them had furnished their papers, had made them insensible of the alterations—whether they believed the change effected by the base hand of Breton to have originated with Diderot, their legal censor—or that, in fact, the alterations were chiefly in the articles of the said Diderot himself, we cannot pretend to say; but M. Grimm assures us, that, to his astonishment and that of Diderot, the mutilated publication, when it at last made its appearance, was very quietly received by the injured authors as their authentic production, and apologies humbly made, by some of them, for imperfections that had been created by the beast of a publisher.

There are many curious and original anecdotes of the Empress of Russia in this book; and as she always appeared to advantage where munificence and clemency to individuals were concerned, they are certainly calculated to give us a very favourable impression of that extraordinary woman. We can only afford room now for one, which characterises the nation as well as its sovereign. A popular poet, of the name of Sumarokoff, had quarrelled with the leading actress at Moscow, and protested that she should never again have the honour to perform in any of his tragedies. The Governor of Moscow, however, not being aware of this theatrical feud, thought fit to order one of Sumarokoff's tragedies for representation, and also to command

the services of the offending actress on the occasion. Sumarokoff did not venture to take any step against his Excellency the Governor; but when the heroine advanced in full Muscovite costume on the stage, the indignant poet rushed forward from behind the scenes, seized her reluctantly by the collar and waist, and tossed her furiously from the boards. He then went home, and indited two querulous and sublime epistles to the Empress. Catherine, in the midst of her gigantic schemes of conquest and improvement, had the patience to sit down and address the following good-humoured and sensible exhortation to the disordered bard.

"Monsieur Sumarokoff, j'ai été fort étonnée de votre lettre du 28 Janvier, et encore plus de celle du premier Février. Toutes deux contiennent, à ce qu'il me semble, des plaintes contre la Belmontia qui pourtant n'a fait que suivre les ordres du comte Soltikoff. Le feld-maréchal a désiré de voir représenter votre tragédie; cela vous fait honneur. Il était convenable de vous conformer au désir de la première personne en autorité à Moscou; mais si elle a jugé à propos d'ordonner que cette pièce fût représentée, il fallait exécuter sa volonté sans contestation. Je crois que vous savez mieux que personne combien de respect méritent des hommes qui ont servi avec gloire, et dont la tête est couverte de cheveux blancs; c'est pourquoi je vous conseille d'éviter de pareilles disputes à l'avenir. Par ce moyen vous conserverez la tranquillité d'âme qui est nécessaire pour vos ouvrages, et il me sera toujours plus agréable de voir les passions représentées dans vos drames que de les lire dans vos lettres.

"Au surplus, je suis votre affectionnée.

Signé CATHERINE."

"Je conseille," adds M. Grimm, "à tout ministre chargé du département des lettres de cachet, d'enrégistrer ce formulaire à son greffe, et à tout hasard de n'en jamais délivrer d'autres aux poetes et à tout ce qui a droit d'être du genre irritable, c'est-à-dire enfant et fou par état. Après cette lettre qui mérite peut-être autant l'immortalité que les monumens de la sagesse et de la gloire du règne actuel de la Russie, je meurs de peur de m'affermir dans la pensée hérétique que l'esprit ne gâte jamais rien, même sur le trône."

But it is at last necessary to close these entertaining volumes,—though we have not been able to furnish our readers with any thing like a fair specimen of their various and miscellaneous contents. Whoever wishes to see the economist wittily abused—to read a full and picturesque account of the tragical rejoicings that filled Paris with mourning at the marriage of the late King—to learn how *Paul Jones* was a writer of pastorals and love songs—or how they made carriages of leather, and evaporated diamonds in 1772—to trace the *debût* of Madame de Staël as an author at the age of twelve, in the year ——!—to understand M. Grimm's notions on suicide and happiness—to know in what the *unique* charm of Madlle. *Thevenin* consisted—and in what manner the dispute between the patrons of the French and the Italian music was conducted—will do well to peruse the five thick volumes, in which these, and innumerable other matters of equal importance are discussed, with the talent and vivacity with which the reader must have been struck, in the least of the foregoing extracts.

We add but one trivial remark, which is forced upon us, indeed, at almost every page of this correspondence. The profession of literature must be much wholesomer in France than in any other country:—for though the volumes before us may be regarded as a great literary obituary, and record the deaths, we suppose, of more than an hundred persons of some note in the world of letters, we scarcely meet with an individual who is less than seventy or eighty years of age—and no very small proportion actually last till near ninety or an hundred—although the greater part of them seem neither to have lodged so high, nor lived so low, as their more active and abstemious brethren in other cities. M. Grimm observes that, by a remarkable fatality, Europe was deprived, in the course of little more than six months, of the splendid and commanding talents of Rousseau, Voltaire, Haller, Linnæus, Heidegger, Lord Chatham, and Le Kain—a constellation of genius, he adds, that when it set to us, must have carried a dazzling light into the domains of the King of Terrors, and excited no small alarm in his ministers—if they bear any resemblance to the ministers of other sovereigns.

(January, 1810.)

Memoirs of the Life and Writings of VICTOR ALFIERI. Written by Himself. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 614. London: 1810.

THIS book contains the delineation of an extraordinary and not very engaging character; and an imperfect sketch of the rise and progress of a great poetical genius. It is deserving of notice in both capacities—but chiefly in the first; as there probably never was an instance in which the works of an author were more likely to be influenced by his personal peculiarities. Pride and enthusiasm—irrepressible vehemence and ambition—and an arrogant, fastidious, and somewhat narrow system of taste and opinions, were the great leading features in the mind of Alfieri. Strengthened, and in some degree produced, by a loose and injudicious education, those traits were still further developed by the premature and protracted indulgences of a very dissipated youth; and when, at last, they admitted of an application to study, imparted their own character of impetuosity to those more meritorious exertions;—converted a taste into a passion; and left him, for a great part of his life, under the influence of a true and irresistible inspiration. Every thing in

him, indeed, appears to have been passion and ungoverned impulse; and, while he was raised above the common level of his degenerate countrymen by a stern and self-willed haughtiness, that might have become an ancient Roman, he was chiefly distinguished from other erect spirits by the vehemence which formed the basis of his character, and by the uncontrolled dominion which he allowed to his various and successive propensities. So constantly and entirely, indeed, was he under the influence of these domineering attachments, that his whole life and character might be summed up by describing him as the victim, successively, of a passion for horses—a passion for travelling—a passion for literature—and a passion for what he called independence.

The memoirs of such a life, and the confessions of such a man, seem to hold out a promise of no common interest and amusement. Yet, though they are here presented to us with considerable fulness and apparent fidelity, we cannot say that we have been much amused or interested by the perusal. There is a proud coldness in the narrative, which neither invites sympathy, nor kindles the imagination. The author seems to disdain giving himself *en spectacle* to his readers; and chronicles his various acts of extravagance and fits of passion, with a sober and languid gravity, to which we can recollect no parallel. In this review of the events and feelings of a life of adventure and agitation, he is never once betrayed into the genuine language of emotion; but dwells on the scenes of his childhood without tenderness, and on the struggles and tumults of his riper years without any sort of animation: We look in vain through the whole narrative for one gleam of that magical eloquence by which Rousseau transports us into the scenes he describes, and into the heart which responded to those scenes,—or even for a trait of that social garrulity which has enabled Marmontel and Cumberland to give a grace to obsolete anecdote, and to people the whole space around them with living pictures of the beings among whom they existed. There is not one character attempted, from beginning to end of this biography;—which is neither lively, in short, nor eloquent—neither playful, impassioned, nor sarcastic. Neither is it a mere unassuming outline of the author's history and publications, like the short notices of Hume or Smith. It is, on the contrary, a pretty copious and minute narrative of all his feelings and adventures; and contains, as we should suppose, a tolerably accurate enumeration of his migrations, prejudices, and antipathies. It is not that he does not condescend to talk about trifling things, but that he will not talk about them in a lively or interesting manner; and systematically declines investing any part of his statement with those picturesque details, and that warm colouring, by which alone the story of an individual can often excite much interest among strangers. Though we have not been able to see the original of these Memoirs, we will venture to add, that they are by no means well written; and that they will form no exception to the general observation, that almost all Italian prose is feeble and deficient in precision. There is something, indeed, quite remarkable in the wordiness of most of the modern writers in this language,—the very copiousness and smoothness of which seems to form an apology for the want of force or exactness—and to hide, with its sweet and uniform flow, both from the writer and the reader, that penury of thought, and looseness of reasoning, which are so easily detected when it is rendered into a harsher dialect. Unsatisfactory, however, as they are in many particulars, it is still impossible to peruse the memoirs of such a man as Alfieri without interest and gratification. The traits of ardour and originality that are disclosed through all the reserve and gravity of the style, beget a continual expectation and curiosity; and even those parts of the story which seem to belong rather to his youth, rank, and education, than to his genius or peculiar character, acquire a degree of importance, from considering how far those very circumstances may have assisted the formation, and obstructed the development of that character and genius; and in what respects its peculiarities may be referred to the obstacles it had to encounter, in misguidance, passion, and prejudice.

Alfieri was born at Asti, in Piedmont, of noble and rich, but illiterate parents, in January 1749. The history of his childhood, which fills five chapters, contains nothing very remarkable. The earliest thing he remembers, is being fed with sweetmeats by an old uncle with square-toed shoes. He was educated at home by a good-natured, stupid priest; and having no brother of his own age, was without any friend or companion for the greater part of his childhood. When about seven years old, he falls in love with the smooth faces of some male novices in a neighbouring church; and is obliged to walk about with a green net on his hair, as a punishment for fibbing. To the agony which he endured from this infliction, he ascribes his scrupulous adherence to truth through the rest of his life; —all this notwithstanding, he is tempted to steal a fan from an old lady in the family, and grows silent, melancholy, and reserved; —at last, when about ten years of age, he is sent to the academy at Turin.

This migration adds but little to the interest of the narrative, or the improvement of the writer. The academy was a great, ill-regulated establishment; in one quarter of which the pages of the court, and foreigners of distinction, were indulged in every sort of dissipation—while the younger pupils were stowed into filthy cells, ill fed, and worse educated. There he learned a little Latin, and tried, in vain, to acquire the elements of mathematics; for, after the painful application of several months, he was never able to comprehend the fourth proposition of Euclid; and found, he says, all his life after, that he had "a completely anti-geometrical head." From the bad diet, and preposterously early hours of

the academy, he soon fell into wretched health, and, growing more melancholy and solitary than ever, became covered over with sores and ulcers. Even in this situation, however, a little glimmering of literary ambition became visible. He procured a copy of Ariosto from a voracious schoolfellow, by giving up to him his share of the chickens which formed their Sunday regale; and read Metastasio and Gil Blas with great ardour and delight. The inflammability of his imagination, however, was more strikingly manifested in the effects of the first opera to which he was admitted, when he was only about twelve years of age.

"This varied and enchanting music," he observes, sunk deep into my soul, and made the most astonishing impression on my imagination;—it agitated the inmost recesses of my heart to such a degree, that for several weeks I experienced the most profound melancholy, which was not, however, wholly unattended with pleasure. I became tired and disgusted with my studies, while at the same time the most wild and whimsical ideas took such possession of my mind, as would have led me to portray them in the most impassioned verses, had I not been wholly unacquainted with the true nature of my own feelings. It was the first time music had produced such a powerful effect on my mind. I had never experienced any thing similar, and it long remained engraven on my memory. When I recollect the feelings excited by the representation of the grand operas, at which I was present during several carnivals, and compare them with those which I now experience, on returning from the performance of a piece I have not witnessed for some time, I am fully convinced that nothing acts so powerfully on my mind as all species of music, and particularly the sound of female voices, and of *contro-alto*. Nothing excites more various or terrific sensations in my mind. Thus the plots of the greatest number of my tragedies were either formed while listening to music, or a few hours afterwards."—p. 71—73.

With this tragic and Italian passion for Music, he had a sovereign contempt and abhorrence for Dancing. His own account of the origin of this antipathy, and of the first rise of those national prejudices, which he never afterwards made any effort to overcome, is among the most striking and characteristic passages in the earlier part of the story.

"To the natural hatred I had to dancing, was joined an invincible antipathy towards my master —a Frenchman newly arrived from Paris. He possessed a certain air of polite assurance, which, joined to his ridiculous motions and absurd discourse, greatly increased the innate aversion I felt towards this frivolous art. So unconquerable was this aversion, that, after leaving school, I could never be prevailed on to join in any dance whatever. The very name of this amusement still makes me shudder, and laugh at the same time—a circumstance by no means unusual with me. I attribute, also, in a great measure, to this dancing-master the unfavourable, and perhaps erroneous opinion I have formed of the French people! who, nevertheless, it must be confessed, possess many agreeable and estimable qualities. But it is difficult to weaken or efface impressions received in early youth. Two other causes also contributed to render me from my infancy disgusted with the French character. The first was the impression made on my mind by the sight of the ladies who accompanied the Duchess of Parma in her journey to Asti, and were all bedaubed with rouge—the use of which was then exclusively confined to the French. I have frequently mentioned this circumstance several years afterwards, not being able to account for such an absurd and ridiculous practice, which is wholly at variance with nature; for when *men*, to disguise the effects of sickness, or other calamities, besmear themselves with this detestable rouge,—they carefully conceal it; well knowing that, when discovered, it only excites the laughter or pity of the beholders. These painted French figures left a deep and lasting impression on my mind, and inspired me with a certain feeling of disgust towards the females of this nation.

"From my geographical studies resulted another cause of antipathy to that nation. Having seen on the chart the great difference in extent and population between England or Prussia and France; and hearing, every time news arrived from the armies, that the French had been beaten by sea and land; —recalling to mind the first ideas of my infancy, during which I was told that the French had frequently been in possession of Asti; and that during the last time, they had suffered themselves to be taken prisoners to the number of six or seven thousand, without resistance, after conducting themselves, while they remained in possession of the place, with the greatest insolence and tyranny;— all these different circumstances, *being associated with the idea of the ridiculous dancing-master!* tended more and more to rivet in my mind an aversion to the French nation."—pp. 83—86.

At the early age of fourteen, Alfieri was put in possession of a considerable part of his fortune; and launched immediately into every sort of fashionable folly and extravagance. His passion for horses, from which he was never entirely emancipated, now took entire possession of his soul; and his days were spent in galloping up and down the environs of Turin, in company chiefly with the young English who were resident in that capital. From this society, and these exercises, he soon derived such improvement, that in a short time he became by far the most skilful jockey, farrier, and coachman, that modern Italy could boast of producing.

For ten or twelve years after this period, the life of Alfieri presents a most humiliating, but instructive picture of idleness, dissipation, and *ennui*. It is the finest and most flattering illustration of Miss Edgeworth's admirable tale of Lord Glenthorn; and, indeed, rather outgoes, than falls short of that high-coloured and apparently exaggerated representation.— Such, indeed, is the coincidence between the traits of the fictitious and the real character, that if these Memoirs had been published when Miss Edgeworth's story was written, it would have been impossible not to suppose that she had derived from them every thing that is striking and extraordinary in her narrative. For two or three years, Alfieri contented himself with running, restless and discontented, over the different states and cities of Italy; almost ignorant of its language, and utterly indifferent both to its literature and its arts. Consumed, at every moment of inaction, with the most oppressive discontent and unhappiness, he had no relief but in the velocity of his movements and the rapidity of his transitions. Disappointed with every thing, and believing himself incapable of application or reflection, he passed his days in a perpetual fever of

impatience and dissipation;—apparently pursuing enjoyment with an eagerness which was in reality inspired by the vain hope of escaping from misery. There is much general truth, as well as peculiar character, in the following simple confession.

"In spite, however, of this constant whirl of dissipation, my being master of my own actions; notwithstanding I had plenty of money, was in the heyday of youth, and possessed a prepossessing figure; I yet felt every where satiety, ennui, and disgust. My greatest pleasure consisted in attending the opera buffa, though the gay and lively music left a deep and melancholy impression in my mind. A thousand gloomy and mournful ideas assailed my imagination, in which I delighted to indulge by wandering alone on the shores near the Chiaja and Portici."—Vol. i. p. 128.

When he gets to Venice, things are, if possible, still worse,—though like other hypochondriacs, he is disposed to lay the blame on the winds and the weather. The tumult of the carnival kept him alive, it seems, for a few days.

"But no sooner was the novelty over, than my habitual melancholy and ennui returned. I passed several days together in complete solitude, never leaving the house nor stirring from the window, whence I made signs to a young lady who lodged opposite, and with whom I occasionally exchanged a few words. During the rest of the day, which hung very heavy on my hands, I passed my time either in sleeping or in dreaming, I knew not which, and frequently in weeping without any apparent motive. I had lost my tranquillity, and I was unable even to divine what had deprived me of it. A few years afterwards, on investigating the cause of this occurrence, I discovered that it proceeded from a malady which attacked me every spring, sometimes in April, and sometimes in June: its duration was longer or shorter, and its violence very different, according as my mind was occupied.

"I likewise experienced that my intellectual faculties resembled a barometer, and that I possessed more or less talent for composition, in proportion to the weight of the atmosphere. During the prevalence of the solstitial and equinoctial winds, I was always remarkably stupid, and uniformly evinced less penetration in the evening than the morning. I likewise perceived that the force of my imagination, the ardour of enthusiasm, and capability of invention, were possessed by me in a higher degree in the middle of winter, or in the middle of summer, than during the intermediate periods. This materiality, which I believe to be common to all men of a delicate nervous system, has greatly contributed to lessen the pride with which the good I have done might have inspired me, in like manner as it has tended to diminish the shame I might have felt for the errors I have committed, particularly in my own art."—Vol. i. pp. 140—142.

In his nineteenth year, he extends his travels to France, and stops a few weeks at Marseilles, where he passed his evenings exactly as Lord Glenthorn is represented to have done his at his Irish castle. To help away the hours, he went every night to the play, although his Italian ears were disgusted with the poverty of the recitation; and,

—"after the performance was over, it was my regular practice to bathe every evening in the sea. I was induced to indulge myself in this luxury, in consequence of finding a very agreeable spot, on a tongue of land lying to the right of the harbour, where, seated on the sand, with my back leaning against a rock, I could behold the sea and sky without interruption. In the contemplation of these objects, embellished by the rays of the setting sun, I passed my time dreaming of future delights."—Vol. i. pp. 150, 151.

In a very short time, however, these reveries became intolerable; and he very nearly killed himself and his horses in rushing, with incredible velocity, to Paris. This is his own account of the impression which was made upon him by his first sight of this brilliant metropolis.

"It was on a cold, cloudy, and rainy morning, between the 15th and 20th of August, that I entered Paris, by the wretched suburb of St. Marceau. Accustomed to the clear and serene sky of Italy and Provence, I felt much surprised at the thick fog which enveloped the city, especially at this season. Never in my life did I experience more disagreeable feelings than on entering the damp and dirty suburb of St. Germain, where I was to take up my lodging. What inconsiderate haste, what mad folly had led me into this sink of filth and nastiness! On entering the inn, I felt myself thoroughly undeceived; and I should certainly have set off again immediately, had not shame and fatigue withheld me. My illusions were still further dissipated when I began to ramble through Paris. The mean and wretched buildings; the contemptible ostentation displayed in a few houses dignified with the pompous appellation of hotels and palaces; the filthiness of the Gothic churches; the truly vandal-like construction of the public theatres at that time, besides innumerable other disagreeable objects, of which not the least disgusting to me was the plastered countenances of many very ugly women, far outweighed in my mind the beauty and elegance of the public walks and gardens, the infinite variety of fine carriages, the lofty façade of the Louvre, as well as the number of spectacles and entertainments of every kind."—Vol. i. pp. 153, 154.

There, then, as was naturally to be expected, he again found himself tormented "by the demon of melancholy;" and, after trying in vain the boasted stimulant of play, he speedily grew wearied of the place and all its amusements, and resolved to set off, without delay, for England. To England, accordingly, he goes, at midwinter; and with such a characteristic and compassionable craving for all sorts of powerful sensations, that "he rejoiced exceedingly at the extreme cold, which actually froze the wine and bread in his carriage during a part of the journey." Prepared, as he was, for disappointment, by the continual extravagance of his expectation, Alfieri was delighted with England. "The roads, the inns, the horses, and, above all, the incessant bustle in the suburbs, as well as in the capital, all conspired to fill my mind with delight." He passed a part of the winter in good society, in London; but soon "becoming disgusted with assemblies and routs, determined no longer to play the lord in the drawing-room, but *the coachman* at the gate!" and accordingly contrived to get through three laborious months, by being "five or six hours every morning on horseback, and *being seated on the coachbox for two or three hours every evening*, whatever was the state of the weather." Even these great and meritorious exertions, however, could not

long keep down his inveterate malady, nor quell the evil spirit that possessed him; and he was driven to make a hasty tour through the west of England, which appears to have afforded him very considerable relief.

"The country then so much enchanted me that I determined to settle in it; not that I was much attached to any individual, but because I was delighted with the scenery, the simple manners of the inhabitants, the modesty and beauty of the women, and, above all, with the enjoyment of political liberty,—all which made me overlook its mutable climate, the melancholy almost inseparable from it, and the exorbitant price of all the necessaries of life."—Vol. i. pp. 162, 163.

Scarcely, however, was this bold resolution of *settling* adopted, when the author is again "seized with the mania of travelling;" and skims over to Holland in the beginning of summer. And here he is still more effectually diverted than ever, by falling in love with a young married lady at the Hague, who was obliging enough to return his affection. Circumstances, however, at last compel the fair one to rejoin her husband in Switzerland; and the impetuous Italian is affected with such violent despair, that he makes a desperate attempt on his life, by taking off the bandages after being let blood; and returns sullenly to Italy, without stopping to look at any thing, or uttering a single word to his servant during the whole course of the journey.

This violent fit of depression, however, and the seclusion by which it was followed, led him, for the first time, to look into his books; and the perusal of the Lives of Plutarch seems to have made such an impression on his ardent and susceptible spirit, that a passion for liberty and independence now took the lead of every other in his soul, and he became for life an emulator of the ancient republicans. He read the story of Timoleon, Brutus, &c., he assures us, with floods of tears, and agonies of admiration. "I was like one beside himself; and shed tears of mingled grief and rage at having been born at Piedmont; and at a period, and under a government, where it was impossible to conceive or execute any great design." The same sentiment, indeed, seems to have haunted him for the greater part of his life; and is expressed in many passages of these Memoirs besides the following.

"Having lived two or three years almost wholly among the English; having heard their power and riches everywhere celebrated; having contemplated their great political influence, and on the other hand viewing Italy wholly degraded from her rank as a nation, and the Italians divided, weak, and enslaved, I was ashamed of being an Italian, and wished not to possess any thing in common with this nation."—Vol. i. p. 121.

"I was naturally attached to a domestic life; but after having visited England at nineteen, and read Plutarch with the greatest interest at twenty years of age, I experienced the most insufferable repugnance at marrying and having my children born at Turin."—Vol. i. p. 175.

The time, however, was not yet come when study was to ballast and anchor this agitated spirit. Plutarch was soon thrown aside; and the patriot and his horses gallop off to Vienna. The state of his mind, both as to idleness and politics, is strikingly represented in the following short passage.

"I might easily, during my stay at Vienna, have been introduced to the celebrated poet Metastasio, at whose house our minister, the old and respectable Count Canale, passed his evenings in a select company of men of letters, whose chief amusement consisted in reading portions from the Greek, Latin, and Italian classics. Having taken an affection for me, he wished, out of pity to my idleness, to conduct me thither. But I declined accompanying him, either from my usual awkwardness, or from the contempt which the constant habit of reading French works had given me for Italian productions. Hence I concluded, that this assemblage of men of letters, with their classics, could be only a dismal company of pedants. Besides, I had seen Metastasio, in the gardens of Schoenbrunn, perform the customary genuflexion to Maria Theresa in such a servile and adulatory manner, that I, who had my head stuffed with Plutarch, and who exaggerated every thing I conceived, could not think of binding myself, either by the ties of familiarity or friendship, with a poet who had sold himself to a despotism which I so cordially detested."
Vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

From Vienna he flew to Prussia, which, he says, looked all like one great guardhouse; and where he could not repress "the horror and indignation he felt at beholding oppression and despotism assuming the mask of virtue." From Prussia he passed on to Denmark; where his health was seriously affected by the profligacy in which he indulged; and where the only amusement he could relish, consisted in "driving a sledge with inconceivable velocity over the snow." In this way he wandered on through Sweden and Finland to Russia; and experienced, as usual, a miserable disappointment on arriving at St. Petersburg.

"Alas! no sooner had I reached this Asiatic assemblage of wooden huts, than Rome, Genoa, Venice, and Florence rose to my recollection; and I could not refrain from laughing. What I afterwards saw of this country tended still more strongly to confirm my first impression, that it merited not to be seen. Every thing, except their beards and their horses, disgusted me so much, that, during six weeks I remained among these savages, I determined not to become acquainted with any one; nor even to see the two or three youths with whom I had associated at Turin, and who were descended from the first families of the country. I took no measure to be presented to the celebrated Autocratrix Catherine II.; nor did I even behold the countenance of a sovereign who in our days has outstripped fame. On investigating, at a future period, the reason of such extraordinary conduct, I became convinced that it proceeded from a certain intolerance of character, and a hatred to every species of tyranny, and which in this particular instance attached itself to a person suspected of the most horrible crime—the murder of a defenceless husband."—Vol. i. pp. 194, 195.

This rage for liberty continued to possess him in his return through Prussia, and really seems to have reached its acmé when it dictated the following most preposterous passage,—which, we cannot help suspecting, is indebted for part of its absurdity to the translator.

"I visited Zorndorff, a spot rendered famous by the sanguinary battle fought between the Russians and Prussians, where thousands of men on both

sides were immolated on the altar of despotism, and thus escaped from the galling yoke which oppressed them. The place of their interment was easily recognised by its greater verdure, and by yielding more abundant crops than the barren and unproductive soil in its immediate vicinity. *On this occasion, I reflected, with sorrow, that slaves seem everywhere only born to fertilize the soil on which they vegetate.*"—Vol. i. pp. 196, 197.

After this he meets with a beautiful *ass* at Gottingen, and regrets that his indolence prevented him from availing himself of this excellent opportunity for writing some immeasurably facetious verses "upon this rencounter of a German and an Italian ass, in so celebrated an university!" After a hasty expedition to Spa, he again traverses Germany and Holland, and returns to England in the twenty-third year of his age; where he is speedily involved in some very distressing and discreditable adventures. He engages in an intrigue with an English lady of rank, and is challenged, and slightly wounded by her husband. After this eclat, he consoles himself with the thought of marrying the frail fair, with whom he is, as usual, most heroically in love; when he discovers, to his infinite horror and consternation, that, previous to her connection with him, she had been equally lavish of her favours to her husband's *groom!* whose jealous resentment had led him to watch and expose this new infidelity. After many struggles between shame, resentment, and unconquerable love, he at last tears himself from this sad sample of English virtue, and makes his way to Holland, bursting with grief and indignation; but without seeming to think that there was the slightest occasion for any degree of contrition or self-condemnation. From Holland he goes to France, and from France to Spain—as idle, and more oppressed with himself than ever—buying and caressing Andalusian horses, and constantly ready to sink under the heavy burden of existence. At Madrid he has set down an extraordinary trait of the dangerous impetuosity of his temper. His faithful servant, in combing his hair one day, happened accidentally to give him pain by stretching one hair a little more than the rest, upon which, without saying a word, he first seized a candlestick, and felled him to the ground with a huge wound on his temple, and then drew his sword to despatch him, upon his offering to make some resistance. The sequel of the story is somewhat more creditable to his magnanimity, than this part of it is to his self-command.

"I was shocked at the brutal excess of passion into which I had fallen. Though Elias was somewhat calmed, he still appeared to retain a certain degree of resentment; yet I was not disposed to display towards him the smallest distrust. Two hours after his wound was dressed I went to bed, leaving the door open, as usual, between my apartment and the chamber in which he slept; notwithstanding the remonstrance of the Spaniards, who pointed out to me the absurdity of putting vengeance in the power of a man whom I had so much irritated. I said even aloud to Elias, who was already in bed, that he might kill me, if he was so inclined, during the night; and that I justly merited such a fate. But this brave man, who possessed as much elevation of soul as myself, took no other revenge for my outrageous conduct, except preserving for several years two handkerchiefs stained with blood which had been bound round his head, and which he occasionally displayed to my view. It is necessary to be fully acquainted with the character and manners of the Piedmontese, in order to comprehend the mixture of ferocity and generosity displayed on both sides in this affair.

"When at a more mature age, I endeavoured to discover the cause of this violent transport of rage, I became convinced that the trivial circumstance which gave rise to it, was, so to speak, like the last drop poured into a vessel ready to run over. My irascible temper, which must have been rendered still more irritable by solitude and perpetual idleness, required only the slightest impulse to cause it to burst forth. Besides, I never lifted a hand against a domestic, as that would have been putting them on a level with myself. Neither did I ever employ a cane, nor any kind of weapon in order to chastise them, though I frequently threw at them any moveable that fell in my way, as many young people do, during the first ebullitions of anger; yet I dare to affirm that I would have approved, and even esteemed the domestic who should on such occasions have rendered me back the treatment he received, since I never punished them as a master, but only contended with them as one man with another."—Vol. i. pp. 244—246.

At Lisbon he forms an acquaintance with a literary countryman of his own, and feels, for the first time of his life, a glow of admiration on perusing some passages of Italian poetry. From this he returns to Spain, and, after lounging over the whole of that kingdom, returns through France to Italy, and arrives at Turin in 1773. Here he endeavours to maintain the same unequal contest of dissipation against ennui and conscious folly, and falls furiously in love, for the third time, with a woman of more than doubtful reputation, ten years older than himself. Neither the intoxication of this passion, however, nor the daily exhibition of his twelve fine horses, could repress the shame and indignation which he felt at thus wasting his days in inglorious licentiousness; and his health was at last seriously affected by those compunctious visitings of his conscience. In 1774, while watching by his unworthy mistress in a fit of sickness, he sketched out a few scenes of a dramatic work in Italian, which was thrown aside and forgotten immediately on her recovery; and it was not till the year after, that, after many struggles, he formed the resolution of detaching himself from this degrading connection. The efforts which this cost him, and the means he adopted to ensure his own adherence to his resolution, appear al together wild and extravagant to our northern imaginations. In the first place, he had himself lashed with strong cords to his elbow chair, to prevent him from rushing into the presence of the syren; and, in the next place, he entirely cut off his hair, in order to make it impossible for him to appear with decency in any society! The first fifteen days, he assures us, he spent entirely "in uttering the most frightful groans and lamentations," and the next in riding furiously through all the solitary places in the neighbourhood. At last, however, this frenzy of grief began to subside; and, most fortunately for the world and

the author, gave place to a passion for literature, which absorbed the powers of this fiery spirit during the greater part of his future existence. The perusal of a wretched tragedy on the story of Cleopatra, and the striking resemblance he thought he discovered between his own case and that of Antony, first inspired him with the resolution of attempting a dramatic piece on the same subject; and, after encountering the most extreme difficulty from his utter ignorance of poetical diction, and of pure Italian, he at last hammered out a tragedy, which was represented with tolerable success in 1775. From this moment his whole heart was devoted to dramatic poetry; and literary glory became the idol of his imagination.

In entering upon this new and arduous career, he soon discovered that greater sacrifices were required of him than he had hitherto offered to any of the former objects of his idolatry. The defects of his education, and his long habits of indolence and inattention to every thing connected with letters, imposed upon him far more than the ordinary labour of a literary apprenticeship. Having never been accustomed to the use of the pure Tuscan, and being obliged to speak French during so many years of travelling, he found himself shamefully deficient in the knowledge of that beautiful language, in which he proposed to enter his claims to immortality; and began, therefore, a course of the most careful and critical reading of the great authors who had adorned it. Dante and Petrarca were his great models of purity; and, next to them, Ariosto and Tasso; in which four writers, he gives it as his opinion, that there is to be found the perfection of every style, except that fitted for dramatic poetry—of which, he more than insinuates, that his own writings are the only existing example. In order to acquire a perfect knowledge and command of their divine language, he not only made many long visits to Tuscany, but absolutely interdicted himself the use of every other sort of reading, and abjured for ever that French literature which he seems to have always regarded with a mixture of envy and disdain. To make amends for this, he went resolutely back to the rudiments of his Latin; and read over all the classics in that language with a most patient and laborious attention. He likewise committed to memory many thousand lines from the authors he proposed to imitate; and sought, with the greatest assiduity, the acquaintance of all the scholars and critics that came in his way,—pestering them with continual queries, and with requesting their opinion upon the infinite quantity of bad verses which he continued to compose by way of exercise. His two or three first tragedies he composed entirely in French prose; and afterwards translated, with infinite labour, into Italian verse.

"In this manner, without any other judge than my own feelings, I have only finished those, the sketches of which I had written with energy and enthusiasm; or, if I have finished any other, I have at least never taken the trouble to clothe them in verse. This was the case with Charles I., which I began to write in French prose, immediately after finishing Philippe. When I had reached to about the middle of the third act, my heart and my hand became so benumbed, that I found it impossible to hold my pen. The same thing happened in regard to Romeo and Juliet, the whole of which I nearly expanded, though with much labour to myself, and at long intervals. On reperusing this sketch, I found my enthusiasm so much lowered, that, transported with rage against myself, I could proceed no further, but threw my work into the fire."—Vol. ii. pp. 48—51.

Two or three years were passed in these bewitching studies; and, during this time, nine or ten tragedies, at least, were in a considerable state of forwardness. In 1778, the study of Machiavel revived all that early zeal for liberty which he had imbibed from the perusal of Plutarch; and he composed with great rapidity his two books of "La Tiranide;"—perhaps the most nervous and eloquent of all his prose compositions. About the same period, his poetical studies experienced a still more serious interruption, from the commencement of his attachment to the Countess of Albany, the wife of the late Pretender;—an attachment that continued to soothe or to agitate all the remaining part of his existence. This lady, who was by birth a princess of the house of Stolberg, was then in her twenty-fifth year, and resided with her ill-matched husband at Florence. Her beauty and accomplishments made, from the first,* a powerful impression on the inflammable heart of Alfieri, guarded as it now was with the love of glory and of literature; and the loftiness of his character, and the ardour of his admiration, soon excited corresponding sentiments in her, who had suffered for some time from the ill temper and gross vices of her superannuated husband. Though the author takes the trouble to assure us that "their intimacy never exceeded the strictest limits of honour," it is not difficult to understand, that it should have aggravated the ill-humour of the old husband; which increased, it seems, so much, that the lady was at last forced to abandon his society, and to take refuge with his brother, the Cardinal York, at Rome. To this place Alfieri speedily followed her; and remained there, divided between love and study, for upwards of two years; when her holy guardian becoming scandalized at their intimacy, it was thought necessary for her reputation, that they should separate. The effects of this separation he has himself described in the following short, but eloquent passage.

"For two years I remained incapable of any kind of study whatever, so different was my pres-

* His first introduction to her, we have been informed, was in the great gallery of Florence;—a circumstance which led him to signalize his admiration by an extraordinary act of gallantry. As they stopped to examine the picture of Charles XII. of Sweden, the Countess observed, that the singular uniform in which that prince is usually painted, appeared to her extremely becoming. Nothing more was said at the time; but, in two days after, Alfieri appeared in the streets in the exact *costume* of that warlike sovereign,—to the utter consternation of all the peaceful inhabitants.

ent forlorn state from the happiness I enjoyed during my late residence in Rome:—there the Villa Strozzi near to the warm baths of Dioclesian, afforded me a delightful retreat, where I passed my mornings in study, only riding for an hour or two through the vast solitudes which, in the neighbourhood of Rome, invite to melancholy, meditation, and poetry. In the evening, I proceeded to the city, and found a relaxation from study in the society of her who constituted the charm of my existence; and, contented and happy, I returned to my solitude, never at a later hour than eleven o'clock. It was impossible to find, in the circuit of a great city, an abode more cheerful, more retired,—or better suited to my taste, my character, and my pursuits. Delightful spot!—the remembrance of which I shall ever cherish, and which through life I shall long to revisit."—Vol. ii. pp. 121, 122.

Previously to this time, his extreme love of independence, and his desire to be constantly with the mistress of his affections, had induced him to take the very romantic step of resigning his whole property to his sister; reserving to himself merely an annuity of 14,000 livres, or little more than 500*l*. As this transference was made with the sanction of the King, who was very well pleased, on the whole, to get rid of so republican a subject, it was understood, upon both sides, as a tacit compact of expatriation; so that, upon his removal from Rome, he had no house or fixed residence to repair to. In this desolate and unsettled state, his passion for horses revived with additional fury; and he undertook a voyage to England, for the sole purpose of purchasing a number of those noble animals; and devoted eight months "to the study of noble heads, fine necks, and well-turned buttocks, without once opening a book or pursuing any literary avocation." In London, he purchased fourteen horses,—in relation to the number of his tragedies!—and this whimsical relation frequently presenting itself to his imagination, he would say to himself with a smile—"Thou hast gained a horse by each tragedy!"—Truly the noble author must have been far gone in love, when he gave way to such innocent deliration.—He conducted his fourteen friends, however, with much judgment across the Alps; and gained great glory and notoriety at Sienna, from their daily procession through the streets, and the feats of dexterity he exhibited in riding and driving them.

In the mean time, he had printed twelve of his tragedies; and imbibed a sovereign contempt for such of his countrymen as pretended to find them harsh, obscure, or affectedly sententious. In 1784, after an absence of more than two years, he rejoined his mistress at Baden in Alsace; and, during a stay of two months with her, sketched out three new tragedies. On his return to Italy, he took up his abode for a short time at Pisa,—where, in a fit of indignation at the faults of Pliny's Panegyric on Trajan, he composed in five days that animated and eloquent piece of the same name, which alone, of all his works have fallen into our hands, has left on our minds the impression of ardent and flowing eloquence. His rage for liberty likewise prompted him to compose several odes on the subject of American independence, and several miscellaneous productions of a similar character:—at last, in 1786, he is permitted to take up his permanent abode with his mistress, whom he rejoins at Alsace, and never afterwards abandons. In the course of the following year, they make a journey to Paris, with which he is nearly as much dissatisfied as on his former visit,—and makes arrangements with Didot for printing his tragedies in a superb form. In 1788, however, he resolves upon making a complete edition of his whole works at Kehl; and submits, for the accommodation of his fair friend, to take up his residence at Paris. There they receive intelligence of the death of her husband, which seems, however, to make no change in their way of life;—and there he continues busily employed in correcting his various works for publication, till the year 1790, when the first part of these memoirs closes with anticipations of misery from the progress of the revolution, and professions of devoted attachment to the companion whom time had only rendered more dear and respected.

The supplementary part bears date in May 1803—but a few months prior to the death of the author,—and brings down his history, though in a more summary manner, to that period. He seems to have lived in much uneasiness and fear in Paris, after the commencement of the revolution; from all approbation, or even toleration of which *tragic farce*, as he terms it, he exculpates himself with much earnestness and solemnity; but, having vested the greater part of his fortune in that country, he could not conveniently abandon it. In 1791, he and his companion made a short visit to England, with which he was less pleased than on any former occasion,—the damp giving him a disposition to gout, and the late hours interfering with his habits of study. The most remarkable incident in this journey, occurred at its termination. As he was passing along the quay at Dover, on his way to the packet-boat, he caught a glimpse of the bewitching woman on whose account he had suffered so much, in his former visit to this country nearly twenty years before! She still looked beautiful, he says, and bestowed on him one of those enchanting smiles which convinced him that he was recognised. Unable to control his emotion, he rushed instantly aboard—hid himself below—and did not venture to look up till he was landed on the opposite shore. From Calais he addressed a letter to her of kind inquiry, and offers of service; and received an answer, which, on account of the singular tone of candour and magnanimity which it exhibits, he has subjoined in the appendix. It is undoubtedly a very remarkable production, and shows both a strength of mind and a kindness of disposition which seem worthy of a happier fortune.

In the end of 1792, the increasing fury of the revolution rendered Paris no longer a place of safety for foreigners of high birth; and Alfieri and his countess with some difficulty

effected their escape from it, and established themselves, with a diminished income, at his beloved Florence. Here, with his usual impetuosity, he gave vent to his anti-revolutionary feelings, by composing an apology for Louis XVI., and a short satirical view of the French excesses, which he entitled "The Antigallican." He then took to acting his own plays; and, for two or three years, this new passion seduced him in a good degree from literature. In 1795, however, he tried his hand in some satirical productions; and began, with much zeal, to reperuse and translate various passages from the Latin classics. Latin naturally led to Greek; and, in the forty-ninth year of his age, he set seriously to the study of this language. Two whole years did this ardent genius dedicate to solitary drudgery, without being able to master the subject he had undertaken. At last, by dint of perseverance and incredible labour, he began to understand a little of the easier authors; and, by the time he had completed his fiftieth year, succeeded in interpreting a considerable part of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Homer. The perusal of Sophocles, in the following year, impelled him to compose his last tragedy of Alceste in 1798. In the end of this year, the progress of the French armies threatened to violate the tranquillity of his Tuscan retreat! and, in the spring following, upon the occupation of Florence, he and his friend retired to a small habitation in the country. From this asylum, however, they returned so precipitately on the retreat of the enemy, that they were surprised by them on their second invasion of Tuscany in 1800; but had more to suffer, it appears, from the importunate civility, than from the outrages of the conquerors. The French general, it seems, was a man of letters, and made several attempts to be introduced to Alfieri. When evasion became impossible, the latter made the following haughty but guarded reply to his warlike admirer:—

"If the general, in his official capacity, commands his presence, Victor Alfieri, who never resists constituted authority of any kind, will immediately hasten to obey the order; but if, on the contrary, he requests an interview only as a private individual, Alfieri begs leave to observe, that being of a very retired turn of mind, he wishes not to form any new acquaintance; and therefore entreats the French general to hold him excused."—Vol. ii. pp. 286, 287.

Under these disastrous circumstances, he was suddenly seized with the desire of signalizing himself in a new field of exertion; and sketched out no fewer than six *comedies* at once, which were nearly finished before the end of 1802. His health, during this year, was considerably weakened by repeated attacks of irregular gout and inflammatory affections; and the memoir concludes with the description of a collar and medal which he had invented, as the badge of "the order of Homer," which, in his late sprung ardour for Greek literature, he had founded and endowed. Annexed to this record is a sort of postscript, addressed, by his friend the Abbé Caluso, to the Countess of Albany; from which it appears, that he was carried off by an inflammatory or gouty attack in his bowels, which put a period to his existence after a few days' illness, in the month of October 1803. We have since learned, that the publication of his posthumous works, which had been begun by the Countess of Albany at Milan, has been stopped by the French government; and that several of the manuscripts have, by the same authority, been committed to the flames.

We have not a great deal to add to this copious and extraordinary narrative. Many of the peculiarities of Alfieri may be safely referred to the accident of his birth, and the errors of his education. His *ennui*, arrogance, and dissipation, are not very unlike those of many spoiled youths of condition; nor is there any thing very extraordinary in his subsequent application to study, or the turn of his first political opinions. The peculiar nature of his pursuits, and the character of his literary productions, afford more curious matter for speculation.

In reflecting on the peculiar misery which Alfieri and some other eminent persons are recorded to have endured, while their minds were withheld from any worthy occupation, we have sometimes been tempted to conclude, that to suffer deeply from *ennui* is an indication of superior intellect; and that it is only to minds destined for higher attainments that the want of an object is a source of real affliction. Upon a little reflection, however, we are disposed to doubt of the soundness of this opinion; and really cannot permit all the shallow coxcombs who languish under the burden of existence, to take themselves, on our authority, for spell-bound geniuses. The most powerful stream, indeed, will stagnate the most deeply, and will burst out to more wild devastation when obstructed in its peaceful course; but the weakly current is, upon the whole, most liable to obstruction; and will mantle and rot at least as dismally as its betters. The innumerable blockheads, in short, who betake themselves to suicide, dram-drinking, or dozing in dirty nightcaps, will not allow us to suppose that there is any real connection between ennui and talent; or that fellows who are fit for nothing but mending shoes, may not be very miserable if they are unfortunately raised above their proper occupation.

If it does frequently happen that extraordinary and vigorous exertions are found to follow this heavy slumber of the faculties, the phenomenon, we think, may be explained without giving any countenance to the supposition, that vigorous faculties are most liable to such an obscuration. In the first place, the relief and delight of exertion must act with more than usual force upon a mind which has suffered from the want of it; and will be apt to be pushed further than in cases where the exertion has been more regular. The chief cause, however, of the signal success which has sometimes attended those who have been rescued from ennui, we really believe to be their ignorance of the difficulties they have

to encounter, and that inexperience which makes them venture on undertakings which more prudent calculators would decline. We have already noticed, more than once, the effect of early study and familiarity with the best models in repressing emulation by despair; and have endeavoured, upon this principle, to explain why so many original authors have been in a great degree without education. Now, a youth spent in lassitude and dissipation leads necessarily to a manhood of ignorance and inexperience; and has all the advantages, as well as the inconveniences, of such a situation. If any inward feeling of strength, ambition, or other extraordinary impulse, therefore, prompt such a person to attempt any thing arduous, it is likely that he will go about it with all that rash and vehement courage which results from unconsciousness of the obstacles that are to be overcome; and it is needless to say how often success is ensured by this confident and fortunate audacity. Thus Alfieri, in the outset of his literary career, ran his head against dramatic poetry, almost before he knew what was meant either by poetry or the drama; and dashed out a tragedy while but imperfectly acquainted with the language in which he was writing, and utterly ignorant either of the rules that had been delivered, or the models which had been created by the genius of his great predecessors. Had he been trained up from his early youth in fearful veneration for these rules and these models, it is certain that he would have resisted the impulse which led him to place himself, with so little preparation, within their danger; and most probable that he would never have thought himself qualified to answer the test they required of him. In giving way, however, to this propensity, with all the thoughtless freedom and vehemence which had characterised his other indulgences, he found himself suddenly embarked in an unexpected undertaking, and in sight of unexpected distinction. The success he had obtained with so little knowledge of the subject, tempted him to acquire what was wanting to deserve it; and justified hopes and stimulated exertions which earlier reflection would, in all probability, have for ever prevented.

The *morality* of Alfieri seems to have been at least as relaxed as that of the degenerate nobles, whom in all other things he professed to reprobate and despise. He confesses, without the slightest appearance of contrition, that his general intercourse with women was profligate in the extreme; and has detailed the particulars of three several intrigues with married women, without once appearing to imagine that they could require any apology or expiation. On the contrary, while recording the deplorable consequences of one of them, he observes, with great composure, that it was distressing to him to contemplate a degradation, of which he had, "though innocently," been the occasion. The general arrogance of his manners, too, and the occasional brutality of his conduct towards his inferiors, are far from giving us an amiable impression of his general character; nor have we been able to find, in the whole of these confessions, a single trait of kindness of heart, or generous philanthropy, to place in the balance against so many indications of selfishness and violence. There are proofs enough, indeed, of a firm, elevated, and manly spirit; but small appearance of any thing gentle, or even, in a moral sense, of any thing very respectable. In his admiration, in short, of the worthies of antiquity, he appears to have copied their harshness and indelicacy at least as faithfully as their loftiness of character; and, at the same time, to have combined with it all the licentiousness and presumption of a modern Italian noble.

We have been somewhat perplexed with his politics. After speaking as we have seen, of the mild government of the kings of Sardinia,—after adding that, "when he had read Plutarch and visited England, he felt the most unsurmountable repugnance at marrying, or having his children born at Turin,"—after recording that a monarch is a master, and a subject a slave,—and "that he shed tears of mingled grief and rage at having been born in such a state as Piedmont;"—after all this—after giving up his estates to escape from this bondage, and after writing his books on the Tiranide, and his odes on American liberty,—we really were prepared to find him taking the popular side, at the outset at least of the French Revolution, and exulting in the downfal of one of those hateful despotisms, against the whole system of which he had previously inveighed with no extraordinary moderation. Instead of this, however, we find him abusing the revolutionists, and extolling their opponents with all the zeal of a professed antijacobin,—writing an eulogium on the dethroned monarch like Mr. Pybus, and an Antigallican like Peter Porcupine. Now, we are certainly very far from saying, that a true friend of liberty might not execrate the proceedings of the French revolutionists; but a professed hater of royalty might have felt more indulgence for the new republic; such a crazy zealot for liberty, as Alfieri showed himself in Italy, both by his writings and his conduct, might well have been carried away by that promise of emancipation to France, which deluded sounder heads than his in all the countries of Europe. There are two keys, we think, in the work before us, to this apparent inconsistency. Alfieri, with all his abhorrence of tyrants, was, in his heart, a great lover of aristocracy; and, he had a great spite and antipathy at the French nation, collectively and individually.

Though professedly a republican, it is easy to see, that the republic he wanted was one on the Roman model,—where there were Patricians as well as Plebeians, and where a man of great talents had even a good chance of being one day appointed Dictator. He did not admire kings indeed,—because he did not happen to be born one, and because they were the only beings to whom he was born inferior: but he had the utmost veneration for nobles,—because fortune had placed him in that order, and because the power and distinction which belonged to it were agreeable to him, and, he thought, would be exercised for the good of his inferiors. When he heard that Voltaire had written a tragedy on the story of Brutus, he fell into a great passion, and exclaimed, that the subject was too lofty for "a French plebeian, who, during twenty years, had subscribed himself gentleman in ordinary to the King!"

This love of aristocracy, however, will not explain the defence of monarchy and the abuse of republics, which formed the substance of his Antigallican. But the truth is, that he was antigallican from his youth up; and would never have forgiven that nation, if they had succeeded in establishing a free government,—especially while Italy was in bondage. The contempt which Voltaire had expressed for Italian literature, and the general degradation into which the national character had fallen, had sunk deep into his fierce and haughty spirit, and inspired him with an antipathy towards that people by whom his own countrymen had been subdued, ridiculed, and outshone. This paltry and vindictive feeling leads him, throughout this whole work, to speak of them in the most unjust and uncandid terms. There may be some truth in his remarks on the mean and meagre articulation of their language, and on their "horrible *u*, with their thin lips drawn in to pronounce it, as if they were blowing hot soup." Nay, we could even excuse the nationality which leads him to declare, that "he would rather be the author of ten good Italian verses, than of volumes written in *English* or *French*, or any such harsh and unharmonious jargon,—though their cannon and their armies should continue to render these languages fashionable." But we cannot believe in the sincerity of an amorous Italian, who declares, that he never could get through the first volume of Rousseau's Héloise; or of a modern author of regular dramas, who professes to see nothing at all admirable in the tragedies of Racine or Voltaire. It is evident to us, that he grudged those great writers the glory that was due to them, out of a vindictive feeling of national resentment; and that, for the same reason, he grudged the French nation the freedom, in which he would otherwise have been among the first to believe and to exult.

It only remains to say a word or two of the literary productions of this extraordinary person;—a theme, however interesting and attractive, upon which we can scarcely pretend to enter on the present occasion. We have not yet been able to procure a complete copy of the works of Alfieri; and, even of those which have been lately transmitted to us, we will confess that a considerable portion remains to be perused. We have seen enough, however, to satisfy us that they are deserving of a careful analysis, and that a free and enlightened estimate of their merit may be rendered both interesting and instructive to the greater part of our readers. We hope soon to be in a condition to attempt this task; and shall, in the mean time, confine ourselves to a very few observations suggested by the style and character of the tragedies with which we have been for some time acquainted.

These pieces approach much nearer to the ancient Grecian model, than any other modern production with which we are acquainted; in the simplicity of the plot, the fewness of the persons, the directness of the action, and the uniformity and elaborate gravity of the composition. Infinitely less declamatory than the French tragedies, they have less brilliancy and variety, and a deeper tone of dignity and nature. As they have not adopted the choral songs of the Greek stage, however, they are, on the whole, less poetical than those ancient compositions; although they are worked throughout with a fine and careful hand, and diligently purified from every thing ignoble or feeble in the expression. The author's anxiety to keep clear of figures of mere ostentation, and to exclude all showpieces of fine writing in a dialogue of deep interest or impetuous passion, has betrayed him, on some occasions, into too sententious and strained a diction, and given an air of labour and heaviness to many parts of his composition. He has felt, perhaps a little too constantly, that the cardinal virtue of a dramatic writer is to keep his personages to the business and the concerns that lie before them; and by no means to let them turn to moral philosophers, or rhetorical describers of their own emotions. But, in his zealous adherence to this good maxim, he seems sometimes to have forgotten, that certain passions are declamatory in nature as well as on the stage; and that, at any rate, they do not all vent themselves in concise and pithy sayings, but run occasionally into hyperbole and amplification. As it is the great excellence, so it is occasionally the chief fault of Alfieri's dialogue, that every word is honestly employed to help forward the action of the play, by serious argument, necessary narrative, or the direct expression of natural emotion. There are no excursions or digressions,—no episodical conversations,—and none but the most brief moralizings. This gives a certain air of solidity to the whole structure of the piece, that is apt to prove oppressive to an ordinary reader, and reduces the entire drama to too great uniformity.

We make these remarks chiefly with a reference to French tragedy. For our own part, we believe that those who are duly sensible of the merits of Shakespeare, will never be much struck with any other dramatical compositions. There are no other plays, indeed, that paint human nature,—that strike off the characters of men with all the freshness and sharpness of the original,—and speak the language of all the passions, not like a mimic, but an echo—neither softer nor louder, nor differently modulated from the spontaneous utterance of the heart. In these respects he disdains all comparison with Alfieri, or with any other mortal: nor is it fair, perhaps, to suggest a comparison, where no

rivalry can be imagined. Alfieri, like all the continental dramatists, considers a tragedy as a poem. In England, we look upon it rather as a representation of character and passion. With them, of course, the style and diction, and the congruity and proportions of the piece, are the main objects;—with us, the truth and the force of the imitation. It is sufficient for them, if there be character and action enough to prevent the composition from languishing, and to give spirit and propriety to the polished dialogue of which it consists;—we are satisfied, if there be management enough in the story not to shock credibility entirely, and beauty and polish enough in the diction to exclude disgust or derision. In his own way, Alfieri, we think, is excellent. His fables are all admirably contrived and completely developed; his dialogue is copious and progressive; and his characters all deliver natural sentiments with great beauty, and often with great force of expression. In our eyes, however, *it is* a fault that the fable is too simple, and the incidents too scanty; and that all the characters express themselves with equal felicity, and urge their opposite views and pretensions with equal skill and plausibility. We see at once, that an ingenious author has versified the sum of a dialogue; and never, for a moment, imagine that we hear the real persons contending. There may be more eloquence and dignity in this style of dramatising;—there is infinitely more deception in ours.

With regard to the diction of these pieces, it is not for *tramontane* critics to presume to offer any opinion. They are considered, in Italy, we believe, as the purest specimens of the *favella Toscana* that late ages have produced. To us they certainly seem to want something of that flow and sweetness to which we have been accustomed in Italian poetry, and to be formed rather upon the model of Dante than of Petrarca. At all events, it is obvious that the style is highly elaborate and artificial; and that the author is constantly striving to give it a sort of factitious force and energy, by the use of condensed and emphatic expressions, interrogatories, antitheses, and short and inverted sentences. In all these respects, as well as in the chastised gravity of the sentiments, and the temperance and propriety of all the delineations of passion, these pieces are exactly the reverse of what we should have expected from the fiery, fickle, and impatient character of the author. From all that Alfieri has told us of himself, we should have expected to find in his plays great vehemence and irregular eloquence—sublime and extravagant sentiments—passions rising to frenzy—and poetry swelling into bombast. Instead of this, we have a subdued and concise representation of energetic discourses—passions, not loud but deep—and a style so severely correct and scrupulously pure, as to indicate, even to unskilful eyes, the great labour which must have been bestowed on its purification. No characters can be more different than that which we should infer from reading the tragedies of Alfieri, and that which he has assigned to himself in these authentic memoirs.

(April, 1803.)

The Life and Posthumous Writings of William Cowper, Esq. *With an Introductory Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Cowper.* By William Hayley, Esq. 2 vols. 4to. Chichester: 1803.

This book is too long; but it is composed on a plan that makes prolixity unavoidable. Instead of an account of the poet's life, and a view of his character and performances, the biographer has laid before the public a large selection from his private correspondence, and merely inserted as much narrative between each series of letters, as was necessary to preserve their connection, and make the subject of them intelligible.

This scheme of biography, which was first introduced, we believe, by Mason, in his life of Gray, has many evident advantages in point of liveliness of colouring, and fidelity of representation. It is something intermediate between the egotism of *confessions*, and the questionable narrative of a surviving friend, who must be partial, and may be mistaken: It enables the reader to judge for himself, from materials that were not provided for the purpose of determining his judgment; and holds up to him, instead of a flattering or unfaithful portrait, the living lineaments and features of the person it intends to commemorate. It is a plan, however, that requires so much room for its execution, and consequently so much money and so much leisure in those who wish to be masters of it, that it ought to be reserved, we conceive, for those great and eminent characters that are likely to excite an interest among all orders and generations of mankind. While the biography of Shakespeare and Bacon shrinks into the corner of an octavo, we can scarcely help wondering that the history of the sequestered life and solitary studies of Cowper should have extended into two quarto volumes.

The little Mr. Hayley writes in these vo' umes is by no means well written; though certainly distinguished by a very amiable gentleness of temper, and the strongest appearance of sincere veneration and affection for the departed friend to whose memory it is consecrated. It will be very hard, too, if they do not become popular; as Mr. Hayley seems to have exerted himself to conciliate readers

of every description, not only by the most lavish and indiscriminate praise of every individual he has occasion to mention, but by a general spirit of approbation and indulgence towards every practice and opinion which he has found it necessary to speak of. Among the other symptoms of *book making* which this publication contains, we can scarcely forbear reckoning the expressions of this too obsequious and unoffending philanthropy.

The constitutional shyness and diffidence of Cowper appeared in his earliest childhood, and was not subdued in any degree by the bustle and contention of a Westminster education; where, though he acquired a considerable portion of classical learning, he has himself declared, that "he was never able to raise his eye above the shoe-buckles of the elder boys, who tyrannized over him." From this seminary, he seems to have passed, without any academical preparation, into the Society of the Inner Temple, where he continued to reside to the age of thirty-three. Neither his biographer nor his letters give any satisfactory account of the way in which this large and most important part of his life was spent. Although Lord Thurlow was one of his most intimate associates, it is certain that he never made any proficiency in the study of the law; and the few slight pieces of composition, in which he appears to have been engaged in this interval, are but a scanty produce for fifteen years of literary leisure. That a part of those years was very idly spent, indeed, appears from his own account of them. In a letter to his cousin, in 1786, he says,

"I did actually live three years with Mr. Chapman, a solicitor; that is to say, I slept three years in his house; but I lived, that is to say, I spent my days in Southampton Row, as you very well remember. There was I, and the future Lord Chancellor, constantly employed, from morning to night, in giggling, and making giggle, instead of studying the law."—Vol. i. p. 178.

And in a more serious letter to Mr. Rose, he makes the following just observations.

"The colour of our whole life is generally such as the three or four first years, in which we are our own masters, make it. Then it is that we may be said to shape our own destiny, and to treasure up for ourselves a series of future successes or disappointments. Had I employed my time as wisely as you, in a situation very similar to yours, I had never been a poet perhaps, but I might by this time have acquired a character of more importance in society; a situation in which my friends would have been better pleased to see me. But three years misspent in an attorney's office, were almost of course followed by several more equally misspent in the Temple; and the consequence has been, as the Italian epitaph says, "*Sto qui.*"—The only use I can make of myself now, at least the best, is to serve *in terrorem* to others, when occasion may happen to offer, that they may escape (so far as my admonitions can have any weight with them) my folly and my fate."—Vol. i. pp. 333, 334.

Neither the idleness of this period, however, nor the gaiety in which it appears to have been wasted, had corrected that radical defect in his constitution, by which he was disabled from making any public display of his acquisitions; and it was the excess of this diffidence, if we rightly understand his biographer, that was the immediate cause of the unfortunate derangement that overclouded the remainder of his life. In his thirty-first year, his friends procured for him the office of reading-clerk to the House of Lords; but the idea of reading in public, was the source of such torture and apprehension to him, that he very soon resigned that place, and had interest enough to exchange it for that of clerk of the journals, which was supposed to require no personal attendance. An unlucky dispute in Parliament, however, made it necessary for him to appear in his place; and the consequences of this requisition are stated by Mr. Hayley, in the following, not very lucid, account.

"His terrors on this occasion arose to such an astonishing height, that they utterly overwhelmed his reason: for although he had endeavoured to prepare himself for his public duty, by attending closely at the office for several months, to examine the parliamentary journals, his application was rendered useless by that excess of diffidence, which made him conceive, that whatever knowledge he might previously acquire, it would all forsake him at the bar of the House. This distressing apprehension increased to such a degree, as the time for his appearance approached, that when the day so anxiously dreaded arrived, he was unable to make the experiment. The very friends, who called on him for the purpose of attending him to the House of Lords, acquiesced in the cruel necessity of relinquishing the prospect of a station so severely formidable to a frame of such singular sensibility."

"The conflict between the wishes of just affectionate ambition, and the terrors of diffidence, so entirely overwhelmed his health and faculties, that after two learned and benevolent divines (Mr. John Cowper, his brother, and the celebrated Mr. Martin Madan, his first cousin) had vainly endeavoured to establish a lasting tranquillity in his mind, by friendly and religious conversation, it was found necessary to remove him to St. Alban's, where he resided a considerable time, under the care of that eminent physician Dr. Cotton, a scholar and a poet, who added to many accomplishments a peculiar sweetness of manners, in very advanced life, when I had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with him."—Vol. i. pp. 25, 26.

In this melancholy state he continued for upwards of a year, when his mind began slowly to emerge from the depression under which it had laboured, and to seek for consolation in the study of the Scriptures, and other religious occupations. In the city of Huntingdon, to which he had been removed in his illness, he now formed an acquaintance with the family of the Reverend Mr. Unwin, with whose widow the greater part of his after life was passed. The series of letters, which Mr. Hayley has introduced in this place, are altogether of a devotional cast, and bear evident symptoms of continuing depression and anxiety. He talks a great deal of his *conversion*, of the levity and worldliness of his former life, and of the *grace* which had at last been vouchsafed to him; and seems so entirely and constantly absorbed in those awful meditations, as to consider not only the occupations of his earlier days, but all temporal business or amusement, as utterly unworthy of his attention. We do not think it necessary to make

any extract from this part of the publication; and perhaps Mr. Hayley might have spared some of the methodistical raptures and dissertations that are contained in those letters, without any injury either to the memory of his *friend*, or the reputation of his own performance.

After the death of Mr. Unwin, he retired with his widow to the village of Olney in 1768, where he continued in the same pious and sequestered habits of life till the year 1772, when a second and more protracted visitation of the same tremendous malady obscured his faculties for a melancholy period of eight years; during which he was attended by Mrs. Unwin with a constancy and tenderness of affection, which it was the great business of his after life to repay. In 1780, he began gradually to recover; and in a letter of that year to his cousin, describes himself in this manner:

"You see me sixteen years older, at the least, than when I saw you last; but the effects of time seem to have taken place rather on the outside of my head than within it. What was brown is become grey, but what was foolish remains foolish still. Green fruit must rot before it ripens, if the season is such as to afford it nothing but cold winds and dark clouds, that interrupt every ray of sunshine. My days steal away silently, and march on (as poor mad King Lear would have made his soldiers march) as if they were shod with felt! Not so silently but that I hear them; yet were it not that I am always listening to their flight, having no infirmity that I had not when I was much younger, I should deceive myself with an imagination that I am still young."—Vol. i. pp. 96, 97.

One of the first applications of his returning powers was to the taming and education of the three young hares, which he has since celebrated in his poetry: and, very soon after, the solicitations of his affectionate companion first induced him to prepare some moral pieces for publication, in the hope of giving a salutary employment to his mind. At the age of fifty, therefore, and at a distance from all the excitements that emulation and ambition usually hold out to a poet, Cowper began to write for the public, with the view of diverting his own melancholy, and doing service to the cause of morality. Whatever effect his publications had on the world, the composition of them certainly had a most beneficial one on himself. In a letter to his cousin he says,

"Dejection of spirits, which I suppose may have prevented many a man from becoming an author, made me one. I find constant employment necessary, and therefore take care to be constantly employed.—Manual occupations do not engage the mind sufficiently, as I know by experience, having tried many. But composition, especially of verse, absorbs it wholly. I write, therefore, generally three hours in a morning, and in an evening I transcribe. I read also, but less than I write."—Vol. i. p. 147.

There is another passage in which he talks of his performance in so light and easy a manner, and assumes so much of the pleasing, though antiquated language of Pope and Addison, that we cannot resist extracting it.

"My labours are principally the production of last winter; all indeed, except a few of the minor pieces. When I can find no other occupation, I think; and when I think, I am very apt to do it in rhyme. Hence it comes to pass, that the season of the year which generally pinches off the flowers of poetry, unfolds mine, such as they are, and crowns me with a winter garland. In this respect, therefore, I and my contemporary bards are by no means upon a par. They write when the delightful influence of fine weather, fine prospects, and a brisk motion of the animal spirits, make poetry almost the language of nature; and I, when icicles depend from all the leaves of the Parnassian laurel, and when a reasonable man would as little expect to succeed in verse, as to hear a blackbird whistle. This must be my apology to you for whatever want of fire and animation you may observe in what you will shortly have the perusal of. As to the public, if they like me not, there is no remedy."—Vol. i. pp. 105, 106.

The success of his first volume, which appeared in the end of the year 1781, was by no means such as to encourage him to proceed to a second; and, indeed, it seems now to be admitted by every body but Mr. Hayley, that it was not well calculated for becoming popular. Too serious for the general reader, it had too much satire, wit, and criticism, to be a favourite with the devout and enthusiastic; the principal poems were also too long and desultory, and the versification throughout was more harsh and negligent, than the public had yet been accustomed to. The book therefore was very little read, till the increasing fame of the author brought all his works into notice; and then, indeed, it was discovered, that it contained many traits of strong and original genius, and a richness of idiomatical phraseology, that has been but seldom equalled in our language.

In the end of this year, Cowper formed an accidental acquaintance with the widow of Sir Thomas Austen, which, in spite of his insuperable shyness, ripened gradually into a mutual and cordial friendship, and was the immediate source of some of his happiest hours, and most celebrated productions.—The facetious history of "John Gilpin" arose from a suggestion of that lady, in circumstances and in a way that marks the perilous and moody state of Cowper's understanding more strikingly perhaps than any general description.

"It happened one afternoon, in those years, when his accomplished friend Lady Austen made a part of his little evening circle, that she observed him sinking into increasing dejection; it was her custom, on these occasions, to try all the resources of her sprightly powers for his immediate relief. She told him the story of John Gilpin (which had been treasured in her memory from her childhood) to dissipate the gloom of the passing hour. Its effects on the fancy of Cowper had the air of enchantment. He informed her the next morning, that *convulsions of laughter*, brought on by his recollection of her story, had kept him waking during the greatest part of the night! and that he had turned it into a ballad.—So arose the pleasant poem of John Gilpin."—Vol. i. pp. 128, 129.

In the course of the year 1783, however, Lady Austen was fortunate enough to direct the poet to a work of much greater importance; and to engage him, from a very accidental circumstance, in the composition of "The Task," by far the best and the most popular of all his performances. The anecdote, which is such as the introduction of that poem has

probably suggested to most readers, is given in this manner by Mr. Hayley.

"This lady happened, as an admirer of Milton, to be partial to blank verse, and often solicited her poetical friend to try his powers in that species of composition. After repeated solicitation, he promised her, if she would furnish the subject, to comply with her request. 'Oh!' she replied, 'you can never be in want of a subject,—you can write upon any—write upon this sofa!' The poet obeyed her command; and, from the lively repartee of familiar conversation, arose a poem of many thousand verses, unexampled, perhaps, both in its origin and excellence."—Vol. i. p. 135.

This extraordinary production was finished in less than a year, and became extremely popular from the very first month of its publication. The charm of reputation, however, could not draw Cowper from his seclusion; and his solitude became still more dreary about this period, by the cessation of his intercourse with Lady Austen, with whom certain little jealousies on the part of Mrs. Unwin (which the biographer might as well have passed over in silence) obliged him to renounce any farther connection. Besides the Task and John Gilpin, he appears to have composed several smaller poems for this lady, which are published, for the first time, in the work now before us. We were particularly struck with a ballad on the unfortunate loss of the Royal George, of which the following stanzas may serve as a specimen.

"Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last seafight is fought;
His work of glory done.

"It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

"His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down,
With twice four hundred men.
Vol. i. p. 127.

The same year that saw the conclusion of "The Task," found Cowper engaged in the translation of Homer. This laborious undertaking, is said, by Mr. Hayley, to have been first suggested to him by Lady Austen also; though there is nothing in the correspondence he has published, that seems to countenance that idea. The work was pretty far advanced before he appears to have confided the secret of it to any one. In a letter to Mr. Hill, he explains his design in this manner:

"Knowing it to have been universally the opinion of the literati, ever since they have allowed themselves to consider the matter coolly, that a translation, properly so called, of Homer, is, notwithstanding what Pope has done, a desideratum in the English language, it struck me, that an attempt to supply the deficiency would be an honourable one; and having made myself, in former years, somewhat critically a master of the original, I was, by this double translation, induced to make the attempt myself. I am now translating into blank verse the last book of the Iliad, and mean to publish by subscription."—Vol. i. p. 154.

Some observations that were made by Dr. Maty and others, upon a specimen of his translation, about this time, seem to have drawn from him the following curious and unaffected delineation of his own thoughts and feelings.

"I am not ashamed to confess, that having commenced an author, I am most abundantly desirous to succeed as such. *I have (what perhaps you little suspect me of) in my nature, an infinite share of ambition.* But with it, I have at the same time, as you well know, an equal share of diffidence. To this combination of opposite qualities it has been owing, that, till lately, I stole through life without undertaking any thing, yet always wishing to distinguish myself. At last I ventured: ventured, too, in the only path that, at so late a period, was yet open to me; and I am determined, if God hath not determined otherwise, to work my way through the obscurity that hath been so long my portion, into notice."—Vol. i. p. 190.

As he advanced in his work, however, he seems to have become better pleased with the execution of it; and in the year 1790, addresses to his cousin the following candid and interesting observations: though we cannot but regret that we have not some specimens at least of what he calls the quaint and antiquated style of our earlier poets: and are not without our suspicions that we should have liked it better than that which he ultimately adopted.

"To say the truth, I have now no fears about the success of my translation, though in time past I have had many. I knew there was a style somewhere, could I but find it, in which Homer ought to be rendered, and which alone would suit him. Long time I blundered about it, ere I could attain to any decided judgment on the matter. At first I was betrayed, by a desire of accommodating my language to the simplicity of his, into much of the quaintness that belonged to our writers of the fifteenth century. In the course of many revisals, I have delivered myself from this evil, I believe, entirely: but I have done it slowly, and as a man separates himself from his mistress, when he is going to marry. I had so strong a predilection in favour of this style, at first, that I was crazed to find that others were not as much enamoured with it as myself. At every passage of that sort, which I obliterated, I groaned bitterly, and said to myself, I am spoiling my work to please those who have no taste for the simple graces of antiquity. But in measure, as I adopted a more modern phraseology, I became a convert to their opinion: and in the last revisal, which I am now making, am not sensible of having spared a single expression of the obsolete kind. I see my work so much improved by this alteration, that I am filled with wonder at my own backwardness to assent to the necessity of it; and the more, when I consider, that Milton, with whose manner I account myself intimately acquainted, is never quaint, never twangs through the nose, but is every where grand and elegant, without resorting to musty antiquity for his beauties. On the contrary, he took a long stride forward, left the language of his own day far behind him, and anticipated the expressions of a century yet to come."—Vol. i. pp. 360, 361.

The translation was finished in the year 1791, and published by subscription immediately after. Several applications were made to the University of Oxford for the honour of their subscription, but without success. Their answer was, "That they subscribed to nothing."—"It seems not a little extraordinary." says the offended poet on this occasion, "that

persons so nobly patronised themselves on the score of literature, should resolve to give no encouragement to it in return." We think so too.

The period that elapsed from the publication of his first volume in 1781, to that of his Homer in 1791, seems to have been by far the happiest and most brilliant part of Cowper's existence. It was not only animated by the vigorous and successful exertions in which he was engaged, but enlivened, in a very pleasing manner, by the correspondence and society of his cousin, Lady Hesketh, who renewed, about this time, an intimacy that seems to have endeared the earlier days of their childhood. In his letters to this lady, we have found the most interesting traits of his simple and affectionate character, combined with an innocent playfulness, and vivacity, that charms the more, when contrasted with the gloom and horror to which it succeeded, and by which it was unfortunately replaced. Our limits will not allow us to make many extracts from this part of the publication. We insert, however, the following delightful letter, in answer to one from Lady Hesketh, promising to pay him a visit during the summer.

"I shall see you again!—I shall hear your voice—we shall take walks together: I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks, every thing that I have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days not very far distant, and feel a part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn; mention it not for your life. We have never had so many visitors, but we could easily accommodate them all, though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us; and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with mats, and spread the floor with mats, and there you shall sit with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jesmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention, the country will not be in complete beauty. And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. *Imprimis*, As soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges puss at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author. It was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made; but a merciless servant having scrubbed it until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour into which I shall conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin (unless we should meet her before),—and where we will be as happy as the day is long! Order yourself, my cousin, to the Swan at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

"My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns: and have asked him whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be any thing better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too."—Vol. i. pp. 161—163.

The following is very much in the same style.

"This house, accordingly, since it has been occupied by us and our *Meubles*, is as much superior to what it was when you saw it as you can imagine. The parlour is even elegant. When I say that the parlour is elegant, I do not mean to insinuate that the study is not so. It is neat, warm, and silent, and a much better study than I deserve, if I do not produce in it an incomparable translation of Homer. I think every day of those lines of Milton, and congratulate myself on having obtained, before I am quite superannuated, what he seems not to have hoped for sooner.

'And may at length my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage.'

For if it is not a hermitage, at least it is a much better thing; and you must always understand, my dear, that when poets talk of cottages, hermitages, and such like things, they mean a house with six sashes in front, two comfortable parlours, a smart staircase, and three bedchambers of convenient dimensions; in short, exactly such a house as this."—Vol. i. pp. 227, 228.

In another letter, in a graver humour, he says—

"I am almost the only person at Weston, known to you, who have enjoyed tolerable health this winter. In your next letter give us some account of your own state of health, for I have had my anxieties about you. The winter has been mild; but our winters are in general such, that, when a friend leaves us in the beginning of that season, I always feel in my heart a *perhaps*, importing that we have possibly met for the last time, and that the robins may whistle on the grave of one of us before the return of summer.

"Many thanks for the cuckow, which arrived perfectly safe, and goes well, to the amusement and amazement of all who hear it. Hannah lies awake to hear it; and I am not sure that we have not others in the house that admire his music as much as she."—Vol. i. p. 331.

In the following passage, we have all the calmness of a sequestered and good-natured man, and we doubt whether there was another educated and reflecting individual to be found in the kingdom, who could think and speak so dispassionately of the events which were passing in 1792.

"The French, who, like all lively folks, are extreme in every thing, are such in their zeal for freedom; and if it were possible to make so noble a cause ridiculous, their manner of promoting it could not fail to do so. Princes and peers reduced to plain gentlemanship, and gentles reduced to a level with their own lackeys, are excesses of which they will repent hereafter. Difference of rank and subordination are, I believe, of God's appointment, and, consequently, essential to the well-being of society: but what we mean by fanaticism in religion, is exactly that which animates their politics; and, unless time should sober them, they will, after all, be an unhappy people. Perhaps it deserves not much to be wondered at, that at their first escape from tyrannic shackles, they should act extravagantly, and treat their kings as they have sometimes treated their idols. To these, however, they are reconciled in due time again; but their respect for monarchy is at an end. They want nothing now but a little English sobriety, and that they want extremely. I heartily wish them some wit in their anger; for it were great pity that so many millions should be miserable for want of it."—Vol. i. p. 379.

Homer was scarcely finished, when a proposal was made to the indefatigable translator, to engage in a magnificent edition of Milton, for which he was to furnish a version of his Latin and Italian poetry, and a critical commentary upon his whole works. Mr. Hayley had, at this time, undertaken to write a life of Milton: and some groundless reports, as to an intended rivalry between him and Cowper, led to a friendly explanation, and to a very cordial and affectionate intimacy. In the year 1792, Mr. Hayley paid a visit to his newly acquired friend at Weston; and happened to be providentially present with him when the agony which he experienced from the sight of a paralytic attack upon Mrs. Unwin, had very nearly affected his understanding. The anxious attention of his friend, and the gradual recovery of the unfortunate patient, prevented any very calamitous effect from this unhappy occurrence: But his spirits appear never to have recovered the shock; and the solicitude and apprehension which he constantly felt for his long tried and affectionate companion, suspended his literary exertions, aggravated the depression to which he had always been occasionally liable, and rendered the remainder of his life a very precarious struggle against that overwhelming malady by which it was at last obscured. In the end of summer, he returned Mr. Hayley's visit at Eartham; but came back again to Weston, with spirits as much depressed and forebodings as gloomy as ever. His constant and tender attention to Mrs Unwin, was one cause of his neglect of every thing else. "I cannot sit," he says in one of his letters, "with my pen in my hand, and my books before me, while she is, in effect, in solitude—silent, and looking in the fire." A still more powerful cause was, the constant and oppressive dejection of spirits that now began again to overwhelm him. "It is in vain," he says, "that I have made several attempts to write since I came from Sussex. Unless more comfortable days arrive, than I have now the confidence to look for, there is an end of all writing with me! I have no spirits. When Rose came, I was obliged to prepare for his coming, by a nightly dose of laudanum."

In the course of the year 1793, he seems to have done little but revise his translation of Homer, of which he meditated an improved edition. Mr. Hayley came to see him a second time at Weston, in the month of November; and gives this affecting and prophetic account of his situation—

"He possessed completely at this period all the admirable faculties of his mind, and all the native tenderness of his heart; but there was something indescribable in his appearance, which led me to apprehend, that, without some signal event in his favour, to re-animate his spirits, they would gradually sink into hopeless dejection. The state of his aged infirm companion, afforded additional ground for increasing solicitude. Her cheerful and beneficent spirit could hardly resist her own accumulated maladies, so far as to preserve ability sufficient to watch over the tender health of him whom she had watched and guarded so long. Imbecility of body and mind must gradually render this tender and heroic woman unfit for the charge which she had so laudably sustained. The signs of such imbecility were beginning to be painfully visible; nor can nature present a spectacle more truly pitiable, than imbecility in such a shape, eagerly grasping for dominion, which it knows not either how to retain, or how to relinquish."—Vol. ii. pp. 161, 162.

From a part of these evils, however, the poet was relieved, by the generous compassion of Lady Hesketh, who nobly took upon herself the task of superintending this melancholy household. We will not withhold from our readers the encomium she has so well earned from the biographer.

"Those only, who have lived with the superannuated and melancholy, can properly appreciate the value of such magnanimous friendship; or perfectly apprehend, what personal sufferings it must cost the mortal who exerts it, if that mortal has received from nature a frame of compassionate sensibility. The lady, to whom I allude, has felt but too severely, in her own health, the heavy tax that mortality is forced to pay for a resolute perseverance in such painful duty."—Vol. ii. p. 177.

It was impossible, however, for any care or attention to arrest the progress of that dreadful depression, by which the faculties of this excellent man were destined to be extinguished. In the beginning of the year 1794, he became utterly incapable of any sort of exertion, and ceased to receive pleasure from the company or conversation of his friends. Neither a visit from Mr. Hayley, nor his Majesty's order for a pension 300*l.* a-year, was able to rouse him from that languid and melancholy state into which he had gradually been sinking; and, at length, it was thought necessary to remove him from the village of Weston to Tuddenham in Norfolk, where he could be under the immediate superintendence of his kinsman, the Reverend Mr. Johnson. After a long cessation of all correspondence, he addressed the following very moving lines to the clergyman of the favourite village, to which he was no more to return:

"I will forget, for a moment, that to whomsoever I may address myself, a letter from me can no otherwise be welcome, than as a curiosity. To you, sir, I address this, urged by extreme penury of employment, and the desire I feel to learn something of what is doing, and has been done, at Weston (my beloved Weston!) since I left it? No situation, at least when the weather is clear and bright, can be pleasanter than what we have here; which you will easily credit, when I add, that it imparts something a little resembling pleasure even to me.—Gratify me with news of Weston!—If Mr. Gregson and the Courtney's are there, mention me to them in such terms as you see good. Tell me if my poor birds are living! I never see the herbs I used to give them, without a recollection of them, and sometimes am ready to gather them, forgetting that I am not at home.—Pardon this intrusion."

In summer 1796, there were some faint glimmerings of returning vigour, and he again applied himself, for some time, to the revisal of his translation of Homer. In December, Mrs. Unwin died; and such was the severe depression under which her companion then laboured, that he seems to have suffered but little on the occasion. He never afterwards mentioned her name! At intervals, in the summer, he continued to work at the revisal of his Homer, which he at length finished in 1799; and afterwards translated some of

Gay's Fables into Latin verse, and made English translations of several Greek and Latin Epigrams. This languid exercise of his once-vigorous powers was continued till the month of January 1800, when symptoms of dropsy became visible in his person, and soon assumed a very formidable appearance. After a very rapid but gradual decline, which did not seem to affect the general state of his spirits, he expired, without struggle or agitation, on the 25th of April, 1800.

Of the volumes now before us, we have little more to say. The biography of Cowper naturally terminates with this account of his death; and the posthumous works that are now given to the public, require very few observations. They consist chiefly of short and occasional poems, that do not seem to have been very carefully finished, and will not add much to the reputation of their author. The longest is a sort of ode upon Friendship, in which the language seems to be studiously plain and familiar, and to which Mr. Hayley certainly has not given the highest poetical praise, by saying that it "contains the essence of every thing that has been said on the subject, by the best writers of different countries." Some of the occasional songs and sonnets are good; and the translations from the *anthologia*, which were the employment of his last melancholy days, have a remarkable closeness and facility of expression. There are two or three little poetical pieces, written by him in the careless days of his youth, while he resided in the Temple, that are, upon the whole, extremely poor and unpromising. It is almost inconceivable, that the author of The Task should ever have been guilty of such verses as the following:

"'Tis not with either of these views,
That I presume to address the Muse;
But to divert a fierce banditti,
(Sworn foes to every thing that's witty!)
That, with a black infernal train,
Make cruel inroads in my brain,
And daily threaten to drive thence
My little garrison of sense:
The fierce banditti which I mean,
Are gloomy thoughts, led on by spleen.
Then there's another reason yet,
Which is, that I may fairly quit
The debt which justly became due
The moment when I heard from you:
And you might grumble, crony mine,
If paid in any other coin."—Vol. i. p. 15.

It is remarkable, however, that his prose was at this time uncommonly easy and elegant. Mr. Hayley has preserved three numbers of the Connoisseur, which were written by him in 1796, and which exhibit a great deal of that point and politeness, which has been aimed at by the best of our periodical essayists since the days of Addison.

The personal character of Cowper is easily estimated, from the writings he has left, and the anecdotes contained in this publication. He seems to have been chiefly remarkable for a certain feminine gentleness, and delicacy of nature, that shrunk back from all that was boisterous, presumptuous, or rude His secluded life, and awful impressions of religion, concurred in fixing upon his manners, something of a saintly purity and decorum, and in cherishing that pensive and contemplative turn of mind, by which he was so much distinguished. His temper appears to have been yielding and benevolent; and though sufficiently steady and confident in the opinions he had adopted, he was very little inclined, in general, to force them upon the conviction of others. The warmth of his religious zeal made an occasional exception: but the habitual temper of his mind was toleration and indulgence; and it would be difficult, perhaps, to name a satirical and popular author so entirely free from jealousy and fastidiousness, or so much disposed to make the most liberal and impartial estimate of the merit of others, in literature, in politics, and in the virtues and accomplishments of social life. No angry or uneasy passions, indeed, seem at any time to have found a place in his bosom; and, being incapable of malevolence himself, he probably passed through life, without having once excited that feeling in the breast of another.

As the whole of Cowper's works are now before the public, and as death has finally closed the account of his defects and excellencies, the public voice may soon be expected to proclaim the balance; and to pronounce that impartial and irrevocable sentence which is to assign him his just rank and station in the poetical commonwealth, and to ascertain the value and extent of his future reputation. As the success of his works has, in a great measure, anticipated this sentence, it is the less presumptuous in us to offer our opinion of them.

The great merit of this writer appears to us to consist in the boldness and originality of his composition, and in the fortunate audacity with which he has carried the dominion of poetry into regions that had been considered as inaccessible to her ambition. The gradual refinement of taste had, for nearly a century, been weakening the force of original genius. Our poets had become timid and fastidious, and circumscribed themselves both in the choice and the management of their subjects, by the observance of a limited number of models, who were thought to have exhausted all the legitimate resources of the art. Cowper was one of the first who crossed this enchanted circle; who reclaimed the natural liberty of invention, and walked abroad in the open field of observation as freely as those by whom it was originally trodden. He passed from the imitation of poets, to the imitation of nature, and ventured boldly upon the representation of objects that had not been sanctified by the description of any of his predecessors. In the ordinary occupations and duties of domestic life, and the consequences of modern manners, in the common scenery of a rustic situation, and the obvious contemplation of our public institutions, he has found a multitude of subjects for ridicule and reflection, for pathetic and picturesque description, for moral declamation, and devotional rapture, that would have been looked upon with disdain, or with despair, by most of our poetical adventurers. He took as wide a

range in language too, as in matter; and, shaking off the tawdry incumbrance of that poetical diction which had nearly reduced the art to the skilful collocation of a set of conventional phrases, he made no scruple to set down in verse every expression that would have been admitted in prose, and to take advantage of all the varieties with which our language could supply him.

But while, by the use of this double licence, he extended the sphere of poetical composition, and communicated a singular character of freedom, force, and originality to his own performances, it must not be dissembled, that the presumption which belongs to most innovators, has betrayed him into many defects. In disdaining to follow the footsteps of others, he has frequently mistaken the way, and has been exasperated, by their blunders, to rush into opposite extremes. In his contempt for their scrupulous selection of topics, he has introduced some that are unquestionably low and uninteresting; and in his zeal to strip off the tinsel and embroidery of their language, he has sometimes torn it (like Jack's coat in the Tale of a Tub) into terrible rents and beggarly tatters. He is a great master of English, and evidently values himself upon his skill and facility in the application of its rich and diversified idioms: but he has indulged himself in this exercise a little too fondly, and has degraded some grave and animated passages by the unlucky introduction of expressions unquestionably too colloquial and familiar. His impatience of control, and his desire to have a great scope and variety in his compositions, have led him not only to disregard all order and method so entirely in their construction, as to have made each of his larger poems professedly a complete miscellany, but also to introduce into them a number of subjects, that prove not to be very susceptible of poetical discussion. There are specimens of argument, and dialogue, and declamation, in his works, that partake very little of the poetical character, and make rather an awkward appearance in a metrical production, though they might have had a lively and brilliant effect in an essay or a sermon. The structure of his sentences, in like manner, has frequently much more of the copiousness and looseness of oratory, than the brilliant compactness of poetry; and he heaps up phrases and circumstances upon each other, with a profusion that is frequently dazzling, but which reminds us as often of the exuberance of a practised speaker, as of the holy inspiration of a poet.

Mr. Hayley has pronounced a warm eulogium on the satirical talents of his friend: but it does not appear to us, either that this was the style in which he was qualified to excel, or that he has made a judicious selection of subjects on which to exercise it.—There is something too keen and vehement in his invective, and an excess of austerity in his doctrines, that is not atoned for by the truth or the beauty of his descriptions. Foppery and affectation are not such hateful and gigantic vices, as to deserve all the anathemas that are bestowed upon them; nor can we believe that soldiership, or Sunday music, have produced all the terrible effects which he ascribes to them: There is something very undignified, too, to say no worse of them, in the protracted parodies and mock-heroic passages with which he seeks to enliven some of his gravest productions. The *Sofa* (for instance, in the *Task*) is but a feeble imitation of "The Splendid Shilling; the *Monitor* is a copy of something still lower; and the tedious directions for *raising cucumbers*, which begin with calling a hotbed "a *stercorarious* heap," seem to have been intended as a counterpart to the tragedy of Tom Thumb. All his serious pieces contain some fine devotional passages: but they are not without a taint of that enthusiastic intolerance which religious zeal seems but too often to produce.

It is impossible to say any thing of the defects of Cowper's writings, without taking notice of the occasional harshness and inelegance of his versification. From his correspondence, however, it appears that this was not with him the effect of negligence merely, but that he really imagined that a rough and incorrect line now and then had a very agreeable effect in a composition of any length. This prejudice, we believe, is as old as Cowley among English writers; but we do not know that it has of late received the sanction of any one poet of eminence. In truth, it does not appear to us to be at all capable of defence. The very essence of versification is uniformity; and while any thing like versification is preserved, it must be evident that uniformity continues to be aimed at. What pleasure is to be derived from an occasional failure in this aim, we cannot exactly understand. It must afford the same gratification, we should imagine, to have one of the buttons on a coat a little larger than the rest, or one or two of the pillars in a colonnade a little out of the perpendicular. If variety is wanted, let it be variety of excellence, and not a relief of imperfection: let the writer alter the measure of his piece, if he thinks its uniformity disagreeable; or let him interchange it every now and then, if he thinks proper, with passages of plain and professed prose; but do not let him torture an intractable scrap of prose into the appearance of verse, nor slip in an illegitimate line or two among the genuine currency of his poem.

There is another view of the matter, no doubt, that has a little more reason in it. A smooth and harmonious verse is not so easily written, as a harsh and clumsy one; and, in order to make it smooth and elegant, the strength and force of the expression must often be sacrificed. This seems to have been Cowper's view of the subject, at least in one passage. "Give me," says he, in a letter to his publisher, "a manly rough line, with a deal of meaning in it, rather than a whole poem full of musical periods, that have nothing but their smoothness to recommend them." It is obvious, however, that this is not a defence of harsh versification, but a confession of inability to write smoothly. Why should

not harmony and meaning go together? It is difficult, to be sure; and so it is, to make meaning and verse of any kind go together: But it is the business of a poet to overcome these difficulties, and if he do not overcome them both, he is plainly deficient in an accomplishment that others have attained. To those who find it impossible to pay due attention both to the sound and the sense, we would not only address the preceding exhortation of Cowper, but should have no scruple to exclaim, "Give us a sentence of plain prose, full of spirit and meaning, rather than a poem of any kind that has nothing but its versification to recommend it."

Though it be impossible, therefore, to read the productions of Cowper, without being delighted with his force, his originality, and his variety; and although the enchantment of his moral enthusiasm frequently carries us insensibly through all the mazes of his digressions, it is equally true, that we can scarcely read a single page with attention, without being offended at some coarseness or lowness of expression, or disappointed by some "most lame and impotent conclusion." The dignity of his rhetorical periods is often violated by the intrusion of some vulgar and colloquial idiom, and the full and transparent stream of his diction broken upon some obstreperous verse, or lost in the dull stagnation of a piece of absolute prose. The effect of his ridicule is sometimes impaired by the acrimony with which it is attended; and the exquisite beauty of his moral painting and religious views, is injured in a still greater degree by the darkness of the shades which his enthusiasm and austerity have occasionally thrown upon the canvas. With all these defects, however, Cowper will probably very long retain his popularity with the readers of English poetry. The great variety and truth of his descriptions; the minute and correct painting of those home scenes, and private feelings with which every one is internally familiar; the sterling weight and sense of most of his observations, and, above all, the great appearance of facility with which every thing is executed, and the happy use he has so often made of the most common and ordinary language; all concur to stamp upon his poems the character of original genius, and remind us of the merits that have secured immortality to Shakespeare.

After having said so much upon the original writings of Cowper, we cannot take our leave of him without adding a few words upon the merits of the translation with which we have found him engaged for so considerable a portion of his life. The views with which it was undertaken have already been very fully explained in the extracts we have given from his correspondence; and it is impossible to deny, that his chief object has been attained in a very considerable degree. That the translation is a great deal more close and literal than any that had previously been attempted in English verse, probably will not be disputed by those who are the least disposed to admire it; that the style into which it is translated, is a true English style, though not perhaps a very elegant or poetical one, may also be assumed; but we are not sure that a rigid and candid criticism will go farther in its commendation. The language is often very tame, and even vulgar; and there is by far too great a profusion of antiquated and colloquial forms of expression. In the dialogue part, the idiomatical and familiar turn of the language has often an animated and happy effect; but in orations of dignity, this dramatical licence is frequently abused, and the translation approaches to a parody. In the course of one page, we observe that Nestor undertakes "to entreat Achilles *to a calm*." Agamemnon calls him, "this wrangler here." And the godlike Achilles himself complains of being treated "like a *fellow* of no worth."

"Ye critics say,
How poor to this was Homer's style!"

In translating a poetical writer, there are two kinds of fidelity to be aimed at. Fidelity to the *matter*, and fidelity to the *manner* of the original. The best translation would be that, certainly, which preserved both. But, as this is generally impracticable, some concessions must be made upon both sides; and the largest upon that which will be least regretted by the common readers of the translation. Now, though antiquaries and moral philosophers, may take great delight in contemplating the state of manners, opinions, and civilization, that prevailed in the age of Homer, and be offended, of course, at any disguise or modern embellishment that may be thrown over his representations, still, this will be but a secondary consideration with most readers of poetry; and if the smoothness of the verse, the perspicuity of the expression, or the vigour of the sentiment, must be sacrificed to the observance of this rigid fidelity, they will generally be of opinion, that it ought rather to have been sacrificed to them; and that the *poetical beauty* of the original was better worth preserving than the literal import of the expressions. The splendour and magnificence of the Homeric diction and versification is altogether as essential a part of his composition, as the sense and the meaning which they convey. His poetical reputation depends quite as much on the one as on the other; and a translator must give but a very imperfect and unfaithful copy of his original, if he leave out half of those qualities in which the excellence of the original consisted. It is an indispensable part of his duty, therefore, to imitate the harmony and elevation of his author's language, as well as to express his meaning; and he is equally unjust and unfaithful to his original, in passing over the beauties of his diction, as in omitting or disguising his sentiments. In Cowper's elaborate version, there are certainly some striking and vigorous passages, and the closeness of the translation continually recals the original to the memory of a classical reader; but he will look in vain for the melodious and elevated language of Homer in the unpolished verses and colloquial phraseology of his translator.

(July, 1804.)

The Life and Posthumous Writings of William Cowper, Esq. *With an Introductory Letter to the Right Honourable Earl Cowper.* By William Hayley, Esq. Vol. III. 4to. pp. 416. Johnson, London: 1804.

This is the continuation of a work of which we recently submitted a very ample account and a very full character to our readers: On that occasion, we took the liberty of observing, that two quarto volumes seemed to be almost as much as the biography of a secluded scholar was entitled to occupy; and, with a little judicious compression, we are still of opinion that the life and correspondence of Cowper might be advantageously included in somewhat narrower limits. We are by no means disposed, however, to quarrel with this *third* volume, which is more interesting, if possible, than either of the two former, and will be read, we have no doubt, with general admiration and delight.

Though it still bears the title of the life of Cowper, this volume contains no further particulars of his history; but is entirely made up of a collection of his letters, introduced by a long, rambling dissertation on letter-writing in general, from the pen of his biographer. This prologue, we think, possesses no peculiar merit. The writer has no vigour, and very little vivacity; his mind seems to be cultivated, but not at all fertile; and, while he always keeps at a safe distance from extravagance or absurdity, he does not seem to be uniformly capable of distinguishing affectation from elegance, or dulness from good judgment. This discourse upon letter-writing, in short, contains nothing that might not have been omitted with considerable advantage to the publication; and we are rather inclined to think, that those who are ambitious of being introduced to the presence of Cowper, will do well not to linger very long in the antichamber with Mr. Hayley.

Of the letters themselves, we may safely assert, that we have rarely met with any similar collection, of superior interest or beauty. Though the incidents to which they relate be of no public magnitude or moment, and the remarks which they contain are not uniformly profound or original, yet there is something in the sweetness and facility of the diction, and more, perhaps, in the glimpses they afford of a pure and benevolent mind, that diffuses a charm over the whole collection, and communicates an interest that is not often commanded by performances of greater dignity and pretension. This interest was promoted and assisted, no doubt, in a considerable degree, by that curiosity which always seeks to penetrate into the privacy of celebrated men, and which had been almost entirely frustrated in the instance of Cowper, till the appearance of this publication. Though his writings had long been extremely popular, the author himself was scarcely known to the public; and having lived in a state of entire seclusion from the world, there were no anecdotes of his conversation, his habits or opinions, in circulation among his admirers. The publication of his correspondence has in a great measure supplied this deficiency; and we now know almost as much of Cowper as we do of those authors who have spent their days in the centre and glare of literary or fashionable notoriety. These letters, however, will continue to be read, long after the curiosity is gratified to which perhaps they owed their first celebrity: for the character with which they make us acquainted, will always attract by its rarity, and engage by its elegance. The feminine delicacy and purity of Cowper's manners and disposition, the romantic and unbroken retirement in which his innocent life was passed, and the singular gentleness and modesty of his whole character, disarm him of those terrors that so often shed an atmosphere of repulsion around the persons of celebrated writers, and make us more indulgent to his weaknesses, and more delighted with his excellences, than if he had been the centre of a circle of wits, or the oracle of a literary confederacy. The interest of this picture is still further heightened by the recollection of that tremendous malady, to the visitations of which he was subject, and by the spectacle of that perpetual conflict which was maintained, through the greater part of his life, between the depression of those constitutional horrors, and the gaiety that resulted from a playful imagination, and a heart animated by the mildest affections.

In the letters now before us, Cowper displays a great deal of all those peculiarities by which his character was adorned or distinguished; he is frequently the subject of his own observations, and often delineates the finer features of his understanding with all the industry and impartiality of a stranger. But the most interesting traits are those which are unintentionally discovered, and which the reader collects from expressions that were employed for very different purposes. Among the most obvious, perhaps, as well as the most important of these, is that extraordinary combination of shyness and ambition, to which we are probably indebted for the very existence of his poetry. Being disqualified, by the former, from vindicating his proper place in the ordinary scenes either of business or of society, he was excited, by the latter, to attempt the only other avenue to reputation that appeared to be open, and to assert the real dignity of the talents with which he felt that he was gifted. If he could only have mustered courage enough to read the journals of

the House of Lords, or been able to get over the diffidence which fettered his utterance in general society, his genius would probably have evaporated in conversation, or been contented with the humbler glory of contributing to the Rolliad or the Connoisseur.

As the present collection relates to no particular set of subjects or occurrences, but exhibits a view of the author's miscellaneous correspondence with the few intimate friends he had retained, it is impossible to give any abstract of its contents, or to observe any order in the extracts that may be made from it. We shall endeavour, however, to introduce as great a variety as possible.

Though living altogether in retirement, Cowper appears to have retained a very nice perception of the proprieties of conduct and manners, and to have exercised a great deal of acuteness and sagacity upon the few subjects of practical importance which he had occasion to consider. The following sketch is by a fine and masterly hand; and proves how much a bashful recluse may excel a gentleman from the grand tour in delicacy of observation and just notions of politeness.

"Since I wrote last, we had a visit from ——. I did not feel myself vehemently disposed to receive him with that complaisance, from which a stranger generally infers that he is welcome. By his manner, which was rather bold than easy, I judged that there was no occasion for it; and that it was a trifle which, if he did not meet with, neither would he feel the want of. He has the air of a travelled man, but not of a travelled gentleman; is quite delivered from that reserve, which is so common an ingredient in the English character, yet does not open himself gently and gradually, as men of polite behaviour do, but bursts upon you all at once. He talks very loud; and when our poor little robins hear a great noise, they are immediately seized with an ambition to surpass it—the increase of their vociferation occasioned an increase of his; and his, in return, acted as a stimulus upon theirs—neither side entertained a thought of giving up the contest, which became continually more interesting to our ears during the whole visit. The birds, however, survived it,—and so did we. They perhaps flatter themselves they gained a complete victory, but I believe Mr. —— would have killed them both in another hour."—pp. 17, 18.

Cowper's antipathy to public schools is well known to all the readers of his poetry. There are many excellent remarks on that subject in these letters. We can only find room for the following.

"A public education is often recommended as the most effectual remedy for that bashful and awkward restraint, so epidemical among the youth of our country. But I verily believe, that, instead of being a cure, it is often the cause of it. For seven or eight years of his life, the boy has hardly seen or conversed with a man, or a woman, except the maids at his boarding house. A gentleman or a lady, are consequently such novelties to him, that he is perfectly at a loss to know what sort of behaviour he should preserve before them. He plays with his buttons, or the strings of his hat, he blows his nose, and hangs down his head, is conscious of his own deficiency to a degree that makes him quite unhappy, and trembles lest any one should speak to him, because that would quite overwhelm him. Is not all this miserable shyness the effect of his education? To me it appears to be so. If he saw good company every day, he would never be terrified at the sight of it, and a room full of ladies and gentlemen, would alarm him no more than the chairs they sit on. Such is the effect of custom."—p. 60.

There is much acuteness in the following examination of Dr. Paley's argument in favour of the English hierarchy.

"He says first, that the appointment of various orders in the church, is attended with this good consequence, that each class of people is supplied with a clergy of their own level and description, with whom they may live and associate on terms of equality. But in order to effect this good purpose, there ought to be at least three parsons in every parish; one for the gentry, one for the traders and mechanics, and one for the lowest of the vulgar. Neither is it easy to find many parishes, where the laity at large have any society with their minister at all: this therefore is fanciful, and a mere invention. In the next place, he says it gives a dignity to the ministry itself; and the clergy share in the respect paid to their superiors. Much good may such participation do them! They themselves know how little it amounts to. The dignity a curate derives from the lawn sleeves and square cap of his diocesan, will never endanger his humility. Again—'Rich and splendid situations in the church, have been justly regarded as prizes, held out to invite persons of good hopes and ingenious attainments.' Agreed. But the prize held out in the Scripture, is of a very different kind; and our ecclesiastical baits are too often snapped by the worthless, and persons of no attainments at all. They are indeed incentives to avarice and ambition, but not to those acquirements, by which only the ministerial function can be adorned, zeal for the salvation of men, humility, and self-denial. Mr. Paley and I therefore cannot agree."—pp. 172, 173.

One of the most remarkable things in this volume, is the great profusion of witty and humorous passages which it contains; though they are usually so short, and stand so much connected with more indifferent matter, that it is not easy to give any tolerable notion of them by an extract. His style of narrative is particularly gay and pleasing, though the incidents are generally too trifling to bear a separation from the whole tissue of the correspondence. We venture on the following account of an election visit.

"As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard-side, where in general we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidently deposited in some hollow beyond the water-mark, by the usual dashing of the waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion, in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when, to our unspeakable surprise, a mob appeared before the window, a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr. G——. Puss* was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach.

"Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at the window than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour were filled. Mr. G——, advancing toward me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he, and as many

* His tame hare.

as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less no doubt because Mr. G——, addressing himself to me at that moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any, I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. G—— squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen; and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he had a third also, which he wore suspended by a riband from his button-hole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, puss scampered; the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly, that I had not that influence for which he sued, and for which, had I been possessed of it, with my present views of the dispute between the Crown and the Commons, I must have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disobliging somebody."—pp. 242—244.

Melancholy and dejected men often amuse themselves with pursuits that seem to indicate the greatest levity. Swift wrote all sorts of doggrel and absurdity while tormented with spleen, giddiness, and misanthropy. Cowper composed John Gilpin during a season of most deplorable depression, and probably indited the rhyming letter which appears in this collection, in a moment equally gloomy. For the amusement of our readers, we annex the concluding paragraph, containing a simile, of which we think they must immediately feel the propriety.

"I have heard before of a room, with a floor laid upon springs, and such like things, with so much art, in every part, that when you went in, you was forced to begin a minuet pace, with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in and now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing; and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you dance, and as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay, till you come to an end of what I have penn'd; which that you may do, ere madam and you, are quite worn out, with jiggling about, I take my leave; and here you receive a bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me—W. C."—p. 89.

As a contrast to this ridiculous effusion, we add the following brief statement, which, notwithstanding its humble simplicity, appears to us to be an example of the true pathetic.

"You never said a better thing in your life, than when you assured Mr.—— of the expedience of a gift of bedding to the poor of Olney. There is no one article of this world's comforts with which, as Falstaff says, they are so heinously unprovided. When a poor woman, whom we know well, carried home two pair of blankets, a pair for herself and husband, and a pair for her six children, as soon as the children saw them, they jumped out of their straw, caught them in their arms, kissed them, blessed them and danced for joy. Another old woman, a very old one, the first night that she found herself so comfortably covered, could not sleep a wink, being kept awake by the contrary emotions, of transport on the one hand, and the fear of not being thankful enough on the other."
pp. 347 348.

The correspondence of a poet may be expected to abound in poetical imagery and sentiments. They do not form the most prominent parts of this collection, but they occur in sufficient profusion; and we have been agreeably surprised to find in these letters the germs of many of the finest passages in the "Task." There is all the ardour of poetry and devotion in the following passages.

"Oh! I could spend whole days, and moon-light nights, in feeding upon a lovely prospect! My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour, as I have done for many years, there might perhaps be many miserable men among them, but not an unawakened one could be found, from the arctic to the antarctic circle. At present, the difference between them and me is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so; for, rested in, and viewed without a reference to their Author, what is the earth, what are the planets, what is the sun itself, but a bauble? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, 'The Maker of all these wonders is my friend!' Their eyes have never been opened, to see that they are trifles; mine have been, and will be, till they are closed for ever. They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hot-house rich as a West Indian garden, things of consequence; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with ten times more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains will ever be worth a farthing; amuse myself with a greenhouse, which Lord Bute's gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with; and when I have paid it the accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself—This is not mine, 'tis a plaything lent me for the present, I must leave it soon."—pp. 19, 20.

"We keep no bees; but if I lived in a hive, I should hardly hear more of their music. All the bees in the neighbourhood resort to a bed of mignonette, opposite to the window, and pay me for the honey they get out of it, by a hum, which, though rather monotonous, is as agreeable to my ear, as the whistling of my linnets. All the sounds that nature utters are delightful, at least in this country. I should not perhaps find the roaring of lions in Africa, or of bears in Russia, very pleasing; but I know no beast in England whose voice I do not account musical, save and except always the braying of an ass. The notes of all our birds and fowls please me, without one exception. I should not indeed think of keeping a goose in a cage, that I might hang him up in the parlour, for the sake of his melody; but a goose upon a common, or in a farm yard, is no bad performer. And as to insects, if the black beetle, and beetles indeed of all hues, will keep out of my way, I have no objection to any of the rest; on the contrary, in whatever key they sing, from the knat's fine treble to the bass of the humble bee, I admire them all. Seriously, however, it strikes me as a very observable instance of providential kindness to man, that such an exact accord has been contrived between his ear and the sounds with which, at least in a rural situation, it is almost every moment visited. All the world is sensible of the uncomfortable effect that certain sounds have upon the nerves, and consequently upon the spirits; and if a sinful world had been filled with such as would have curdled the blood, and have made the sense of hearing a perpetual in-

convenience, I do not know that we should have had a right to complain.—*There is somewhere* in infinite space, a world that does not roll within the precincts of mercy; and as it is reasonable, and even scriptural, to suppose that there is music in heaven, in those dismal regions perhaps the reverse of it is found. Tones so dismal, as to make woe itself more insupportable, and to acuminate even despair. But my paper admonishes me in good time to draw the reins, and to check the descent of my fancy into deeps with which she is but too familiar.

pp. 287—289.

The following short sketches, though not marked with so much enthusiasm, are conceived with the same vigour and distinctness.

"When we look back upon our forefathers, we seem to look back upon the people of another nation, almost upon creatures of another species. Their vast rambling mansions, spacious halls, and painted casements, their Gothic porches smothered with honeysuckles, their little gardens and high walls, their box-edgings, balls of holly, and yew-tree statues, are become so entirely unfashionable now, that we can hardly believe it possible that a people who resembled us so little in their taste, should resemble us in any thing else. But in every thing else, I suppose, they were our counterparts exactly; and time, that has sewed up the slashed sleeve, and reduced the large trunk-hose to a neat pair of silk stockings, has left human nature just where it found it. The inside of the man, at least, has undergone no change. His passions, appetites, and aims are just what they ever were. They wear perhaps a handsomer disguise than they did in days of yore; for philosophy and literature will have their effect upon the exterior; but in every other respect a modern is only an ancient in a different dress."

p. 48.

"I am much obliged to you for the voyages, which I received, and began to read last night. My imagination is so captivated upon these occasions, that I seem to partake with the navigators in all the dangers they encountered. I lose my anchor; my main-sail is rent into shreds; I kill a shark, and by signs converse with a Patagonian,—and all this without moving from the fire-side. The principal fruits of these circuits that have been made around the globe, seem likely to be the amusement of those that staid at home. Discoveries have been made, but such discoveries as will hardly satisfy the expense of such undertakings. We brought away an Indian, and, having debauched him, we sent him home again to communicate the infection to his country—fine sports to be sure, but such as will not defray the cost. Nations that live upon bread-fruit, and have no mines to make them worthy of our acquaintance, will be but little visited for the future. So much the better for them; their poverty is indeed their mercy."—pp. 201, 202.

Cowper's religious impressions occupied too great a portion of his thoughts, and exercised too great an influence on his character, not to make a prominent figure in his correspondence. They form the subject of many eloquent and glowing passages; and have sometimes suggested sentiments and expressions that cannot be perused without compassion and regret. The following passage, however, is liberal and important.

"No man was ever scolded out of his sins. The heart, corrupt as it is, and because it is so, grows angry if it be not treated with some management and good manners, and scolds again. A surly mastiff will bear perhaps to be stroked, though he will growl even under that operation; but if you touch him roughly, he will bite. There is no grace that the spirit of self can counterfeit with more success than a religious zeal. A man thinks he is fighting for Christ, when he is fighting for his own notions. He thinks that he is skilfully searching the hearts of others, while he is only gratifying the malignity of his own; and charitably supposes his hearers destitute of all grace, that he may shine the more in his own eyes by comparison."—pp. 179, 180.

The following, too, is in a fine style of eloquence.

"We have exchanged a zeal that was no better than madness, for an indifference equally pitiable and absurd. The holy sepulchre has lost its importance in the eyes of nations called Christian; not because the light of true wisdom had delivered them from a superstitious attachment to the spot, but because he that was buried in it is no longer regarded by them as the Saviour of the world. The exercise of reason, enlightened by philosophy, has cured them indeed of the misery of an abused understanding; but, together with the delusion, they have lost the substance, and, for the sake of the lies that were grafted upon it, have quarrelled with the truth itself. Here, then, we see the *ne plus ultra* of human wisdom, at least in affairs of religion. It enlightens the mind with respect to non-essentials; but, with respect to that in which the essence of Christianity consists, leaves it perfectly in the dark. It can discover many errors, that in different ages have disgraced the faith; but it is only to make way for the admission of one more fatal than them all, which represents that faith itself as a delusion. Why those evils have been permitted, shall be known hereafter. One thing in the meantime is certain; that the folly and frenzy of the professed disciples of the gospel have been more dangerous to its interest than all the avowed hostilities of its adversaries."—pp. 200, 201.

There are many passages that breathe the very spirit of Christian gentleness and sober judgment. But when he talks of his friend Mr. Newton's *prophetic* intimations (p. 35.), and maintains that a great proportion of the ladies and gentlemen who amuse themselves with dancing at Brighthelmstone, must necessarily be damned (p. 100.), we cannot feel the same respect for his understanding, and are repelled by the austerity of his faith. The most remarkable passage of this kind, however, is that in which he supposes the death of the celebrated Captain Cook to have been *a judgment* on him for having allowed himself to be *worshipped* at Owhyhee. Mr. Hayley assures us, in a note, that Cowper proceeded altogether on a misapprehension of the fact. The passage, however, is curious, and shows with what eagerness his powerful mind followed that train of superstition into which his devotion was sometimes so unfortunately betrayed.

"The reading of those volumes afforded me much amusement, and I hope some instruction. No observation, however, forced itself upon me with more violence than one, that I could not help making, on the death of Captain Cook. God is a jealous God; and at Owhyhee the poor man was content to be worshipped! From that moment, the remarkable interposition of Providence in his favour, was converted into an opposition that thwarted all his purposes. He left the scene of his deification, but was driven back to it by a most violent storm, in which he suffered more than in any that had preceded it. When he departed, he left his worshippers still infatuated with an idea of his godship, consequently well disposed to serve him. At his return, he found them sullen, distrustful, and mysterious. A trifling theft was committed, which, by a blunder of his own in pursuing the thief after the property had been restored, was magnified to an affair of the last importance. One of their favourite chiefs was killed, too, by a blunder. Nothing, in short, but blunder and mistake attended him, till he fell breathless into the water—and then all was smooth again! The world indeed will not take notice, or see that the dispensation bore evident marks of divine displeasure; but a mind, I think, in any degree spiritual, cannot overlook them."—pp. 293, 294.

From these extracts, our readers will now be able to form a pretty accurate notion of the contents and composition of this volume. Its chief merit consists in the singular ease, elegance, and familiarity with which every thing is expressed, and in the simplicity and sincerity in which every thing appears to be conceived. Its chief fault, perhaps, is the too frequent recurrence of those apologies for dull letters, and complaints of the want of subjects, that seem occasionally to bring it down to the level of an ordinary correspondence, and to represent Cowper as one of those who make every letter its own subject, and correspond with their friends by talking about their correspondence.

Besides the subjects, of which we have exhibited some specimens, it contains a good deal of occasional criticism, of which we do not think very highly. It is not easy, indeed, to say to what degree the judgments of those who live in the world are biassed by the opinions that prevail in it; but, in matters of this kind, the general prevalence of an opinion is almost the only test we can have of its truth; and the judgment of a secluded man is almost as justly convicted of error, when it runs counter to that opinion, as it is extolled for sagacity, when it happens to coincide with it. The critical remarks of Cowper furnish us with instances of both sorts; but perhaps with most of the former. His admiration of Mrs. Macaulay's History, and the rapture with which he speaks of the Henry and Emma of Prior, and the compositions of Churchill, will not, we should imagine, attract the sympathy of many readers, or suspend the sentence which time appears to be passing on those performances. As there is scarcely any thing of love in the poetry of Cowper, it is not very wonderful that there should be nothing of it in his correspondence. There is something very tender and amiable in his affection for his cousin Lady Hesketh; but we do not remember any passage where he approaches to the language of gallantry, or appears to have indulged in the sentiments that might have led to its employment. It is also somewhat remarkable, that during the whole course of his retirement, though a good deal embarrassed in his circumstances, and frequently very much distressed for want of employment, he never seems to have had an idea of betaking himself to a profession. The solution of this difficulty is probably to be found in the infirmity of his mental health: but there were ten or twelve years of his life, when he seems to have been fit for any exertion that did not require a public appearance, and to have suffered very much from the want of all occupation.

This volume closes with a fragment of a poem by Cowper, which Mr. Hayley was fortunate enough to discover by accident among some loose papers which had been found in the poet's study. It consists of something less than two hundred lines, and is addressed to a very ancient and decayed oak in the vicinity of Weston. We do not think quite so highly of this production as the editor appears to do; at the same time that we confess it to be impressed with all the marks of Cowper's most vigorous hand: we do not know any of his compositions, indeed, that affords a more striking exemplification of most of the excellences and defects of his peculiar style, or might be more fairly quoted as a specimen of his *manner*. It is full of the conceptions of a vigorous and poetical fancy, expressed in nervous and familiar language; but it is rendered harsh by unnecessary inversions, and debased in several places by the use of antiquated and vulgar phrases. The following are about the best lines which it contains.

"Thou wast a bauble once; a cup and ball,
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs,
And all thine embryo vastness, as a gulp!
But fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains,
Beneath thy parent tree, mellow'd the soil
Design'd thy cradle, and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepar'd
The soft receptacle, in which secure
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through."

"Time made thee what thou wast—King of the woods!
And time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in! Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign, and the numerous flock
That graz'd it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-sheltered from the storm!
No flock frequents thee now; thou hast outliv'd
Thy popularity; and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth!"

"One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman; never gaz'd,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor ow'd articulation to his ear;
But moulded by his Maker into man
At once, upstood intelligent; survey'd
All creatures; with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties; assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, rendered back to heaven,
In praise harmonious, the first air he drew!
He was excus'd the penalties of dull
Minority; no tutor charg'd his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems; History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching time, whose cause
Eventful, should supply her with a theme."

pp. 415, 416.

On the whole, though we complain a little of the size and the price of the volumes now before us, we take our leave of them with reluctance; and lay down our pen with no little regret, to think that we shall review no more of this author's productions.

HISTORY

AND

HISTORICAL MEMOIRS.

(October, 1808.)

Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson, *Governor of Nottingham Castle and Town, Representative of the County of Nottingham in the Long Parliament, and of the Town of Nottingham in the First Parliament of Charles II. &c.; with Original Anecdotes of many of the most distinguished of his Contemporaries, and a summary Review of Public Affairs: Written by his Widow,* Lucy, *daughter of* Sir Allen Apsley, *Lieutenant of the Tower, &c.* Now first published from the Original Manuscript, by the Rev. Julius Hutchinson, &c. &c. To which is prefixed, the Life of Mrs. Hutchinson, written by Herself, a Fragment. pp. 446. 4to. London, Longman and Co.: 1806.

We have not often met with any thing more interesting and curious than this volume. Independent of its being a contemporary narrative of by far the most animating and important part of our history, it challenges our attention as containing an accurate and luminous account of military and political affairs from the hand of a woman; as exhibiting the most liberal and enlightened sentiments in the person of a puritan; and sustaining a high tone of aristocratical dignity and pretension, though the work of a decided republican. The views which it opens into the character of the writer, and the manners of the age, will be to many a still more powerful attraction.

Of the times to which this narrative belongs—times to which England owes all her freedom and all her glory—we can never hear too much, or too often: and though their story has been transmitted to us, both with more fulness of detail and more vivacity of colouring than any other portion of our annals, every reflecting reader must be aware that our information is still extremely defective, and exposes us to the hazard of great misconception. The work before us, we think, is calculated in a good degree to supply these deficiencies, and to rectify these errors.

By far the most important part of history, as we have formerly endeavoured to explain, is that which makes us acquainted with the character, dispositions, and opinions of the great and efficient population by whose motion or consent all things are ultimately governed. After a nation has attained to any degree of intelligence, every other principle of action becomes subordinate; and, with relation to our own country in particular, it may be said with safety, that we can know nothing of its past history, or of the applications of that history to more recent transactions, if we have not a tolerably correct notion of the character of the people of England in the reign of Charles I., and the momentous periods which ensued. This character depended very much on that of the landed proprietors and resident gentry; and Mrs. Hutchinson's memoirs are chiefly valuable, as containing a picture of that class of the community.

Agriculture was at this period still the chief occupation of the people; and the truly governing part of society was consequently the rustic aristocracy. The country gentlemen—who have since been worn down by luxury and taxation, superseded by the activity of office, and eclipsed by the opulence of trade—were then all and all in England; and the nation at large derived from them its habits, prejudices, and opinions. Educated almost entirely at home, their manners were not yet accommodated to a general European standard, but retained all those national peculiarities which united and endeared them to the rest of their countrymen. Constitutionally serious, and living much with their families, they had in general more solid learning, and more steady morality than the gentry of other countries. Exercised in local magistracies, and frequently assembled for purposes of national cooperation, they became conscious of their power, and jealous of their privileges: and having been trained up in a dread and detestation of that popery which had been the recent cause of so many wars and persecutions, their religious sentiments had contracted somewhat of an austere and polemical character, and had not yet settled from the ferment of reformation into tranquil and regulated piety. It was upon this side, accordingly, that they were most liable to error:

and the extravagances into which a part of them was actually betrayed, has been the chief cause of the misrepresentations to which they were then exposed, and of the misconception which still prevails as to their character and principles of action.

In the middle of the reign of Charles I. almost the whole nation was serious and devout. Any licence and excess which existed was mostly encouraged and patronised by the Royalists; who made it a point of duty to deride the sanctity and rigid morality of their opponents; and they again exaggerated, out of party hatred, the peculiarities by which they were most obviously distinguished from their antagonists. Thus mutually receding from each other, from feelings of general hostility, they were gradually led to realize the imputations of which they were reciprocally the subjects. The cavaliers gave way to a certain degree of licentiousness; and the adherents of the parliament became, for the most part, really morose and enthusiastic. At the Restoration, the cavaliers obtained a complete and final triumph over their sanctimonious opponents; and the exiled monarch and his nobles imported from the Continent a taste for dissipation, and a toleration for debauchery, far exceeding any thing that had previously been known in England. It is from the wits of that court, however, and the writers of that party, that the succeeding and the present age have derived their notions of the Puritans. In reducing these notions to the standard of truth, it is not easy to determine how large an allowance ought to be made for the exaggerations of party hatred, the perversions of witty malice, and the illusions of habitual superiority. It is certain, however, that ridicule, toleration, and luxury gradually annihilated the Puritans in the higher ranks of society: and after-times, seeing their practices and principles exemplified only among the lowest and most illiterate of mankind, readily caught the tone of contempt which had been assumed by their triumphant enemies; and found no absurdity in believing that the base and contemptible beings who were described under the name of Puritans by the courtiers of Charles II., were true representatives of that valiant and conscientious party which once numbered half the gentry of England among its votaries and adherents.

That the popular conceptions of the austerities and absurdities of the old Roundheads and Presbyterians are greatly exaggerated, will probably be allowed by every one at all conversant with the subject; but we know of nothing so well calculated to dissipate the existing prejudices on the subject, as this book of Mrs. Hutchinson. Instead of a set of gloomy bigots waging war with all the elegancies and gaieties of life, we find, in this calumniated order, ladies of the first birth and fashion, at once converting their husbands to Anabaptism, and instructing their children in music and dancing,—valiant Presbyterian colonels refuting the errors of Arminius, collecting pictures, and practising, with great applause, on the violin,—stout esquires, at the same time, praying and quaffing October with their godly tenants,—and noble lords disputing with their chaplains on points of theology in the evening, and taking them out a-hunting in the morning. There is nothing, in short, more curious and instructive, than the glimpses which we here catch of the old hospitable and orderly life of the country gentlemen of England, in those days when the national character was so high and so peculiar,—when civilization had produced all its effects, but that of corruption,—and when serious studies and dignified pursuits had not yet been abandoned to a paltry and effeminate derision. Undoubtedly, in reviewing the annals of those times, we are struck with a loftier air of manhood than presents itself in any after era; and recognize the same characters of deep thought and steady enthusiasm, and the same principles of fidelity and self-command, which ennobled the better days of the Roman Republic, and have made every thing else appear childish and frivolous in the comparison.

One of the most striking and valuable things in Mrs. Hutchinson's performance, is the information which it affords us as to the manners and condition of women in the period with which she is occupied. This is a point in which all histories of public events are almost necessarily defective; though it is evident that, without attending to it, our notions of the state and character of any people must be extremely imperfect and erroneous. Mrs. Hutchinson, however, enters into no formal disquisition upon this subject. What we learn from her in relation to it, is learnt incidentally—partly on occasion of some anecdotes which it falls in her way to recite—but chiefly from what she is led to narrate or disclose as to her own education, conduct, or opinions. If it were allowable to take the portrait which she has thus indirectly given of herself, as a just representation of her fair contemporaries, we should form a most exalted notion of the republican matrons of England. Making a slight deduction for a few traits of austerity, borrowed from the bigotry of the age, we do not know where to look for a more noble and engaging character than that under which this lady presents herself to her readers; nor do we believe that any age of the world has produced so worthy a counterpart to the Valerias and Portias of antiquity. With a high-minded feeling of patriotism and public honour, she seems to have been possessed by the most dutiful and devoted attachment to her husband; and to have combined a taste for learning and the arts with the most active kindness and munificent hospitality to all who came within the sphere of her bounty. To a quick perception of character, she appears to have united a masculine force of understanding, and a singular capacity for affairs; and to have possessed and exercised all those talents, without affecting any superiority over the rest of her sex, or abandoning for a single instant the delicacy and reserve which were then its most indispensa-

ble ornaments. Education, certainly, is far more generally diffused in our days, and accomplishments infinitely more common; But the perusal of this volume has taught us to doubt, whether the better sort of women were not fashioned of old by a better and more exalted standard, and whether the most eminent female of the present day would not appear to disadvantage by the side of Mrs. Hutchinson. There is, for the most part, something intriguing and profligate and theatrical in the clever women of this generation; and if we are dazzled by their brilliancy, and delighted with their talent, we can scarcely ever guard against some distrust of their judgment or some suspicion of their purity. There is something, in short, in the domestic virtue, and the calm and commanding mind of our English matron, that makes the Corinnes and Heloises appear small and insignificant.

The admirers of modern talent will not accuse us of choosing an ignoble competitor, if we desire them to weigh the merits of Mrs. Hutchinson against those of Madame Roland. The English revolutionist did not indeed compose weekly pamphlets and addresses to the municipalities;—because it was not the fashion, in her days, to print every thing that entered into the heads of politicians. But she shut herself up with her husband in the garrison with which he was intrusted, and shared his counsels as well as his hazards. She encouraged the troops by her cheerfulness and heroism—ministered to the sick—and dressed with her own hands the wounds of the captives, as well as of their victors. When her husband was imprisoned on groundless suspicions, she laboured, without ceasing, for his deliverance—confounded his oppressors by her eloquence and arguments—tended him with unshaken fortitude in sickness and solitude—and, after his decease, dedicated herself to form his children to the example of his virtues; and drew up the memorial which is now before us, of his worth and her own genius and affection. All this, too, she did without stepping beyond the province of a private woman—without hunting after compliments to her own genius or beauty—without sneering at the dulness, or murmuring at the coldness of her husband—without hazarding the fate of her country on the dictates of her own enthusiasm, or fancying for a moment that she was born with talents to enchant and regenerate the world. With equal power of discriminating character, with equal candour and eloquence and zeal for the general good, she is elevated beyond her French competitor by superior prudence and modesty, and by a certain simplicity and purity of character, of which, it appears to us, that the other was unable to form a conception.

After detaining the reader so long with these general observations, we shall only withhold him from the quotations which we mean to lay before him, while we announce, that Mrs. Hutchinson writes in a sort of lofty, classical, translated style; which is occasionally diffuse and pedantic, but often attains to great dignity and vigour, and still more frequently charms us by a sort of antique simplicity and sweetness, admirably in unison with the sentiments and manners it is employed to represent.

The fragment of her own history, with which the volume opens, is not the least interesting, and perhaps the most characteristic part of its contents. The following brief account of her nativity, will at once make the reader acquainted with the pitch of this lady's sentiments and expressions.

"It was one the 29th day of January, in the yeare of our Lord $16\frac{1}{2}\frac{8}{0}$, that in the Tower of London, the principall citie of the English Isle, I was about 4 of the clock in the morning brought forth to behold the ensuing light. My father was Sr. Allen Apsley, leiftenant of the Tower of London; my mother, his third wife, was Lucy, the youngest daughter of Sr. John St. John, of Lidiard Tregoz, in Wiltshire, by his second wife. My father had then living a sonne and a daughter by his former wives, and by my mother three sonns, I being her eldest daughter. The land was then att peace (it being towards the latter end of the reigne of King James), if that quiettnesse may be call'd a peace, which was rather like the calme and smooth surface of the sea, whose darke womb is allready impregnated of a horrid tempest."—pp. 2, 3.

She then draws the character of both her parents in a very graceful and engaging manner, but on a scale somewhat too large to admit of their being transferred entire into our pages. We give the following as a specimen of the style and execution.

"He was a most indulgent husband, and no lesse kind to his children; a most noble master; who thought it not enough to maintaine his servants honourably while they were with him, but, for all that deserv'd it, provided offices or settlements as for children. He was a father to all his prisoners, sweetning with such compassionate kindnesse their restraint, that the afliction of a prison was not felt in his dayes. He had a singular kindnesse for all persons that were eminent either in learning or armes; and when, through the ingratitude and vice of that age, many of the wives and chilldren of Queene Elizabeth's glorious captaines were reduc'd to poverty, his purse was their common treasury, and they knew not the inconvenience of decay'd fortunes till he was dead: many of those valliant seamen he maintain'd in prison; many he redeem'd out of prison and cherisht with an extraordinary bounty. He was severe in the regulating of his famely; especially would not endure the least immodest behaviour or dresse in any woman under his roofe. There was nothing he hated more than an insignificant gallant, that could *only make his leggs and prune himself, and court a lady*, but had not braines to employ himselfe in things more suteable to man's nobler sex. Fidelity in his trust, love and loyalty to his prince, were not the least of his vertues, but those wherein he was not excell'd by any of his owne or succeeding times. He gave my mother a noble allowance of 300*l.* a yeare for her owne private expence, and had given her all her owne portion to dispose of how she pleas'd, as soone as she was married; which she suffer'd to encrease in her friend's hands; and what my father allowed her she spent not in vanities, although she had what was rich and requisite upon occasions, but she lay'd most of it out in pious and charitable uses. Sr. Walter Rawleigh and Mr. Ruthin being prisoners in the Tower, and addicting themselves to chimistrie, she suffer'd them to make their rare experiments at her cost, partly to comfort and divert the poore prisoners, and partly to gaine the knowledge of their experiments, and the medicines to helpe such poore people as were not able to seeke to phi

sitians. By these means she acquir'd a greate deale of skill, which was very profitable to many all her life. She was not only to these, but to all the other prisoners that came into the Tower, as a mother. All the time she dwelt in the Tower, if any were sick she made them broths and restoratives with her owne hands, visited and took care of them, and provided them all necessaries: If any were afflicted she comforted them, so that they felt not the inconvenience of a prison who were in that place. She was not lesse bountifull to many poore widdowes and orphans, whom officers of higher and lower rank had left behind them as objects of charity. Her owne house was fill'd with distressed families of her relations, whom she supplied and maintained in a noble way."—pp. 12—15.

For herself, being her mother's first daughter, unusual pains were bestowed on her education; so that, when she was seven years of age, she was attended, she informs us, by no fewer than eight several tutors. In consequence of all this, she became very grave and thoughtful; and withal very pious. But her early attainments in religion seem to have been by no means answerable to the notions of sanctity which she imbibed in her maturer years. There is something very innocent and natural in the Puritanism of the following passage.

"It pleas'd God that thro' the good instructions of my mother, and the sermons she carried me to, I was convinc'd that the knowledge of God was the most excellent study; and accordingly applied myselfe to it, and to practise as I was taught. I us'd to exhort my mother's maides much, and to turne their idle discourses to good subjects; but I thought, when I had done this on the Lord's day, and every day perform'd my due taskes of reading and praying, that then I was free to anie thing that was not sin; for I was not at that time convinc'd of the vanity of conversation which was not scandalously wicked; I thought it no sin to learne or heare wittie songs and amorous sonnets or poems, and twenty things of that kind; wherein I was so apt that I became the confident in all the loves that were managed among my mother's young women: and there was none of them but had many lovers and some particular friends belov'd above the rest; among these I have ——."—p. 17, 18.

Here the same spirit of austerity which dictated the preceding passage, had moved the fair writer, as the editor informs us, to tear away many pages immediately following the words with which it concludes—and thus to defraud the reader of the only love story with which he had any chance of being regaled in the course of this narrative. Although Mrs. Hutchinson's abhorrence of any thing like earthly or unsanctified love, has withheld her on all occasions from the insertion of any thing that related to such feelings, yet it is not difficult, we think, to perceive that she was originally constituted with an extraordinary sensibility to all powerful emotions; and that the suppression of those deep and natural impressions has given a singular warmth and animation to her descriptions of romantic and conjugal affection. In illustration of this, we may refer to the following story of her husband's grandfather and grandmother, which she recounts with much feeling and credulity. After a very ample account of their mutual love and loveliness, she proceeds—

"But while the incomparable mother shin'd in all the humane glorie she wisht, and had the crowne of all outward felicity to the full in the enjoyment of the mutuall love of her most beloved husband, God in one moment tooke it away, and alienated her most excellent understanding in a difficult childbirth, wherein she brought forth two daughters which liv'd to be married, and one more that died, I think assoone or before it was borne. But after that, all the art of the best physitians in England could never restore her understanding. Yet she was not frantick, but had such a pretty deliration, that her ravings were more delightful than other weomen's most rationall conversations. Upon this occasion her husband gave himselfe up to live retired with her, as became her condition. The daughters and the rest of the children as soon as they grew up were married and disperst. I think I have heard she had some children after that childbirth which distemper'd her; and then my lady Hutchinson must have bene one of them. I have heard her servants say, that even after her marriage, she would steale many melancholy houres to sitt and weepe in remembrance of her. Meanewhile her parents were driving on their age, in no lesse constancy of love to each other, when even that distemper which had estrang'd her mind in all things elce, had left her love and obedience entire to her husband, and he retein'd the same fondnesse and respect for her, after she was distemper'd, as when she was the glory of her age! He had two beds in one chamber, and she being a little sick, two weomen watcht by her, some time before she died. It was his custome, as soon as ever he unclos'd his eies, to aske how she did; but one night, he being as they thought in a deepe sleepe, she quietly departed towards the morning. He was that day to have gone a hunting, his usuall exercise for his health; and it was his custome to have his chaplaine pray with him before he went out: the weomen, fearfull to surprise him with the ill newes, knowing his deare affection to her, had stollen out and acquainted the chaplaine, desiring him to informe him of it. Sr. John waking, did not that day, as was his custome, ask for her; but call'd the chaplaine to prayers, and joyning with him, in the middst of the prayer, expir'd!—and both of them were buried together in the same grave. Whether he perceiv'd her death and would not take notice, or whether some strange sympathy in love or nature tied up their lives in one, or whether God was pleased to exercise an unusuall providence towards them, preventing them both from that bitter sorrow which such separations cause, it can be but conjectur'd," &c. —p. 26—28.

The same romantic and suppressed sensibility is discernible, we think, in her whole account of the origin and progress of her husband's attachment to her. As the story is in many respects extremely characteristic of the times as well as the persons to which it relates, we shall make a pretty large extract from it. Mr. Hutchinson had learned, it seems, to "dance and vault" with great agility, and also attained to "great mastery on the violl" at the University; and, upon his return to Nottingham, in the twentieth year of his age, spent much of his time with a licentious but most accomplished gentleman, a witty but profane physician, and a pleasant but cynical old schoolmaster. In spite of these worldly associations, however, we are assured that he was a most godly and incorruptible person; and, in particular, proof against all the allurements of the fair sex, whom he frequently "reproved, but in a handsome way of raillery, for their pride and

vanity." In this hopeful frame of mind, it was proposed to him to spend a few summer months at Richmond, where the young princes then held their court.

"Mr. Hutchinson considering this, resolv'd to accept his offer; and that day telling a gentleman of the house whither he was going, the gentleman bid him take heed of the place, for it was so fatall for love, that never any young disengag'd person went thither, who return'd again free. Mr. Hutchinson laught at him; but he, to confirme it, told him a very true story of a gentleman, who not long before had come for some time to lodge there, and found all the people he came in company with, bewailing the death of a gentlewoman that had lived there. Hearing her so much deplor'd, he made enquiry after her, and grew so in love with the description, that no other discourse could at first please him, nor could he at last endure any other; he grew desperately melancholly, and would goe to a mount where the print of her foote was cutt, and lie there pining and kissing of it all the day long, till att length death in some months space concluded his languishment. This story was very true; but Mr. Hutchinson was neither easie to believe it, nor frighted at the example; thinking himselfe not likely to make another."—p. 37, 38.

He goes accordingly to Richmond, and boards with his music-master; in whose house a younger sister of his future wife happened then to be placed,—she herself having gone into Wiltshire with her mother, with some expectations of being married before her return.

"This gentlewoman, that was left in the house with Mr. Hutchinson, was a very child, her elder sister being at that time scarcely past it; but a child of such pleasantnesse and vivacity of spiritt, and ingenuity in the quallity she practis'd, that Mr. Hutchinson tooke pleasure in hearing her practise, and would fall in discourse with her. She having the keyes of her mother's house, some halfe a mile distant, would some times aske Mr. Hutchinson, when she went over, to walk along with her: one day when he was there, looking upon an odde byshelf, in her sister's closett, he found a few Latine bookes; asking whose they were, he was told they were her elder sister's; whereupon, enquiring more after her, he began first to be sorrie she was gone, before he had seene her, and gone upon such an account, that he was not likely to see her; then he grew to love to heare mention of her; and the other gentleweomen who had bene her companions, used to talke much to him of her, telling him how reserv'd and studious she was, and other things which they esteem'd no advantage; but it so much inflam'd Mr. Hutchinson's desire of seeing her, that he began to wonder at himselfe, that his heart, which had ever had such an indifferency for the most excellent of weomenkind, should have so strong impulses towards a stranger he never saw."—"While he was exercis'd in this, many days past not, but a foote-boy of my lady her mothers came to young Mrs. Apsley as they were at dinner, bringing newes that her mother and sister would in few dayes return; and when they enquir'd of him, whether Mrs. Apsley was married, having before bene instructed to make them believe it, he smiled, and pull'd out some bride laces, which were given at a wedding in the house where she was, and gave them to the young gentlewoman and the gentleman's daughter of the house, and told them Mrs. Apsley bade him tell no news, but give them those tokens, and carried the matter so, that all the companie believ'd she had bene married. Mr. Hutchinson immediately turned pale as ashes, and felt a fainting to seize his spiritts, in that extraordinary manner, that finding himselfe ready to sinke att table, he was faine to pretend something had offended his stomach, and to retire from the table into the garden, where the gentleman of the house going with him, it was not necessary for him to feigne sickness, for the distemper of his mind had infected his body with a cold sweate and such a dispersion of spiritt, that all the courage he could at present recollect was little enough to keep him allive. While she so ran in his thoughts, meeting the boy againe, he found out, upon a little stricter examination of him, that she was not married, and pleas'd himselfe in the hopes of her speedy returne, when one day, having bene invited by one of the ladies of that neighbourhood, to a noble treatment at Sion Garden, which a courtier, *that was her servant*, had made for her and whom she would bring, Mr. Hutchinson, Mrs. Apsley, and Mr. Coleman's daughter were of the partie, and having spent the day in severall pleasant divertisements, att evening they were att supper, when a messenger came to tell Mrs. Apsley her mother was come. She would immediately have gone; but Mr. Hutchinson, pretending civility to conduct her home, made her stay 'till the supper was ended, of which he eate no more, now only longing for that sight, which he had with such perplexity expected. This at length he obteined; but his heart being prepossesst with his owne fancy, was not free to discerne how little there was in her to answer so greate an expectation. She was not ugly—in a carelesse riding-habitt, she had a melancholly negligence both of herselfe and others, as if she neither affected to please others, nor tooke notice of anie thing before her; yet spite of all her indifferency, she was surpris'd with some unusual liking in her soule, when she saw this gentleman, who had haire, eies, shape, and countenance enough to begett love in any one at the first, and these sett off with a gracefull and a generous mine, which promis'd an extraordinary person. Although he had but an evening sight of her he had so long desir'd, and that at disadvantage enough for her, yett the prevailing sympathie of his soule, made him thinke all his paynes well pay'd, and this first did whett his desire to a second sight, which he had by accident the next day, and to his ioy found she was wholly disengaged from that treaty which he so much fear'd had been accomplisht; he found withall, that though she was modest, she was accostable, and willing to entertaine his acquaintance. This soone past into a mutuall friendship betweene them, and though she innocently thought nothing of love, yet was she glad to have acquir'd such a friend, who had wisedome and vertue enough to be trusted with her councells. Mr. Hutchinson, on the other side, having bene told, and seeing how she shunn'd all other men, and how civilly she entertain'd him, believ'd that a secret power had wrought a mutuall inclination betweene them, and dayly frequented her mother's house, and had the opportunitie of conversing with her in those pleasant walkes, which, at that sweete season of the spring, invited all the neighbouring inhabitants to seeke their ioys; where, though they were never alone, yet they had every day opportunity for converse with each other, which the rest shar'd not in, while every one minded their own delights."—pp. 38—44.

Here the lady breaks off her account of this romantic courtship, as of "matters that are to be forgotten as the vanities of youth, and not worthy mention among the greater transactions of their lives." The consent of parents having been obtained on both sides, she was married at the age of eighteen.

"That day that the friends on both sides met to conclude the marriage, she fell sick of the small-pox, which was many ways a greate triall upon him; first her life was allmost in desperate hazard, and then the disease, for the present, made her the most deformed person that could be seene, for a greate while after she recover'd; yett he was nothing troubled at it, but married her assoone as she was able to quitt the chamber, when the priest and all that saw her were affrighted to looke on her! but God recompenc'd his iustice and constancy, by restoring her, though she was longer than ordinary before she recover'd, as well as before."—pp. 45, 46.

There is a good deal more of this affectionate and romantic style of writing throughout the book; but the Shade of Mrs. Hutchinson would not forgive us, if we were to detain the reader longer with these "vanities of her youth." We proceed, therefore, to graver matters.

We might cull many striking specimens of eloquence from her summary account of the English Constitution and of the Reformation; but the following view of the changes which took place on the accession of James and of Charles, are more characteristic of the age and of the party to which she belongs.

"The honor, wealth, and glory of the nation, wherein Queene Elizabeth left it, were soone prodigally wasted by this thriftlesse heire, the nobility of the land utterly debas'd by setting honors to publick sale, and conferring them on persons that had neither blood nor meritt fitt to weare, nor estates to beare up their titles, but were faine to invent projects to pill* the people, and pick their purses for the maintenance of vice and lewdnesse. The generallity of the gentry of the land soone learnt the court fashion, and every greate house in the country became a sty of uncleannesse. To keepe the people in their deplorable security, till vengeance overtooke them, they were entertain'd with masks, stage playes, and sorts of ruder sports. Then began murther, incest, adultery, drunkennesse, swearing, fornication, and all sorts of ribaldry, to be no conceal'd but countenanc'd vices; because they held such conformity with the court example."—"And now the ready way to preferment there, was to declare an opposition to the power of godlinesse, under that name; so that their pulpitts might iustly be called the scorner's chair, those sermons only pleasing that flatter'd them in their vices, and told the poore king that he was Solomon!—that his sloth and cowardize, by which he betrey'd the cause of God and honour of the nation, was gospell meekenesse and peaceablenesse, for which they rays'd him up above the heavens, while he lay wallowing like a swine in the mire of his lusts. He had a little learning,—and this they call'd the spiritt of wisedome, and so magnified him, so falsely flatter'd him, that he could not endure the words of truth and soundnesse, but rewarded these base, wicked, unfaithfull fawners with rich preferments, attended with pomps and titles, which heav'd them up above a humane heighth: With their pride their envie swell'd against the people of God, whom they began to proiect how they might roote out of the land; and when they had once given them a name, whatever was odious or dreadfull to the king, that they fixt upon the Puritane, which, according to their character, was nothing but a factious hypocrite."
pp. 59—61.

"The face of the court was much chang'd in the change of the king; for King Charles was temperate, chast, and serious; so that the fooles and bawds, mimicks and catamites of the former court grew out of fashion; and the nobility and courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debosheries, had yet that reverence to the king, to retire into corners to practise them: Men of learning and ingenuity in all arts were in esteeme, and receiv'd encouragement from the king; who was a most excellent iudge and a greate lover of paintings, carvings, gravings, and many other ingenuities, less offensive then the prophane abusive witt, which was the only exercise of the other court."—p. 65.

The characters of this king's counsellors are drawn, in general, with great force and liveliness; and with a degree of candour scarcely to have been expected in the widow of a regicide. We give that of Lord Strafford as an example.

"But there were two above all the rest, who led the van of the king's evill councellors, and these were Laud, archbishop of Canterbury, a fellow of meane extraction and arrogant pride, and the earl of Strafford, who as much outstript all the rest in favour as he did in abilities, being a man of deep policy, sterne resolution, and ambitious zeale to keepe up the glory of his own greatnesse. In the beginning of this king's reigne, this man had bene a strong assertor of the liberties of the people, among whom he had gain'd himselfe an honorable reputation, and was dreadfull to the court party, who thereupon strew'd snares in his way, and when they found a breach at his ambition, his soule was that way enter'd and captivated. He was advanc'd first to be lord president of the councell in the north, to be a baron, after an earle, then deputy of Ireland; the neerest to a favourite of any man since the death of the duke of Buckingham, who was rays'd by his first master, and kept up by the second, upon no account of personall worth or any deserving abilities in him, but only upon violent and private inclinations of the princes; but the earle of Strafford wanted not any accomplishment that could be desir'd in the most serviceable minister of state: besides, he having made himselfe odious to the people, by his revolt from their interest to that of the oppressive court, he was now oblig'd to keep up his owne interest with his new party, by all the mallitious practises that pride and revenge could inspire him with."—pp. 68, 69.

One of Mrs. Hutchinson's great talents, indeed, is the delineation of characters; and though her affections are apt to throw rather too glowing or too dark a tint over the canvas, yet this very warmth carries with it an impression of sincerity, which adds not a little to the interest of her pictures. We pass by her short sketches,—of the Earl of Newcastle, who was "a prince in his own country, till a foolish ambition of glorious slavery carried him to court;"—the Earl of Kingston, "whose covetousness made him divide his sons between the two parties, till his fate drew him over to the king's side, where he behaved himself honourably, and died remarkably;"—the Earl of Clare, "who was very often of both parties, and, I think, never advantaged either,"—and a great number of other persons, who are despatched with equal brevity; and venture to put her talents to a severer test, by trying whether they can interest the reader in a description of the burghers and private gentlemen of Nottingham, at the breaking out of these great disturbances.

"There were seven aldermen in the towne, and of these only alderman James, then mayor, own'd the parliament. He was a very honest, bold man, but had no more but a burgher's discretion; he was yett very well assisted by his wife, a weoman of greate zeal and courage, and more understanding than weomen of her ranke usually have. All the devout people of the towne were very vigorous and ready to offer their lives and famelies, but there was not halfe the halfe of the towne that consisted of these. The ordinary civill sort of people coldly

* "Pill—pillage, plunder."

adher'd to the better; but all the debosht, and such as had liv'd upon the bishops persecuting courts, and bene the lacqueys of proiectors and monopolizers, and the like, they were all bitterly malignant. Yett God awed them, that they could not at that time hinder his people, whom he overrul'd some of their greatest enemies to assist, such as were one Chadwick and Plumptre, two who, at the first, put themselves most forward into the businesse.

"Plumptre was a doctor of phisick, an inhabitant of Nottingham, who had learning, naturall parts, and understanding enough to discerne betweene naturall civill righteousnesse and iniustice, but he was a horrible atheist, and had such an intollerable pride, that he brook'd no superiours, and having some witt, tooke the boldnesse to exercise it, in the abuse of all the gentlemen wherever he came."—"This man had sence enough to approove the parliament's cause, in poynt of civill right, and pride enough to desire to breake the bonds of slavery, whereby the king endeavour'd to chaine up a free people; and upon these scores, appearing high for the parliament's interest, he was admitted into the consultations of those who were then putting the country into a posture of defence.

"Chadwick was a fellow of a most pragmaticall temper, and, to say truth, had strangely wrought himselfe into a station unfitt for him. He was at first a boy that scraped trenchers in the house of one of the poorest iustices in the county, but yet such a one as had a greate deale of formallity and understanding of the statute law, from whom this boy pick'd such ends of law, that he became first the iustice's, then a lawyer's clearke. Then, I know not how, gott to be a parcell-iudge in Ireland, and came over to his owne country swell'd with the reputation of it, and sett on foote a base, absolute, arbitrary court there, which the Conqueror of old had given to one Peverel his bastard," &c.—"When the king was in towne a little before, this man so insinuated into the court that, comming to kisse the king's hand, the king told him he was a very honest man; yet by flatteries and dissimulations he kept up his creditt with the godly, cutting his haire, and taking up a forme of godlinesse, the better to deceive. In some of the corrupt times he had purchas'd the honor of a barrister, though he had neither law nor learning, but he had a voluble tongue, and was crafty; and it is allmost incredible that one of his meane education and poverty should arrive to such things as he reacht. This baseness he had, that all the iust reproaches in the world could not moove him, but he would fawne upon any man that told him of his villanies to his face, even at the very time. Never was a truer Judas, since Iscariott's time, than he; for he would kisse the man he had in his heart to kill; he naturally delighted in mischiefe and treachery, and was so exquisite a villaine, that he destroy'd those designes he might have thriven by, with overlaying them with fresh knaveries."—pp. 110—113.

We have not room for many of the more favourable delineations with which these are contrasted; but we give the following short sketch of Mr. Thornhagh, who seems to have been a great favourite of Mrs. Hutchinson's.

"Mr. Francis Thornhagh, the eldest sonne of Sr. Francis Thornhagh, was a man of a most upright faithfull heart to God and God's people, and to his countrie's true interest, comprehended in the parliament's cause; a man of greater vallour or more noble daring fought not for them; nor indeed ever drew sword in any cause; he was of a most excellent good nature to all men, and zealous for his friend; he wanted councell and deliberation, and was sometimes too facile to flatterers, but had iudgment enough to discerne his errors when they were represented to him, and worth enough not to persist in an iniurious mistake because he had once entertained it."—p. 114.

This gallant gentleman afterwards fell at the battle of Preston. Mrs. Hutchinson has given the following animated description of his fate.

"In the beginning of this battle, the valliant Coll. Thornhagh was wounded to death. Being at the beginning of the charge on a horse as courageous as became such a master, he made such furious speed, to sett upon a company of Scotch lanciers, that he was singly engaged and mortally wounded, before it was possible for his regiment, though as brave men as ever drew sword, and too affectionate to their collonell to be slack in following him, to come time enough to breake the furie of that body, which shamed not to unite all their force against one man. His soule was hovering to take her flight out of his body, but that an eager desire to know the successe of that battle kept it within, till the end of the day, when the newes being brought him, he clear'd his dying countenance, and say'd, 'I now reioyce to die, since God hath lett me see the overthrow of this perfidious enemy; I could not lose my life in a better cause, and I have the favour from God to see my blood aveng'd.' So he died; with a large testimony of love to his souldiers, but more to the cause, and was by mercy remoov'd, that the temptations of future times might not prevaile to corrupt his pure soule. A man of greater courage and integritie fell not nor fought not in this glorious cause; he had also an excellent good nature, but easie to be wrought upon by flatterers, yett as flexible to the admonitions of his friends; and this virtue he had, that if sometimes a cunning insinuation prevail'd upon his easie faith, when his error was made known to him, notwithstanding all his greate courage he was readier to acknowledge and repaire, then to pursue his mistake."—pp. 289, 290.

The most conspicuous person by far, of the age to which Mrs. Hutchinson belongs, was Cromwell; and there is no character, accordingly, which she appears to have studied more, or better comprehended. Her work contains a great number of original anecdotes with regard to him; and with all the advantages which later times have derived from the collation of various authorities, and from considering, at a dispassionate distance, the various turns of his policy, we doubt whether any historian has yet given a more just or satisfactory account of this extraordinary personage than this woman, who saw him only in the course of his obliquities, and through the varying medium of her own hopes and apprehensions. The profound duplicity and great ambition of his nature, appear to have been very early detected by Colonel Hutchinson, whose biographer gives this account of his demeanour to the Levellers and Presbyterians, who were then at the height of their rivalry.

"These were they," says she, speaking of the former, "who first began to discover the ambition of Lieftenant-general Cromwell and his idolaters, and to suspect and dislike it. About this time, he was sent downe, after his victory in Wales, to encounter Hamilton in the north. When he went downe, the chiefe of these levellers following him out of the towne, to take their leaves of him, receiv'd such professions from him, of a spiritt bent to pursue the same iust and honest things that they desir'd, as they went away with greate satisfaction,—'till they heard that a coachfull of *Presbyterian priests* comming after them, went away no less pleas'd; by which it was apparent he dissembled with one or the other, and by so doing lost his creditt with both.

"When he came to Nottingham, Coll. Hutchinson went to see him, whom he embrac'd with all the expressions of kindnesse that one friend could make to another, and then retiring with him, prest him to tell him what thoughts his friends, the levellers, had of him. The collonell, who was the freest man in the world from concealing truth from his friend, especially when it was requir'd of him in love and plainnesse, not only told him what others thought of him, but what he himselfe conceiv'd, and how much it would darken all his glories, if he should become a slave to his owne ambition, and be guilty of what he gave the world iust cause to suspect, and therefore begg'd of him to weare his heart in his face, and to scorne to delude his enemies, but to make use of his noble courage, to maintaine what he believ'd iust, against all greate oposers. Cromwell made mighty professions of a sincere heart to him, but it is certeine that for this and such like plaine dealing with him, he dreaded the collonell, and made it his particular businesse to keepe him out of the armie; but the collonell, never desiring command, to serve himselfe, but his country, would not use that art he detested in others, to procure himselfe any advantage."—pp. 285—287.

An after scene is still more remarkable, and more characteristic of both the actors. After Cromwell had possessed himself of the sovereignty, Colonel Hutchinson came accidentally to the knowledge of a plot which had been laid for his assassination; and was moved, by the nobleness of his own nature, and his regard for the Protector's great qualities—though he had openly testified against his usurpation, and avoided his presence since the time of it—to give such warning of it to Fleetwood, as might enable him to escape that hazard, but at the same time without betraying the names of any of the conspirators.

"After Collonell Hutchinson had given Fleetwood that caution, he was going into the country, when the protector sent to search him out with all the earnestnesse and haste that could possibly be, and the collonell went to him; who mett him in one of the galleries, and receiv'd him with open armes and the kindest embraces that could be given, and complain'd that the collonell should be so unkind as never to give him a visitt, professing how wellcome he should have bene, the most wellcome person in the land; and with these smooth insinuations led him allong to a private place, giving him thankes for the advertisement he had receiv'd from Fleetwood, and using all his art to gett out of the collonell the knowledge of the persons engag'd in the conspiracy against him. But none of his cunning, nor promises, nor flatteries, could prevaile with the collonell to informe him more than he thought necessary to prevent the execution of the designe; which when the protector perceiv'd, he gave him most infinite thankes for what he had told him, and acknowledg'd it open'd to him some misteries that had perplext him, and agreed so with other intelligence he had, that he must owe his preservation to him: 'But,' says he, 'deare collonell, why will not you come in and act among us?' The collonell told him plainly, because he liked not any of his wayes since he broke the parliament, as being those which led to certeine and unavoydable destruction, not only of themselves, but of the whole parliament party and cause, and thereupon tooke occasion, with his usuall freedom, to tell him into what a sad hazard all things were put, and how apparent a way was made for the restitution of all former tyranny and bondage. Cromwell seem'd to receive this honest plainnesse with the greatest affection that could be, and acknowledg'd his precipitatenesse in some things, and *with teares* complained how Lambert had put him upon all those violent actions, for which he now accus'd him and sought his ruine. He expresst an earnest desire to restore the people's liberties, and to take and pursue more safe and sober councells, and wound up all with a very fair courtship of the collonell to engage with him, offering him any thing he would account worthy of him. The collonell told him, he could not be forward to make his owne advantage, by serving to the enslaving of his country. The other told him, he intended nothing more then the restoring and confirming the liberties of the good people, in order to which he would employ such men of honor and interest as the people should rejoyce, and he should not refuse to be one of them. And after, with all his arts, he had endeavour'd to excuse his publique actions, and to draw in the collonell, he dismist him with such expressions as were publickely taken notice of by all his little courtiers then about him; when he went to the end of the gallery with the collonell, and there, embracing him, sayd allowd to him, 'Well, collonell, satisfied or dissatisfied, you shall be one of us, for wee can no longer exempt a person so able and faithfull from the publique service, and you shall be satisfied in all honest things.' The collonell left him with that respect that became the place he was in; when immediately the same courtiers, who had some of them past him by without knowing him when he came in, although they had bene once of his familiar acquaintance; and the rest, who had look'd upon him with such disdainfull neglect as those little people use to those who are not of their faction, now flockt about him, striving who should expresse most respect, and, by an extraordinary officiousnesse, redeeme their late slightings. Some of them desir'd he would command their service in any businesse he had with their lord, and a thousand such frivolous compliments, which the collonell smiled att, and, quitting himselfe of them as soone as he could, made haste to returne into the country. There he had not long bene but that he was inform'd, notwithstanding all these faire shewes, the protector, finding him too constant to be wrought upon to serve his tirannie, had resolv'd to secure his person, least he should head the people, who now grew very weary of his bondage. But though it was certainly confirm'd to the collonell how much he was afraid of his honesty and freedome, and that he was resolv'd not to let him longer be att liberty, yet, before his guards apprehended the collonell, death imprison'd himselfe, and confin'd all his vast ambition, and all his cruell designes into the narrow compasse of a grave."—pp. 340—342.

Two other anecdotes, one very discreditable to Cromwell, the other affording a striking proof of his bravery and knowledge of mankind, may be found at p. 308. and 316. But we dismiss the subject of this "great bad man;" with the following eloquent representation of his government after he had attained the height of his ambition;—a representation in which the keen regrets of disappointed patriotism are finely mingled with an indignant contempt for those who submitted to tyranny, and a generous admission of the talents and magnanimity of the tyrant.

"In the interim Cromwell and his armie grew wanton with their power, and invented a thousand tricks of government, which, when nobody oppos'd, they themselves fell to dislike and vary every day. First he calls a parliament out of his owne pockett, himselfe naming a sort of godly men for every county, who meeting and not agreeing, a part of them, in the name of the people, give up the sovereignty to him. Shortly after, he makes up severall sorts of mock parliaments, but not finding one of them absolutely for his turne, turn'd them off againe. He soone quitted himselfe of his triumvirs, and first thrust out Harrison, then tooke away Lambert's commission, and would have bene king

but for feare of quitting his generallship. He weeded, in a few months time, above a hundred and fifty godly officers out of the armie, with whom many of the religious souldiers went off, and in their roome abundance of the king's dissolute souldiers were entertain'd, and the armie was almost chang'd from that godly religious armie, whose vallour God had crown'd with triumph, into the dissolute armie they had beaten, bearing yett a better name. His wife and children too, were setting up for principality, which suited no better with any of them than scarlett on the ape; only, to speak the truth of himselfe, he had much naturall greatnesse, and well became the place he had usurp'd. His daughter Fleetewood was humbled, and not exalted, with these things; but the rest were insolent fooles. Cleypoole, who married his daughter, and his son Henry, were two debauch'd ungodly cavaliers. Richard was a peasant in his nature; yet gentle and vertuous; but became not greatnesse. His court was full of sinne and vanity, and the more abominable, because they had not yett quite cast away the name of God, but prophan'd it by taking it in vaine upon them. True religion was now almost lost, even among the religious party, and hipocrisie became an epidemicall disease, to the sad griefe of Collonell Hutchinson, and all true-hearted Christians and Englishmen. Almost all the ministers every where fell in and worshipt this beast, and courted and made addresses to him. So did the city of London, and many of the degenerate lords of the land, with the poore spirited gentry. The cavaliers, in pollicy, who saw that while Cromwell reduc'd all the exercise of tirannicall power under another name, there was a doore open'd for the restoring of their party, fell much in with Cromwell, and heighten'd all his disorders. He at last exercis'd such an arbitrary power, that the whole land grew weary of him, while he sett up a compnie of silly meane fellows, call'd maior-generalls, as governors in every county. These rul'd, according to their wills, by no law but what seem'd good in their owne eies; imprisoning men, obstructing the course of iustice betweene man and man, perverting right through partiallity, acquitting some that were guilty, and punishing some that were innocent as guilty. Then he exercised another proiect to rayse mony, by decimation of the estates of all the king's party, of which actions 'tis said Lambert was the instigator. At last he tooke upon him to make lords and knights; and wanted not many fooles, both of the armie and gentry, to accept of and strutt in his mock titles. Then the Earle of Warwick's grandchild and the Lord Falconbridge married his two daughters; such pittifull slaves were the nobles of those dayes. Att last Lambert, perceiving himselfe to have bene all this while deluded with hopes and promises of succession, and seeing that Cromwell now intended to confirme the government in his own famely, fell off from him, but behav'd himselfe very pittifully and meanely, was turn'd out of all his places, and return'd againe to plott new vengeance at his house at Wimbledon, where he fell to dresse his flowers in his garden, and worke at the needle with his wife and his maides! while he was watching an oppertunity to serve againe his ambition, which had this difference from the protector's; the one was gallant and greate, the other had nothing but an unworthy pride, most insolent in prosperity, and as abiect and base in adversity."—p. 335—338.

In making these miscellaneous extracts, for the amusement of our readers, we are afraid that we have too far lost sight of the worthy colonel, for whose honour the whole record was designed; and though the biography of a private person, however eminent, is seldom of much consequence to the general reader, except where it illustrates the manners of the times, or connects with the public history of the nation, there is something in this account of Colonel Hutchinson which appears to us deserving of notice with reference to both these particulars.

Soon after his marriage, he retired to his house at Owthorpe, where he took to the study of divinity; and having his attention roused to the state of public affairs, by the dreadful massacres of Ireland, in 1641, set himself diligently to read and consider all the disputes which were then begun between the King and Parliament; the result of which was, a steady conviction of the justice of the pretensions maintained by the latter, with a strong anxiety for the preservation of peace. His first achievement (we are sorry to say) was, to persuade the parson of his parish to deface the images, and break the painted glass in the windows of his church, in obedience to an injunction of the parliament; his next, to resist Lord Newark in an illegal attempt to carry off the ammunition belonging to the county, for the use of the King. His deportment upon this last occasion, when he was only twenty-five years of age, affords a very singular proof of temper and firmness,—perfect good breeding, and great powers of reasoning.

When the King set up his standard at Not tingham, Mr. Hutchinson repaired to the camp of Essex, the parliamentary general; but "did not then find a clear call from the Lord to join with him." His irresolution, however, was speedily dissipated, by the persecutions of the Royalists, who made various efforts to seize him as a disaffected person. He accordingly began to consult with others in the same predicament: and having resolved to try to defend the town and castle of Nottingham against the assaults of the enemy, he was first elected governor by his associates, and afterwards had his nomination confirmed by Fairfax and by the Parliament. A great deal too much of the book is occupied with an account of the petty enterprises in which this little garrison was engaged; the various feuds and dissensions which arose among the different officers and the committees who were appointed as their council; the occasional desertion and treachery of various individuals, and the many contrivances, and sacrifices, and exertions by which Colonel Hutchinson was enabled to maintain his post till the final discomfiture of the Royal party. This narrative contains, no doubt, many splendid examples of courage and fidelity on both sides; and, for the variety of intrigues, cabals, and successful and unsuccessful attempts at corruption which it exhibits, may be considered as a complete miniature of a greater history. But the insignificance of the events, and the obscurity of the persons, take away all interest from the story; and our admiration of Colonel Hutchinson's firmness, and disinterestedness and valour, is scarcely sufficient to keep our attention alive through the languishing narrative of the obscure warfare in which he was employed.

It has often been remarked, and for the honour of our country can never be too often

repeated, that history affords no example of a civil contest carried on for years at the point of the sword, and yet producing so little ferocity in the body of the people, and so few instances of particular violence or cruelty. No proscriptions—no executions—no sacking of cities, or laying waste of provinces—no vengeance wreaked, and indeed scarcely any severity inflicted, upon those who were notoriously hostile, unless found actually in arms. Some passages in the wars of Henry IV., as narrated by Sully, approach to this character; but the horrible massacres with which that contest was at other stages attended, exclude it from all parallel with the generous hostility of England. This book is full of instances, not merely of mutual toleration, but of the most cordial friendship subsisting between individuals actually engaged in the opposite parties. In particular, Sir Allan Apsley, Mrs. Hutchinson's brother, who commanded a troop of horse for the King, and was frequently employed in the same part of the country where Colonel Hutchinson commanded for the Parliament, is represented throughout as living on a footing of the greatest friendship and cordiality with this valiant relative. Under the protection of mutual passes, they pay frequent visits to each other, and exchange various civilities and pieces of service, without any attempt on either side to seduce the other from the cause to which his conscience had attached him. In the same way, the houses and families of various royalists are left unmolested in the district commanded by Colonel Hutchinson's forces; and officers conducting troops to the siege of the castle, are repeatedly invited to partake of entertainments with the garrison. It is no less curious and unique to find Mrs. Hutchinson officiating as a surgeon to the wounded; and the Colonel administering spiritual consolation to some of the captives who had been mortally hurt by the men whom he had led into action.

After the termination of the war, Colonel Hutchinson was returned to Parliament for the town which he had so resolutely defended. He was appointed a member of the High Court of Justice, for the trial of the King;—and after long hesitation, and frequent prayer to God to direct him aright in an affair of so much moment, he deliberately concurred in the sentence which was pronounced by it;—Mrs. Hutchinson proudly disclaiming for him the apology, afterwards so familiar in the mouths of his associates, of having been overawed by Cromwell. His opinion of the Protector, and of his government, has been pretty fully explained in the extracts we have already given. During that usurpation, he lived in almost unbroken retirement, at Owthorpe; where he occupied himself in superintending the education of his children, whom he himself instructed in music and other elegant accomplishments; in the embellishment of his residence by building and planting; in administering justice to his neighbours, and in making a very choice collection of painting and sculpture, for which he had purchased a number of articles out of the cabinet of the late King. Such were the liberal pursuits and elegant recreations of one whom all our recent histories would lead us to consider as a gloomy fanatic, and barbarous bigot!

Upon the death of the Protector, he again took his seat in Parliament, for the county of Nottingham; and was an indignant spectator of the base proceedings of Monk, and the headlong and improvident zeal of the people in the matter of the restoration. In the course of the debate on the treatment to be dealt to the regicides, such of them as were members of the House rose in their places, and made such a defence of their conduct as they respectively thought it admitted of. The following passage is very curious, and gives us a high idea of the readiness and address of Colonel Hutchinson in a situation of extraordinary difficulty.

"When it came to Inglesbies turne, he, *with many teares*, profest his repentance for that murther; and told a false tale, how Cromwell held his hand, and forc'd him to subscribe the sentence! and made a most whining recantation; after which he retir'd, and another had almost ended, when Collonell Hutchinson, who was not there at the beginning, came in, and was told what they were about, and that it would be expected he should say something. He was surpriz'd with a thing he expected not; yet neither then, nor in any the like occasion, did he ever faile himselfe, but told them, 'That for his actings in those dayes, if he had err'd, it was the inexperience of his age, and the defect of his iudgement, and not the malice of his heart, which had ever prompted him to persue the generall advantage of his country more then his owne; and if the sacrifice of him might conduce to the publick peace and settlement, he should freely submit his life and fortunes to their dispose; that the vain expence of his age, and the greate debts his publick employments had runne him into, as they were testimonies that neither avarice nor any other interest had carried him on, so they yielded him iust cause to repent that he ever forsooke his owne blessed quiett, to embarque in such a troubled sea, where he had made shipwrack of all things but a good conscience; *and as to that particular action of the king, he desir'd them to believe he had that sence of it that befitted an Englishman, a Christian, and a gentleman.*' Assoone as the collonell had spoken, he retir'd into a roome, where Inglesbie was, with his eies yet red, who had call'd up a little spirit to succeed his whinings, and embracing Collonell Hutchinson, 'O collonell,' say'd he, 'did I ever imagine wee could be brought to this? Could I have suspected it, when I brought them Lambert in the other day, this sword should have redeem'd us from being dealt with as criminalls, by that people, for whom we had so gloriously exposed ourselves.' The collonell told him, he had foreseene, ever since those usurpers thrust out the lawfull authority of the land, to enthrone themselves, it could end in nothing else; but the integrity of his heart, in all he had done, made him as chearefully ready to suffer as to triumph in a good cause. The result of the house that day was to suspend Collonell Hutchinson and the rest from sitting in the house. Monke, after all his greate professions, now sate still, and had not one word to interpose for any person, but was as forward to sett vengeance on foot as any man."—pp. 367—369.

He was afterwards comprehended in the act of amnesty, and with some difficulty obtained his pardon; upon which he retired to the country; but was soon after brought to town, in order to see if he could not be prevailed on to give evidence against such of the

regicides as it was resolved to bring to trial. The Inglesby who is commemorated in the preceding extract, is known to have been the chief informer on that occasion; and Colonel Hutchinson understood, that it was by his instigation that he also had been called as a witness. His deportment, when privately examined by the Attorney-General, is extremely characteristic, and includes a very fine and bitter piece of irony on his base associate, who did not disdain to save himself by falsehood and treachery. When pressed to specify some overt acts against the prisoners,

—"the collonell answered him, that in a businesse transacted so many years agoe, wherein life was concern'd, he durst not beare a testimony; having at that time bene so little an observer, *that he could not remember the least title of that most eminent circumstance, of Cromwell's forcing Collonell Inglesby to sett to his unwilling hand, which, if his life had depended on that circumstance, he could not have affirm'd!* 'And then, sir,' sayd he, 'if I have lost so great a thing as that, it cannot be expected lesse eminent passages remaine with me.'" p. 379.

It was not thought proper to examine him on the trial; and he was allowed, for about a year, to pursue his innocent occupations in the retirement of a country life. At last he was seized, upon suspicion of being concerned in some treasonable conspiracy; and, though no formal accusation was *ever* exhibited against him, and no sort of evidence specified as the ground of his detention, was conveyed to London, and committed a close prisoner to the Tower. In this situation, he was treated with the most brutal harshness; all which he bore with great meekness of spirit, and consoled himself in the constant study of the Scriptures, and the society of his magnanimous consort, who, by the powerful intercession of her brother, was at last admitted to his presence. After an imprisonment of ten months, during which the most urgent solicitations could neither obtain his deliverance, nor the specification of the charges against him, he was suddenly ordered down to Sandown castle in Kent, and found, upon his arrival, that he was to be closely confined in a damp and unwholesome apartment, in which another prisoner, of the meanest rank and most brutal manners, was already established. This aggravated oppression and indignity, however, he endured with a cheerful magnanimity; and conversed with his wife and daughter, as she expresses it, "with as pleasant and contented a spirit as ever in his whole life. Sir Allen Apsley at last procured an order for permitting him to walk a certain time every day on the beach; but this mitigation came too late. A sort of aguish fever, brought on by damp and confinement, had settled on his constitution; and, in little more than a month after his removal from the Tower, he was delivered by death from the mean and cowardly oppression of those whom he had always disdained either to flatter or betray.

England should be proud, we think, of having given birth to Mrs. Hutchinson and her husband; and chiefly because their characters are truly and peculiarly English; according to the standard of those times in which national characters were most distinguishable. Not exempt, certainly, from errors and defects, they yet seem to us to hold out a lofty example of substantial dignity and virtue; and to possess most of those talents and principles by which public life is made honourable, and privacy delightful. Bigotry must at all times debase, and civil dissension embitter our existence; but, in the ordinary course of events, we may safely venture to assert, that a nation which produces many such wives and mothers as Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, must be both great and happy.

For the Reverend Julius Hutchinson, the editor of these Memoirs, it is easy to see that he is considerably perplexed and distracted, between a natural desire to extol those illustrious ancestors, and a fear of being himself mistaken for a republican. So he gives us alternate notes in laud of the English levellers, and in vituperation of the atheists and jacobins of France. From all this, our charity leads us to infer, that the said Reverend Julius Hutchinson has not yet obtained that preferment in the church which it would be convenient for him to possess; and that, when he is promoted according to his merits, he will speak more uniformly in a manner becoming his descent. In the mean time, we are very much obliged to him for this book, and for the pains he has taken to satisfy us of its authenticity, and of the accuracy of its publication. We do not object to the old spelling, which occasions no perplexity; but when the work comes to another edition, we would recommend it to him to add a few dates on the margin, to break his pages into more paragraphs, and to revise his punctuation. He would make the book infinitely more saleable, too, if, without making the slightest variation in what is retained, he would omit about two hundred pages of the siege of Nottingham, and other parish business; especially as the whole is now put beyond the reach of loss or corruption by the present full publication.

(October, 1829.)

Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, *Wife of the Right Honourable Sir Richard Fanshawe, Baronet, Ambassador from Charles the Second to the Court of Madrid in* 1665. Written by herself. *To which are added, Extracts from the Correspondence of Sir Richard Fanshawe.* 8vo. pp. 360. London: 1829.

There is not much in this book, either of individual character, or public story. It is, indeed, but a small affair—any way; but yet pleasing, and not altogether without interest or instruction. Though it presents us with no traits of historical importance, and but few of personal passion or adventure, it still gives us a peep at a scene of surpassing interest from a new quarter; and at all events adds one other item to the great and growing store of those contemporary notices which are every day familiarizing us more and more with the living character of by-gone ages; and without which we begin, at last, to be sensible, that we can neither enter into their spirit, nor even understand their public transactions. Writings not meant for publication, nor prepared for purposes of vanity or contention, are the only memorials in which the true "form and pressure" of the ages which produce them are ever completely preserved; and, indeed, the only documents from which the great events which are blazoned on their records can ever be satisfactorily explained. It is in such writings alone,—confidential letters—private diaries—family anecdotes—and personal remonstrances, apologies, or explanations,—that the true springs of action are disclosed—as well as the obstructions and impediments, whether in the scruples of individuals or the general temper of society, by which their operation is so capriciously, and, but for these revelations, so unaccountably controlled.—They are the true key to the cipher in which public annals are almost necessarily written; and their disclosure, after long intervals of time, is almost as good as the revocation of their writers from the dead—to abide our interrogatories, and to act over again, before us, in the very dress and accents of the time, a portion of the scenes which they once guided or adorned. It is not a very striking portion, perhaps, that is thus recalled by the publication before us; but whatever interest it possesses is mainly of this character. It belongs to an era, to which, of all others in our history, curiosity will always be most eagerly directed; and it constantly rivets our attention, by exciting expectations which it ought, in truth, to have fulfilled; and suggesting how much more interesting and instructive it might so easily have been made.

Lady Fanshawe was, as is generally known, the wife of a distinguished cavalier, in the Heroic Age of the civil wars and the Protectorate; and survived till long after the Restoration. Her husband was a person of no mean figure in those great transactions; and she, who adhered to him with the most devoted attachment, and participated not unworthily in all his fortunes and designs, was, consequently, in continual contact with the movements which then agitated society; and had her full share of the troubles and triumphs which belonged to such an existence. Her memoirs *ought*, therefore, to have formed an interesting counterpart to those of Mrs. Hutchinson; and to have recalled to us, with equal force and vivacity, the aspect under which those great events presented themselves to a female spectatress and sufferer, of the opposite faction. But, though the title of the book, and the announcements of the editor, hold out this promise, we must say that the body of it falls far short of performance: and, whether it be that her side of the question did not admit of the same force of delineation or loftiness of sentiment; or, that the individual chronicler has been less fortunately selected, it is certain that, in point both of interest and instruction; in traits of character, warmth of colouring, or exaltation of feeling, there is no sort of comparison between these gossiping, and, though affectionate, yet relatively cold and feeble, memoranda, and the earnest, eloquent, and graphic representations of the puritan heroine. Nor should it be forgotten, even in hinting at such a parallel, that, in one important respect, the royalist cause also must be allowed to have been singularly happy in its female representative. Since, if it may be said with some show of reason, that Lucy Hutchinson and her husband had too many elegant tastes and accomplishments to be taken as fair specimens of the austere and godly republicans; it certainly may be retorted, with at least equal justice, that the chaste and decorous Lady Fanshawe, and her sober diplomatic lord, shadow out rather too favourably the general manners and morals of the cavaliers.

After all, perhaps, the true secret of her inferiority, in all at least that relates to political interest, may be found in the fact, that the fair writer, though born and bred a royalist, and faithfully adhering to her husband in his efforts and sufferings in the cause, was not naturally, or of herself, particularly studious of such matters; or disposed to occupy herself more than was necessary with any public concern. She seems to have followed, like a good wife and daughter, where her parents or her husband led her; and to have adopted their opinions with a dutiful and implicit confidence, but without being very deeply moved by the principles or passions which actuated those from whom they were derived; while Lucy Hutchinson not only threw her whole heart and soul into the cause of her party

but, like Lady Macbeth or Madame Roland, imparted her own fire to her more phlegmatic helpmate,—"chastised him," when necessary, "with the valour of her tongue," and cheered him on, by the encouragement of her high example, to all the ventures and sacrifices, the triumphs or the martyrdoms, that lay visibly across her daring and lofty course. The Lady Fanshawe, we take it, was of a less passionate temperament; and her book, accordingly, is more like that of an ordinary woman, though living in extraordinary times. She begins, no doubt, with a good deal of love and domestic devotion, and even echoes, from that sanctuary, certain notes of loyalty; but, in very truth, is chiefly occupied, for the best part of her life, with the sage and serious business of some nineteen or twenty *accouchemens*, which are happily accomplished in different parts of Europe; and seems, at last, to be wholly engrossed in the ceremonial of diplomatic presentations,—the description of court dresses, state coaches, liveries, and jewellery,—the solemnity of processions, and receptions by sovereign princes,—and the due interchange of presents and compliments with persons of worship and dignity. Fully one-third of her book is taken up with such goodly matter; and nearly as much with the genealogy of her kindred, and a faithful record of their marriages, deaths, and burials. From the remainder, however, some curious things may be gathered; and we shall try to extract what strikes us as most characteristic. We may begin with something that preceded her own recollection. The following singular legend relates to her mother; and is given, it will be observed, on very venerable authority:

"Dr. Howlsworth preached her funeral sermon, in which, upon his own knowledge, he told, before many hundreds of people, this accident following: That my mother, being sick to death of a fever three months after I was born, which was the occasion she gave me suck no longer, her friends and servants thought, to all outward appearance, that she was dead, and so lay almost two days and a night; but Dr. Winston, coming to comfort my father, went into my mother's room, and looking earnestly on her face, said she was so handsome, and now looks so lovely, I cannot think she is dead; and suddenly took a lancet out of his pocket, and with it cut the sole of her foot, which bled. Upon this, he immediately caused her to be laid upon the bed again, and to be rubbed, and such means, as she came to life, and opening her eyes, saw two of her kinswomen stand by her, my Lady Knollys and my Lady Russell, both with great wide sleeves, as the fashion then was, and said, Did not you promise me fifteen years, and are you come again already? which they not understanding, persuaded her to keep her spirits quiet in that great weakness wherein she then was; but, some hours after, she desired my father and Dr. Howlsworth might be left alone with her, to whom she said, I will acquaint you, that, during the time of my trance, I was in great quiet, but in a place I could neither distinguish nor describe; but the sense of leaving my girl, who is dearer to me than all my children, remained a trouble upon my spirits. Suddenly I saw two by me, cloathed in long white garments, and methought I fell down with my face in the dust; and they asked me why I was troubled in so great happiness. I replied, O let me have the same grant given to Hezekiah, that I may live fifteen years, to see my daughter a woman: to which they answered, It is done: and then, at that instant, I awoke out of my trance; and Dr. Howlsworth did there affirm, that that day she died made just fifteen years from that time."—pp. 26—28.

This gift of dreaming dreams, or seeing visions, seems, indeed, to have been hereditary in the family; for the following is given on the credit of the fair writer's own experience. When she and her husband went to Ireland, on their way to Portugal, they were honourably entertained by all the distinguished royalists who came in their way. Among others, she has recorded that,

"We went to the Lady Honor O'Brien's, a lady that went for a maid, but few believed it! She was the youngest daughter of the Earl of Thomond. There we staid three nights. The first of which I was surprised by being laid in a chamber, where, about one o'clock, I heard a voice that wakened me. I drew the curtain, and, in the casement of the window, I saw, by the light of the moon, a woman leaning into the window, through the casement, in white, with red hair, and pale and ghastly complexion. She spoke loud, and in a tone I had never heard, thrice, 'A horse!' and then, with a sigh more like the wind than breath, she vanished, and, to me, her body looked more like a thick cloud than substance. I was so much frightened, that my hair stood on end, and my night-clothes fell off. I pulled and pinched your father, who never woke during the disorder I was in; but at last was much surprised to see me in this fright, and more so when I related the story and showed him the window opened. Neither of us slept any more that night, but he entertained me with telling me how much more these apparitions were usual in this country than in England! and we concluded the cause to be the great superstition of the Irish, and the want of that knowing faith, which should defend them from the power of the devil, which he exercises among them very much."

Ingenious and orthodox as this solution of the mystery must be allowed to be, we confess we should have been inclined to prefer that of the fair sleeper having had a fit of nightmare; had it not been for the conclusive testimony of the putative virgin of the house of Thomond, who supplies the following astonishing confirmation; and leads us rather to suspect that the whole might have been a trick, to rid herself the sooner of their scrupulous and decorous company.

"About five o'clock," continues Lady Fanshawe, "the lady of the house came to see us, saying she had not been in bed all night, because a cousin O'Brien of hers, whose ancestors had owned that house, had desired her to stay with him in his chamber, and that he died at two o'clock, and she said, 'I wish you to have had no disturbance, for 'tis the custom of the place, that, when any of the family are dying, the shape of a woman appears in the window every night till they be dead. This woman was many ages ago got with child by the owner of this place, who murdered her in his garden, and flung her into the river under the window, but truly I thought not of it when I lodged you here, it being the best room in the house.' We made little reply to her speech, but disposed ourselves to be gone suddenly."

We shall close this chapter, of the supernatural, with the following rather remarkable ghost story, which is calculated, we think, to make a strong impression on the imagination. Our diligent chronicler picked it up, it seems, on her way through Canterbury in the year 1663; and it is thus honourably attested:

"And here I cannot omit relating the ensuing story, confirmed by Sir Thomas Batten, Sir Arnold Breames, the Dean of Canterbury, with many more gentlemen and persons of this town.

"There lives not far from Canterbury a gentleman, called Colonel Colepeper, whose mother was widow unto the Lord Strangford: this gentleman had a sister, who lived with him, as the world said, in too much love. She married Mr. Porter. This brother and sister being both atheists and living a life according to their profession, went in a frolick into a vault of their ancestors, where, before they returned, they pulled some of their father's and mother's hairs! Within a very few days after, Mrs. Porter fell sick and died. Her brother kept her body in a coffin set up in his buttery, saying it would not be long before he died, and then they would be both buried together; but from the night after her death, until the time that we were told the story, which was three months, they say that a head, as cold as death, with curled hair like his sister's, did ever lie by him wherever he slept, notwithstanding he removed to several places and countries to avoid it; and several persons told us they also had felt this apparition."

We may now go back a little to the affairs of this world. Deep and devoted attachments are more frequently conceived in circumstances of distress and danger than in any other: and, accordingly, the love and marriage of Sir Richard Fanshawe and his lady befel during their anxious and perilous residence with the court at Oxford, in 1644. The following little sketch of the life they passed there is curious and interesting:

"My father commanded my sister and myself to come to him to Oxford, where the Court then was; but we, that had till that hour lived in great plenty and great order, found ourselves like fishes out of the water, and the scene so changed, that we knew not at all how to act any part but obedience; for, from as good a house as any gentleman of England had, we came to a baker's house in an obscure street; and from rooms well furnished, to lie in a very bad bed in a garret, to one dish of meat, and that not the best ordered, no money, for we were as poor as Job, nor clothes more than a man or two brought in their cloak bags: we had the perpetual discourse of losing and gaining towns and men: at the windows the sad spectacle of war, sometimes plagues, sometimes sicknesses of other kind, by reason of so many people being packed together, as, I believe, there never was before of that quality; always in want, yet I must needs say, that most bore it with a martyr-like cheerfulness. For my own part, I began to think we should all, like Abraham, live in tents all the days of our lives. The king sent my father a warrant for a baronet, but he returned it with thanks, saying he had too much honour of his knighthood, which his majesty had honoured him with some years before, for the fortune he now possessed."—pp. 35—37.

They were married very privately the year after; and certainly entered upon life with little but their mutual love to cheer and support them; but it seems to have been sufficient.

"Both his fortune and my promised portion, which was made 10,000*l*, were both at that time in expectation; and we might truly be called merchant adventurers, for the stock we set up our trading with did not amount to twenty pounds betwixt us; but, however, it was to us as a little piece of armour is against a bullet, which, if it be right placed, though no bigger than a shilling, serves as well as a whole suit of armour; so our stock bought pen, ink, and paper, which was your father's trade, and by it, I assure you, we lived better than those who were born to 2000*l*. a year, as long as he had his liberty."—pp. 37, 38.

The next scene presents both of them in so amiable and respectable a light, that we think it but justice to extract it, though rather long, without any abridgment. It is, indeed, one of the most pleasing and interesting passages in the book. They had now gone to Bristol, in 1645.

"My husband had provided very good lodgings for us, and as soon as he could come home from the council, where he was at my arrival, he with all expressions of joy received me in his arms, and gave me a hundred pieces of gold, saying, 'I know thou that keeps my heart so well, will keep my fortune, which from this time I will ever put into thy hands as God shall bless me with increase;' and now I thought myself a perfect queen, and my husband so glorious a crown, that I more valued myself to be called by his name than born a princess; for I knew him very wise and very good, and his soul doated on me,—upon which confidence I will tell you what happened. My Lady Rivers, a brave woman, and one that had suffered many thousand pounds loss for the king, and whom I had a great reverence for, and she a kindness for me as a kinswoman, in discourse she tacitly commended the knowledge of state affairs; and that some women were very happy in a good understanding thereof, as my Lady Aubigny, Lady Isabel Thynne, and divers others, and yet none was at first more capable than I; that in the night she knew there came a post from Paris from the queen, and that she would be extremely glad to hear what the queen commanded the king in order to his affairs; saying, if I would ask my husband privately, he would tell me what he found in the packet, and I might tell her. I, that was young and innocent, and to that day had never in my mouth 'What news?' began to think there was more in inquiring into public affairs than I thought of; and that it being a fashionable thing would make me more beloved of my husband, if that had been possible, than I was. When my husband returned home from council, after welcoming him, as his custom ever was, he went with his handful of papers into his study for an hour or more; I followed him; he turned hastily, and said, 'What wouldst thou have, my life?' I told him, I heard the prince had received a packet from the queen, and I guessed it was that in his hand, and I desired to know what was in it; he smilingly replied, 'My love, I will immediately come to thee; pray thee go, for I am very busy:' when he came out of his closet I revived my suit; he kissed me, and talked of other things. At supper I would eat nothing; he as usual sat by me, and drank often to me, which was his custom, and was full of discourse to company that was at table. Going to bed I asked again; and said I could not believe he loved me if he refused to tell me all he knew; but he answered nothing, but stopped my mouth with kisses. So we went to bed; I cried, and he went to sleep! Next morning early, as his custom was, he called to rise, but began to discourse with me first, to which I made no reply; he rose, came on the other side of the bed and kissed me, and drew the curtains softly, and went to court. When he came home to dinner, he presently came to me as was usual, and when I had him by the hand, I said, 'Thou dost not care to see me troubled;' to which he, taking me in his arms, answered, 'My dearest soul, nothing upon earth can afflict me like that: But when you asked me of my business, it was wholly out of my power to satisfy thee; for my life and fortune shall be thine, and every thought of my heart in which the trust I am in may not be revealed: But my honour is my own; which I cannot preserve if I communicate the prince's

affairs; and, pray thee, with this answer rest satisfied.' So great was his reason and goodness, that, upon consideration, it made my folly appear to me so vile, that from that day until the day of his death, I never thought fit to ask him any business, but what he communicated freely to me, in order to his estate or family."

After the ill success of the royal arms had made it necessary for the Prince to retire beyond seas, Lady Fanshawe and her husband attended him to the Scilly Islands. We give this natural and simple picture of their discomforts on that expedition:—

"The next day, after having been pillaged, and extremely sick and big with child, I was set on shore, almost dead, in the island of Scilly; when we had got to our quarters near the castle, where the prince lay, I went immediately to bed, which was so vile that my footman ever lay in a better, and we had but three in the whole house, which consisted of four rooms, or rather partitions, two low rooms, and two little lofts, with a ladder to go up: in one of these they kept dried fish, which was his trade, and in this my husband's two clerks lay; one there was for my sister, and one for myself, and one amongst the rest of the servants; but when I waked in the morning, I was so cold I knew not what to do; but the daylight discovered that my bed was near swimming with the sea, which the owner told us afterwards it never did—*but at spring tides.*"

We must not omit her last interview with her unfortunate Sovereign, which took place at Hampton Court, when his star was hastening to its setting! It is the only interview with that unhappy Prince of which she has left any notice; and is, undoubtedly, very touching and amiable.

"During his stay at Hampton Court, my husband was with him; to whom he was pleased to talk much of his concerns, and gave him three credentials for Spain, with private instructions, and letters for his service: But God, for our sins, disposed his Majesty's affairs otherwise. I went three times to pay my duty to him, both as I was the daughter of his servant, and wife of his servant. The last time I ever saw him, when I took my leave, I could not refrain from weeping. When he had saluted me, I prayed to God to preserve his majesty with long life and happy years; he stroked me on the cheek, and said, 'Child, if God pleaseth it shall be so! both you and I must submit to God's will, and you know in what hands I am in;' then turning to your father, he said, 'Be sure, Dick, to tell my son all that I have said, and deliver those letters to my wife; pray God bless her! I hope I shall do well;' and taking him in his arms, said, 'Thou hast ever been an honest man, and I hope God will bless thee, and make thee a happy servant to my son, whom I have charged in my letter to continue his love, and trust to you;' adding, 'I do promise you, that if ever I am restored to my dignity, I will bountifully reward you for both your service and sufferings.' Thus did we part from that glorious sun, that within a few months after was murdered, to the grief of all Christians that were not forsaken by God."

These are almost sufficient specimens of the work before us; for it would not be fair to extract the whole substance of it. However, we must add the following striking trait of heroism and devoted affection, especially as we have spoken rather too disparagingly of the fair writer's endowment of those qualities. In point of courage and love to her husband it is quite on a level, perhaps with any of the darings of Mrs. Hutchinson,—though we cannot say that the occasion called so clearly for their display. During their voyage to Portugal, and—

"When we had just passed the Straits, we saw coming towards us, with full sails, a Turkish galley, well manned, and we believed we should be all carried away slaves, for this man had so laden his ship with goods for Spain, that his guns were useless, though the ship carried sixty guns. He called for brandy, and after he had well drunken, and all his men, which were near two hundred, he called for arms, and cleared the deck as well as he could, resolving to fight rather than lose his ship, which was worth 30,000*l.* This was sad for us passengers: but my husband bid us be sure to keep in the cabin, and not appear, the women, which would make the Turks think that we were a man-of-war, but if they saw women, they would take us for merchants, and board us. He went upon the deck, and took a gun and bandoliers, and sword, and, with the rest of the ship's company, stood upon deck expecting the arrival of the Turkish man-of-war. This beast, the captain, had locked me up in the cabin; I knocked and called long to no purpose, until at length the cabin-boy came and opened the door. I, all in tears, desired him to be so good as to give me his blue thrum cap he wore, and his tarred coat, which he did, and I gave him half-a-crown, and putting them on, and flinging away my night-clothes, I crept up softly and stood upon the deck by my husband's side, as free from sickness and fear as, I confess, from discretion; but it was the effect of that passion which I could never master.

"By this time the two vessels were engaged in parley, and so well satisfied with speech and sight of each other's forces, that the Turks' man-of-war tacked about, and we continued our course. But when your father saw it convenient to retreat, looking upon me, he blessed himself, and snatched me up in his arms, saying, 'Good God, that love can make this change!' and though he seemingly chid me, he would laugh at it as often as he remembered that voyage."

What follows is almost as strong a proof of that "love which casteth out fear;" while it is more unexceptionable on the score of prudence. Sir Richard, being in arms for the King at the fatal battle of Worcester, was afterwards taken prisoner, and brought to London; to which place his faithful consort immediately repaired, where, in the midst of her anxieties,

"I met a messenger from him with a letter, which advised me of his condition, and told me he was very civilly used, and said little more, but that I should be in some room at Charing Cross, where he had promise from his keeper that he should rest there in my company at dinner-time; this was meant to him as a great favour. I expected him with impatience, and on the day appointed provided a dinner and room, as ordered, in which I was with my father and some more of our friends, where, about eleven of the clock, we saw hundreds of poor soldiers, both English and Scotch, march all naked on foot, and many with your father, who was very cheerful in appearance; who, after he had spoken and saluted me and his friends there, said, 'Pray let us not lose time, for I know not how little I have to spare; this is the chance of war; nothing venture, nothing have; so let us sit down and be merry whilst we may;' then taking my hand in his, and kissing me, 'Cease weeping, no other thing upon earth can move me; remember we are all at God's disposal.'

"During the time of his imprisonment, I failed not constantly to go, when the clock struck four in the morning, with a dark lantern in my hand alone and on foot, from my lodging in Chancery Lane, at my cousin Young's, to Whitehall, in at the entry that went out of King Street into the bowling-green. There I would go under his window and softly call him; he, after the first time excepted, never failed to put out his head at the first call; thus we talked together, and sometimes I was so wet with the rain, that it went in at my neck and out at my heels. He directed how I should make my addresses, which I did ever to their general, Cromwell, who had a great respect for your father, and would have bought him off to his service, upon any terms.

"Being one day to solicit for my husband's liberty for a time, he bid me bring, the next day, a certificate from a physician that he was really ill. Immediately I went to Dr. Batters, that was by chance both physician to Cromwell and to our family, who gave me one very favourable in my husband's behalf. I delivered it at the Council Chamber, at three of the clock that afternoon, as he commanded me, and he himself moved, that seeing they could make no use of his imprisonment, whereby to lighten them in their business, that he might have his liberty upon 4000*l.* bail, to take a course of physic, he being dangerously ill. Many spake against it; but most Sir Henry Vane, who said he would be as instrumental, for ought he knew, to hang them all that sat there, if ever he had opportunity; but if he had liberty for a time, that he might take the engagement before he went out; upon which Cromwell said, 'I never knew that the engagement was a medicine for the scorbutic!' They, hearing their general say so, thought it obliged him, and so ordered him his liberty upon bail."

These are specimens of what we think best in the work; but, as there may be readers who would take an interest in her description of court ceremonies, or, at least, like to see how she manages them, we shall conclude with a little fragment of such a description.

"This afternoon I went to pay my visit to the Duchess of Albuquerque. When I came to take coach, the soldiers stood to their arms, and the lieutenant that held the colours displaying them, which is never done to any one but kings, or such as represent their persons: I stood still all the while, then at the lowering of the colours to the ground, they received for them a low courtesy from me, and for himself a bow; then taking coach, with very many persons, both in coaches and on foot, I went to the duke's palace, where I was again received by a guard of his excellency's, with the same ceremony of the king's colours as before. Then I was received by the duke's brother and near a hundred persons of quality. I laid my hand upon the wrist of his excellency's right hand; he putting his cloak thereupon, as the Spanish fashion is, went up the stairs, upon the top of which stood the duchess and her daughter, who received me with great civility, putting me into every door, and all my children, till we came to sit down in her excellency's chamber, where she placed me upon her right hand, upon cushions, as the fashion of this court is, being very rich, and laid upon Persian carpets."

"The two dukes embraced my husband with great kindness, welcoming him to the place, and the Duke of Medina Celi led me to my coach, an honour that he had never done any but once, when he waited on your queen to help her on the like occasion. The Duke d'Alcala led my eldest daughter, and the younger led my second, and the Governor of Cadiz, Don Antonio de Pimentel, led the third. Mrs. Kestian carried Betty in her arms."

There is great choice of this sort for those who like it; and not a little of the more solemn and still duller discussion of diplomatic etiquette and precedence. But, independent of these, and of the genealogies and obituaries, which are not altogether without interest, there is enough both of heart, and sense, and observation, in these memoirs, at once to repay gentle and intelligent readers for the trouble of perusing them, and to stamp a character of amiableness and respectability on the memory of their author.

(November 1825.)

Memoirs of Samuel Pepys, Esq. F.R.S., *Secretary to the Admiralty in the Reign of Charles II. and James II., comprising his Diary from* 1659 *to* 1669, *deciphered by the Rev. John Smith, A. B., of St. John's College, Cambridge, from the original Shorthand MS. in the Pepysian Library, and a Selection from his Private Correspondence.* Edited by Richard Lord Braybrooke. 2 vols. 4to. London: 1825.

We have a great indulgence, we confess, for the taste, or curiosity, or whatever it may be called, that gives its value to such publications as this; and are inclined to think the desire of knowing, pretty minutely, the manners and habits of former times,—of understanding, in all their details, the character and ordinary way of life and conversation of our forefathers—a very liberal and laudable desire; and by no means to be confounded with that hankering after contemporary slander, with which this age is so miserably infested, and so justly reproached. It is not only curious to see from what beginnings, and by what steps, we have come to be what we are:—But it is most important, for the future and for the present, to ascertain what practices, and tastes, and principles, have been commonly found associated or disunited: And as, in uncultivated lands, we can often judge of their inherent fertility by the quality of the weeds they spontaneously produce — so we may learn, by such an inspection of the moral growths of a country, compared with its subsequent history, what prevailing manners are indicative of vice or of virtue—what existing follies foretell approaching wisdom — what forms of licentiousness give promise of coming purity, and what of deeper degradation—what uncertain lights, in short, announce the *rising*, and what the *setting* sun! While, in like manner, we may trace in the same records the connection of public and private morality, and the mutual action and reaction of govern-

ment and manners;—and discover what individual corruptions spring from political dishonour — what domestic profligacy leads to the sacrifice of freedom—and what national virtues are most likely to resist the oppressions, or yield to the seductions of courts.

Of all these things History tells us little—and yet they are the most important that she could have been employed in recording. She has been contented, however, for the most part, with detailing merely the broad and apparent results—the great public events and transactions, in which the true working principles of its destiny have their end and consummation; and points only to the wrecks or the triumphs that float down the tide of human affairs, without giving us any light as to those *ground currents* by which its central masses are governed, and of which those superficial appearances are, in most cases, the necessary though unsuspected effects.

Every one feels, we think, how necessary this information is, if we wish to understand what antiquity really was, and what manner of men existed in former generations. How vague and unsatisfactory, without it, are all public annals and records of dynasties and battles—of how little interest to private individuals—of how little use even to philosophers and statesmen! Before we can apply any example in history, or even comprehend its actual import, we must know something of the character, both of the age and of the persons to which it belongs—and understand a good deal of the temper, tastes, and occupations, both of the actors and the sufferers.—Good and evil, in truth, change natures, with a change of those circumstances; and we may be lamenting as the most intolerable of calamities, what was scarcely felt as an infliction, by those on whom it fell. Without this knowledge, therefore, the most striking and important events are mere wonders, to be stared at—altogether barren of instruction—and probably leading us astray, even as occasions of sympathy or moral emotion. Those minute details, in short, which History has so often rejected as below her dignity, are indispensable to give life, certainty, or reality to her delineations; and we should have little hesitation in asserting, that no history is really worth any thing, unless it relate to a people and an age of which we have also those humbler and more private memorials. It is not in the grand tragedy, or rather the epic fictions, of History, that we learn the true condition of former ages—the real character of past generations, or even the actual effects that were produced on society or individuals at the time, by the great events that are there so solemnly recorded. If we have not some remnants or some infusion of the Comedy of middle life, we neither have any idea of the state and colour of the general existence, nor any just understanding of the transactions about which we are reading.

For what we know of the ancient Greeks for example—for all that enables us to imagine what sort of thing it would have been to have lived among them, or even what effects were produced on the society of Athens or Sparta by the battles of Marathon or Salamis, we are indebted not so much to the histories of Herodotus, Xenophon, or Thucydides, as to the Deipnosophists of Athenæus—the anecdotes of Plutarch—the introductory and incidental passages of the Platonic dialogues—the details of some of the private orations—and parts of the plays of Plautus and Terence, apparently copied from the Greek comedies. For our personal knowledge of the Romans, again, we do not look to Livy, or Dionysius—or even to Cæsar, Sallust, or Tacitus; but to Horace, Petronius, Juvenal, and the other satirists—to incidental notices in the Orations and Dialogues of Cicero—and above all to his invaluable letters,—followed up by those of Pliny,—to intimations in Plutarch, and Seneca, and Lucian—to the books of the Civil law—and the biographies and anecdotes of the Empire, from Suetonius to Procopius. Of the feudal times—the heroic age of modern Europe—we have fortunately more abundant and minute information, both in the Romances of chivalry, which embody all the details of upper life; and in the memoirs and chronicles of such writers as Commines and Froissart, which are filled with so many individual pictures and redundant particularities, as to leave us scarcely any thing more to learn or to wish for, as to the manners and character, the temper and habits, and even the daily life and conversation of the predominating classes of society, who then stood for every thing in those countries: And, even with regard to their serfs and vassals, we are not without most distinct and intelligible lights—both in scattered passages of the works we have already referred to, in various ancient ballads and legends relating to their condition, and in such invaluable records as the humorous and more familiar tales of our immortal Chaucer. For the character and ordinary life of our more immediate ancestry, we may be said to owe our chief knowledge of it to Shakespeare, and the comic dramatists by whom he was succeeded—reinforced and supported by the infinite quantity of obscure and insignificant matter which the industry of his commentators has brought back to light for his elucidation—and which the matchless charm of his popularity has again rendered both interesting and familiar. The manners and habits of still later times are known to us, not by any means by our public histories, but by the writers of farces and comedies, polite essays, libels, and satires—by collections of private letters, like those of Gray, Swift, Arbuthnot, and Lord Orford—by private memoirs or journals, such as those of Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson, Swift's Journal to Stella, and Doddington's Diary—and, in still later times, by the best of our gay and satirical novels—by caricature prints—by the better newspapers and magazines,—and by various minute accounts (in the manner of Boswell's Life of Johnson) of the private life and conversation of distinguished individuals.

The work before us relates to a period of which we have already very considerable memorials. But it is, notwithstanding, of

very great interest and curiosity. A good deal of what it contains derives, no doubt, its chief interest from having happened one hundred and eighty years ago: But there is little of it that does not, for that very reason, throw valuable lights on our intermediate history. It consists, as the title shows, of a very minute and copious Diary, continued from the year 1659 to 1669—and a correspondence, much less perfect and continuous, down nearly to the death of the author in 1703. Fortunately for the public part of the story, the author was, from the very beginning, in immediate contact with persons in high office and about court—and, still more fortunately for the private part, seems to have been possessed of the most extraordinary activity, and the most indiscriminating, insatiable, and miscellaneous curiosity, that ever prompted the researches, or supplied the pen, of a daily chronicler. Although excessively busy and diligent in his attendance at his office, he finds time to go to every play, to every execution, to every procession, fire, concert, riot, trial, review, city feast, public dissection, or picture gallery that he can hear of. Nay, there seems scarcely to have been a school examination, a wedding, christening, charity sermon, bull-baiting, philosophical meeting, or private merry-making in his neighbourhood, at which he was not sure to make his appearance, and mindful to record all the particulars. He is the first to hear all the court scandal, and all the public news—to observe the changes of fashions, and the downfal of parties—to pick up family gossip, and to retail philosophical intelligence—to criticise every new house or carriage that is built—every new book or new beauty that appears—every measure the King adopts, and every mistress he discards.

For the rest of his character, he appears to have been an easy tempered, compassionate, and kind man; combining an extraordinary diligence and regularity in his official business and domestic economy, with a singular love of gossip, amusement, and all kinds of miscellaneous information—a devoted attachment, and almost ludicrous admiration of his wife, with a wonderful devotion to the King's mistresses, and the fair sex in general, and rather a suspicious familiarity with various pretty actresses and singers; and, above all, a practical sagacity and cunning in the management of affairs, with so much occasional credulity, puerility, and folly, as would often tempt us to set him down for a driveller. Though born with good blood in his veins, and a kinsman, indeed, of his great patron, the first Earl of Sandwich, he had nothing to boast of in his immediate progenitors, being born the son of a tailor in London, and entering on life in a state of the utmost poverty. It was probably from this ignoble vocation of his father, that he derived that hereditary taste for dress which makes such a conspicuous figure in his Diary. The critical and affectionate notices of doublets, cloaks, beavers, periwigs, and sword-belts, actually outnumbering, we think, all the entries on any other subject whatever, and plainly engrossing, even in the most agitating circumstances, no small share of the author's attention. Perhaps it is to the same blot in his scutcheon, that we should trace a certain want of manliness in his whole character and deportment. Certain it is at least, that there is room for such an imputation. He appears before us, from first to last, with the true temper, habits, and manners of an *Underling*—obsequious to his superiors—civil and smooth to all men—lavish in attentions to persons of influence whom he dislikes—and afraid and ashamed of being seen with his best friends and benefactors, when they are supposed to be out of favour—most solicitous to keep out of quarrels of all sorts—and ensuring his own safety, not only by too humble and pacific a bearing in scenes of contention, but by such stretches of simulation and dissimulation as we cannot easily reconcile to our notion of a brave and honourable man.

To such an extent, indeed, is this carried, that, though living in times of great actual, and greater apprehended changes, it is with difficulty that we can guess, even from this most copious and unreserved record of his inmost thoughts, what were really his political opinions, or whether he ever had any. We learn, indeed, from one passage, that in his early youth he had been an ardent Roundhead, and had in that capacity attended with exultation the execution of the King—observing to one of his companions at the time, that if he had been to make a sermon on the occasion, he would have chosen for his text the words, "The memory of the wicked shall rot." This, to be sure, was when he was only in his eighteenth year—but he seems afterwards to have accepted of a small office in the Republican Court of Exchequer, of which he is in possession for some time after the commencement of his Diary. That work begins in January 1659, while Monk was on his march from Scotland; and yet, not only does he continue to frequent the society of Harrington, Hazlerigge, and other staunch republicans, but never once expresses any wish of his own, either for the restoration of the Royalty, or the continuance of the Protectorate, till after he is actually at sea with Lord Sandwich, with the ships that brought Charles back from Breda! After the Restoration is consolidated, indeed, and he has got a good office in the Admiralty, he has recorded, amply enough, his anxiety for the permanency of the ancient dynasty—though he cannot help, every now and then, reprobating the profligacy, wastefulness, and neglect of the new government, and contrasting them disadvantageously with the economy, energy, and popularity, of most of the measures of the Usurper. While we give him credit, therefore, for great candour and impartiality in the *private* judgments which he has here recorded, we can scarcely pay him the compliment of saying that he has any political principles whatever—or any, at least, for which he would ever have dreamed of hazarding his own worldly prosperity.

Another indication of the same low and ignoble turn of mind is to be found, we think, in his penurious anxiety about his money—the intense satisfaction with which he watches its increase, and the sordid and vulgar cares to which he condescends, to check its expenditure. Even after he is in possession of a great income, he goes and sits by the tailor till he sees him sew all the buttons on his doublet—and spends four or five hours, of a very busy day, in watching the coach-maker laying on the coats of varnish on the body of his coach! When he gives a dinner, he knows exactly what every dish has cost him—and tells a long story of his paddling half the night with his fingers in the dirt, digging up some money he had buried in a garden, and conveying it with his own hands, with many fears and contrivances, safely back to his house. With all this, however, he is charitable to the poor, kind to his servants and dependents, and very indulgent to all the members of his family—though we find him chronicling his own munificence in helping to fit out his wife's brother, when he goes abroad to push his fortune, by presenting him with "ten shillings—and a coat that I had by me—a close-bodied, light-coloured, cloth coat—with a gold edging on each seam—that was the lace of my wife's best petticoat, when I married her!"

As we conceive, a good deal, not only of the interest, but of the authority and just construction of the information contained in the work, depends on the reader having a correct knowledge of the individual by whom it is furnished, we think we cannot do better than begin our extracts with a few citations illustrative of the author's own character, habits, and condition, as we have already attempted to sketch them. The very first entry exhibits some of his peculiarities. He was then only twenty-seven years of age—and had been received, though not with much honour, into the house of his kinsman Sir Edward Montague, afterwards Earl of Sandwich. This is his condition in the beginning of 1659.

"Jan. 1st (Lord's day). This morning, (we living lately *in the garret*,) I rose, put on my suit with great skirts, having not lately worn any other clothes but them. Went to Mr Gunning's chapel at Exeter House, &c. Dined at home *in the garret*, where my wife dressed the remains of a turkey, and in the doing of it she burned her hand. I staid at home the whole afternoon, looking over my accounts; then went with my wife to my father's, &c.—2d. From the Hall I called at home, and so went to Mr. Crewe's (my wife she was to go to her father's), and Mr Moore and I and another gentleman went out and drank a cup of ale together in the new market, and there I eat some bread and cheese for my dinner."

His passion for dress breaks out in every page almost; but we shall insert only one or two of the early entries, to give the reader a notion of the style of it.

"10th. This day I put on my new silk suit, the first that ever I wore in my life.—12th. Home, and called my wife, and took her to Clodins' to a great wedding of Nan Hartlib to Mynheer Roder, which was kept at Goring House with very great state, cost and noble company. But among all the beauties there, my wife was thought the greatest.—13th. Up early, the first day that I put on my black camlett coat with silver buttons. To Mr. Spong, whom I found in his night-gown, &c.—14th. To the Privy Seale, and thence to my Lord's, where Mr. Pim the tailor and I agreed upon making me a velvet coat.—25th. This night W. Hewer brought me home from Mr. Pim's my velvet coat and cap, the first that ever I had. This the first day that ever I saw my wife wear black patches since we were married.—My wife seemed very pretty to-day, it being the first time I had given her leave to weare a black patch.—22d. This morning, hearing that the Queene grows worse again, I sent to stop the making of my velvet cloak, till I see whether she lives or dies.—30th. To my great sorrow find myself 43*l.* worse than I was the last month, which was then 760*l.*, and now it is but 717*l.* But it hath chiefly arisen from my layings out in clothes for myself and wife; viz. for her about 12*l.* and for myself 55*l.*, or thereabouts; having made myself a velvet cloak, two new cloth skirts, black, plain both; a new shag gown, trimmed with gold buttons and twist, with a new hat, and silk tops for my legs, and many other things, being resolved henceforward to go like myself. And also two perriwiggs, one whereof costs me 3*l.* and the other 40*s.* I have worn neither yet, but will begin next week, God willing.—29th. Lord's day. This morning I put on my best black cloth suit, trimmed with scarlett ribbon, very neat, with my cloak lined with velvett, and a new beaver, which altogether is very noble, with my black silk knit canons I bought a month ago.—30th. Up, and put on a new summer black bombazin suit; and being come now to an agreement with my barber to keep my perriwig in good order at 20*s.* a year, I am like to go very spruce, more than I used to do.—31st. This day I got a little rent in my new fine camlett cloak with the latch of Sir G. Carteret's door; but it is darned up at my tailor's, that it will be no great blemish to it; but it troubled me."

This, we suppose, is enough—though there are more than five hundred such notices at the service of any curious reader. It may be supposed what a treat a Coronation would be to such a fancier of fine clothes; and accordingly, we have a most rapturous description of it, in all its glory. The King and the Duke of York in their morning dresses were, it seems, "but very plain men;" but, when attired in their "most rich embroidered suits and cloaks, they looked most noble." Indeed, after some time, he assures us, that "the show was so glorious with gold and silver, that we are not able to look at it any longer, our eyes being so much overcome!"

As a specimen of the credulity and *twaddle* which constitutes another of the staples of this collection, the reader may take the following.

"19th. Waked with a very high wind, and said to my wife, 'I pray God I hear not of the death of any great person,—THIS WIND IS SO HIGH!' fearing that the Queene might be dead. So up; and going by coach with Sir W. Batten and Sir J. Minnes to St. James', they tell me that Sir W. Compton, who it is true had been a little sickly for a week or fortnight, but was very well upon Friday night last, at the Tangier Committee with us, was dead,—died yesterday: at which I was *most exceedingly surprised,—he being*, and so all the world saying that he was, *one of the worthyest men and best officers of State now in England!*

"23d. To Westminster Abbey, and there did see all the tombs very finely; having one with us alone (there being no other company this day to see the tombs, it being Shrove-Tuesday): and here we did see, by particular favour, the body of Queen Katherine of Valois;—and I had the upper part of her body in my hands,—and I did kiss her mouth!—reflecting upon it that I did kiss a queene, and that this was my birth day,—thirty-six years old!—that I did kiss a queene! But here this man, who seems to understand well, tells me that the saying is not true that she was never buried,—for she was buried.—Only when Henry the Seventh built his chapel, she was taken up and laid in this wooden coffin; but I did there see that in it the body was buried in a leaden one, which remains under the body to this day, &c. &c.—29th. We sat under the boxes, and saw the fine ladies; among others, my Lady Kerneguy, who is most devilishly painted. And so home—it being mighty pleasure to go alone with my poor wife in a coach of our own to a play! and makes us appear mighty great, I think, in the world; at least, greater than ever I could, or my friends for me, have once expected; or, I think, than ever any of my family ever yet lived in my memory—but my cosen Pepys in Salisbury Court."

Or the following memorandums of his travels.

"A mighty cold and windy, but clear day; and had the pleasure of seeing the Medway running winding up and down mightily,—and a very fine country: and I went a little out of the way to have visited Sir John Bankes, but he at London; but here I had a sight of his seat and house, the outside, which is an old abbey just like Hinchingbroke, and as good at least, and mightily finely placed by the river; and he keeps the grounds about it, and walks and the house, very handsome: I was mightily pleased with the sight of it. Thence to Maydstone, which I had a mighty mind to see, having never been there; and walked all up and down the town,—and up to the top of the steeple—and had a noble view, and then down again: and in the town did see an old man beating of flax! and did step into the barn and give him money, and saw that piece of husbandry, which I never saw; and it is very pretty! In the street also I did buy and send to our inne, the Bell, a dish of fresh fish. And so having walked all round the town, and found it very pretty as most towns I ever saw, though not very big, and people of good fashion in it, we to our inne and had a good dinner; and a barber came to me and there trimmed me, that I might be clean against night to go to Mrs. Allen, &c.

"So all over the plain by the sight of the steeple (the plain high and low) to Salisbury by night; but before I came to the town, I saw a great fortification, and there light, and to it and in it! and find it prodigious! so *as to fright me* to be in it all alone, at that time of night—it being dark. I understand since it to be that that is called Old Sarum. Come to the George Inne, where lay in a silk bed; and very good diet, &c. &c.—22d. So the three women behind W. Hewer, Murford, and our guide, and I single to Stonehenge, over the plain, and *some great hills*, even *to fright* us! Come thither, and find them as prodigious as any tales I ever heard of them, and worth going this journey to see. God knows what their use was: they are hard to tell, but yet may be told.—12th. Friday. Up, finding our beds good, *but lousy;* which made us merry!—9th. Up, and got ready, and eat our breakfast; and then took coach: and the poor, as they did yesterday, did stand at the coach to have something given them, as they do to all great persons; and I did give them something! and the town music did also come and play; but, Lord! what sad music they made! So through the town, and observed at our College of Magdalene *the posts new painted!* and understand that the Vice-Chancellor is there this year."

Though a great playgoer, we cannot say much for his taste in plays, or indeed in literature in general. Of the Midsummer's Dream, he says, "it is the most insipid, ridiculous play I ever saw in my life." And he is almost equally dissatisfied with the Merry Wives of Windsor, and Henry the IV. To make amends, however, for these misjudgments, he is often much moved by the concord of sweet sounds; and has, in the following passage, described the effects they produced on him, in a way that must be admitted to be original The Virgin Martyr (of Massinger), he says, was "mighty pleasant! Not that the play is worth much, but it is finely acted by Beck Marshall. But that which did please me beyond any thing in the whole world, was the wind-musique when the angel comes down; which is so sweet that it ravished me, and indeed, in a word, did wrap up my soul, so that it made me *really sick!—just as I have formerly been when in love with my wife!*"

Though "mighty merry" upon all occasions, and, like gentle dulness, ever loving a joke, we are afraid he had not much relish for wit. His perplexity at the success of Hudibras is exceedingly ludicrous. This is his own account of his first attempt on him—

"Hither come Mr. Battersby; and we falling into discourse of *a new book of drollery* in use, called *Hudebras*, I would needs go find it out, and met with it at the Temple: cost me 2*s.* 6*d.* But when I come to read it, it is *so silly an* abuse of the Presbyter Knight going to the warrs, that *I am ashamed of it;* and by and by meeting at Mr. Townsend's at dinner, *I sold it to him for* 18*d!*"

The second is not much more successful.

"To Paul's Church Yard, and there looked upon the second part of Hudibras—which I *buy not*, but *borrow* to read,—to see if it be as good as the first, which the world cried so mightily up; though it hath not a good liking in me, though I had tried twice or three times reading, to *bring myself to think it witty*."

The following is a ludicrous instance of his parsimony and household meanness.

"29th. (King's birth-day.) Rose early, and put six spoons and a porringer of silver *in my pocket*, to give away to-day. Back to dinner at Sir William Batten's; and then, after a walk in the fine gardens, we went to Mrs. Browne's, where Sir W. Pen and I were godfathers, and Mrs. Jordan and Shipman godmothers to her boy. And there, before and after the christening, we were with the woman above in her chamber; but whether we carried ourselves well or ill, I know not; but I was directed by young Mrs. Batten. One passage, of a lady *that eate wafers with her dog*, did a little displease me. I did give the midwife 10*s.*, and the nurse 5*s.*, and the maid of the house 2*s.* But, for as much as I expected to give the name to the childe, but did not (it being called John), *I forebore then to give my plate*."

On another occasion, when he had, according to the fashion of the time, sent a piece of plate, on a holiday, to his official superior, he records with great joy,

"After dinner Will. comes to tell me that he had presented my piece of plate to Mr. Coventry, who takes it very kindly, and sends me a very kind letter, *and the plate back again*,—of which *my heart is very glad*."

Throughout the whole work, indeed, he is mainly occupied with reckoning up and securing his gains—turning them into good

gold—and bagging and hiding them in holes and corners. His prosperity, indeed, is marvellous; and shows us how good a thing it was to be in office, even in the year 1660. When he goes with Lord Sandwich to bring over the King, he is overjoyed with his Majesty's bounty of a month's pay to all the ships' officers—and exultingly counts up his share, and "finding himself to be worth very *nearly* 100*l.*, blesses Almighty God for it—not having been worth 25*l.* clear when he left his home." And yet, having got the office of Clerk of the Acts in the Admiralty, and a few others, he thrives with such prodigious rapidity, that before the end of 1666, this is his own account of his condition.

"To my accounts, wherein at last I find them clear and right; but to my great discontent do find that my gettings this year have been 573*l.* less than my last: it being this year in all but 2986*l.*; *whereas, the last, I got* 3560*l.*! And then again my spendings this year have exceeded my spendings the last, by 644*l.*: my whole spendings last year being but 509*l.*; whereas this year it appears I have spent 1154*l.*,—which is a sum not fit to be said that ever I should spend in one year, before I am master of a better estate than I am. Yet, blessed be God! and I pray God make me thankful for it, I do find myself worth in money, *all good*, above 6200*l.*; which is above 1800*l.* more than I was the last year."

We have hinted, however, at a worse meanness than the care of money, and sordid household economy. When his friends and patrons seem falling into disgrace, this is the way he takes to countenance them.

"I found my Lord Sandwich there, poor man! I see with a melancholy face, and suffers his beard to grow on his upper lip more than usual. I took him a little aside to know when I should wait on him, and where: he told me, that it would be best to meet at his lodgings, *without being seen* to walk together. Which I liked very well; and, Lord! to see in what difficulty I stand, that *I dare not* walk with Sir W. Coventry, for fear my Lord or Sir G. Carteret should see me; nor with either of them, for fear Sir W. Coventry should! &c.

"To Sir W. Coventry's—after much discourse with him, I walked out with him into James' Park; where, *being afraid to be seen with him (he having not yet leave to kiss the King's hand*, but notice taken, as I hear, of all that go to him), I did take *the pretence* of my attending the Tangier Committee to take my leave of him."

It is but a small matter, after this, to find, that when the office is besieged by poor sailors' wives, clamouring for their arrears of pay, he and Mrs. Pepys are dreadfully "afraid to send a venison pasty, that we are to have for supper to-night, to the cook to be baked—for fear of their offering violence to it."

Notwithstanding his great admiration of his wife and her beauty, and his unremitting attention to business and money, he has a great deal of innocent (?) dalliance with various pretty actresses at the playhouses, and passes a large part of his time in very profligate society. Here is a touch of his ordinary life, which meets us by accident as we turn over the leaves.

"To the King's house; and there going in met with Knipp, and she took us up into the tireing-rooms; and to *the women's shift*,—where Nell (that is, Nell Gwyn)—was dressing herself, and was all unready, and is very pretty, prettier than I thought. And into the scene-room, and there sat down, and she gave us fruit: and here I read the questions to Knipp, while she answered me, through all her part of 'Flora's Figary's,' which was acted to-day. But, Lord! to see how they were both painted, would make a man mad, and did make me loath them! and what base company of men comes among them, and how lewdly they talk! And how poor the men are in clothes, and yet what a shew they make on the stage by candle-light is very observable. But to see how Nell cursed,—for having so few people in the pit, was strange."

Now, whether it was *strange* or not, it was certainly very wrong in Nell to curse so unmercifully, even at a thin house. But we must say, that it was neither so wrong nor so strange, as for this grave man of office, to curse deliberately to himself in this his private Diary. And yet but a few pages after, we find this emphatic entry,—"in fear of nothing but this *damned business* of the prizes. I fear my lord will receive a *cursed* deal of trouble by it."

The following affords a still stronger picture of the profligacy of the times.

"To Fox Hall, and there fell into the company of Harry Killigrew, a rogue newly come back out of France, but still in disgrace at our Court, and young Newport and others; as very rogues as any in the town, who were ready to take hold of every woman that come by them. And so to supper in an arbour: but, Lord! their mad talk did make my heart ake! And here I first understood by their talk the meaning of the company that lately were called Ballers; Harris telling how it was by a meeting of some young blades, where he was among them, and my Lady Bennet and her ladies; and there *dancing naked!* and all the roguish things in the world. But, Lord! what loose company was this that I was in to-night! though full of wit; and worth a man's being in for once,—to know the nature of it, and their manner of talk and lives."

These however, we have no doubt, were all very blameless and accidental associations on his part. But there is one little *liaison* of which we discover some indications in the journal, as to which we do not feel so well assured, unreserved as his confessions undoubtedly are, that he has intrusted the whole truth even to his short-hand cipher. We allude to a certain Mrs. Mercer, his wife's maid and occasional companion, of whom he makes frequent and very particular mention. The following entry, it will be allowed, is a little suspicious, as well as exceedingly characteristic.

"Thence home—and to sing with my wife and Mercer in the garden; and coming in, I find my wife plainly dissatisfied with me, that I can spend so much time with Mercer, teaching her to sing, and could never take the pains with *her*. Which I acknowledge; but it is because the girl do take music mighty readily, and *she* do not,—and music is the thing of the world that I love most, *and all the pleasure almost that I can now take*. So to bed, in some little discontent,—*but no words from me!*"

We trace the effect of this jealousy very curiously, in a little incident chronicled with great simplicity a few days after, where he mentions that being out at supper, the party returned "in *two* coaches,—Mr. Batelier and

his sister Mary, and my wife and I, in one,—and *Mercer alone* in the other."

We are sorry to observe, however, that he seems very soon to have tired of this caution and forbearance; as the following, rather outrageous merry-making, which takes place on the fourth day after, may testify.

"After dinner with my wife *and Mercer* to the Beare-garden; where I have not been, I think, of many years, and saw some good sport of the bull's tossing of the dogs: one into the very boxes. But it is a very rude and nasty pleasure. We had a great many hectors in the same box with us, (and one, very fine, went into the pit, and played his dog for a wager, which was a strange sport for a gentleman,) where they drank wine, *and drank Mercer's health first; which I pledged with my hat off!* We supped at home, and very merry. And then about nine o'clock to Mrs. Mercer's gate, where the fire and boys expected us, and her son had provided abundance of serpents and rockets: and there mighty merry, (my Lady Pen and Pegg going thither with us, and Nan Wright,) till about twelve at night, flinging our fireworks, and burning one another and the people over the way. And at last our businesses being most spent, we into Mrs. Mercer's, and there mighty merry, *smutting one another with candle-grease and soot*, till most of us were like devils! And that being done, then we broke up, and to my house; and there I made them drink, and up stairs we went, and then fell into dancing, (W. Batelier dancing well,) and dressing him and I and one Mr. Bannister (who with my wife come over also with us) like women; and *Mercer put on a suit of Tom's, like a boy*, and mighty mirth we had—*and Mercer danced a jigg!* and Nan Wright, and my wife, and Pegg Pen put on perriwigs. Thus, we spent till three or four in the morning—mighty merry!"—Vol. i. p. 438, 439.

After all this, we confess, we are not very much surprised, though no doubt a little shocked, to find the matter come to the following natural and domestic, though not very dignified catastrophe.

"This day, *Mercer* being not at home, but, against her mistress' order, gone to her mother's, and my wife, going thither to speak with W. Hewer, *beat her there!!*—and was angry; and her mother saying that she was not a prentice girl, to ask leave every time she goes abroad, my wife with good reason was angry, and when she come home *bid her be gone again*. And so she went away! *which troubled me*,—but yet less than it would, because of the condition we are in, in fear of coming in a little time to be less able to keep one in her quality."

Matters, however, we are happy to say, seem to have been wonderfully soon made up again—for we find her attending Mrs. P., as usual, in about six weeks after; and there are various subsequent, though very brief and discreet notices of her, to the end of the Diary.

It is scarcely fair, we confess, thus to drag to light the frailties of this worthy defunct secretary: But we really cannot well help it—he has laid the temptation so directly in our way. If a man will leave such things on record, people will read and laugh at them, although he should long before be laid snug in his grave. After what we have just extracted, the reader will not be surprised at the following ingenious confession.

"The truth is, I do indulge myself a little the more in pleasure, knowing that this is the proper age of my life to do it; and out of my observation, that most men that do thrive in the world do *forget to take pleasure during the time* that they are getting their estate, but reserve that till they have got one, and then it is too late for them to enjoy it."

One of the most characteristic, and at the same time most creditable pieces of *naïveté* that we meet with in the book, is in the account he gives of the infinite success of a speech which he delivered at the bar of the House of Commons, in 1667, in explanation and defence of certain alleged mismanagements in the navy, then under discussion in that assembly. The honourable House probably knew but little about the business; and nobody, we can well believe, knew so much about it as our author,—and this, we have no doubt, was the great merit of his discourse, and the secret of his success:—For though we are disposed to give him every credit for industry, clearness, and practical judgment, we think it is no less plain from his manner of writing, than from the fact of his subsequent obscurity in parliament, that he could never have had any pretensions to the character of an orator. Be that as it may, however, this speech seems to have made a great impression at the time; and certainly gave singular satisfaction to its worthy maker. It would be unjust to withhold from our readers his own account of this bright passage in his existence. In the morning, when he came down to Westminster, he had some natural qualms.

"And to comfort myself did go to the Dog and drink half a pint of mulled sack,—and in the hall did drink a dram of brandy at Mrs. Hewlett's! and with the warmth of this did find myself in better order as to courage, truly."

He spoke three hours and a half "as comfortably as if I had been at my own table," and ended soon after three in the afternoon; but it was not thought fit to put the vote that day, "many members having gone out to dinner, and come in again half drunk." Next morning his glory opens on him.

"6th. Up betimes, and with Sir D. Gauden to Sir W. Coventry's chamber; where the first word he said to me was, 'Good-morrow, Mr. Pepys, that must be Speaker of the Parliament House:' and did protest I had got honour for ever in Parliament. He said that his brother, that sat by him, admires me; and another gentleman said that I could not get less than 1000*l.* a year, if I would *put on a gown and plead at the Chancery-bar*. But, what pleases me most, he tells me that the Solicitor-generall did protest that he thought *I spoke the best of any man in England*. My Lord Barkeley did cry me up for what they had heard of it; and others, Parliament-men there about the King, did say that *they never heard such a speech in their lives*, delivered in that manner. From thence I went to Westminster Hall; where I met with Mr. G. Montagu, who came to me and kissed me, and told me that he had often heretofore kissed my hands, but now he would *kiss my lips:* protesting that *I was another Cicero!* and said all the world *said the same* of me. Mr. Godolphin; Mr. Sands, who swore he would go twenty miles at any time to hear the like again, and that he never saw so many sit four hours together to hear any man in his life as there did to hear me. Mr. Chichly, Sir John Duncomb, and every body do say that *the kingdom will ring of my abilities*, and that I have done myself right for my whole life; and so Captain Coke and others of my friends say that *no man* had ever such an oppor-

tunity of making his abilities known. And that I may cite all at once, Mr. Lieutenant of the Tower did tell me that Mr. Vaughan did protest to him, and that in his hearing said so to the Duke of Albermarle, and afterwards to Sir W. Coventry, that he had sat twenty-six years in Parliament and *never heard such a speech there before!* for which the Lord God make me thankful! and that I may make use of it, not to pride and vainglory, but that, now I have this esteem, I may do nothing that may lessen it!"

There is a great deal more of this—but we have given rather too much space already to Mr. Pepys' individual concerns: and must turn now to something of more public interest. Before taking leave of private life, however, we may notice one or two things, that we collect incidentally, as to the manners and habits of the times. The playhouses, of which there seem to have been at least three, opened apparently soon after noon—though the entertainments often lasted till late in the night—but we cannot make out whether they were ever exhibited by daylight. The pit, in some of them at least, must have been uncovered; for our author speaks repeatedly of being annoyed in that place by rain and hail. For several years after the Restoration, women's parts were done by boys,—though there seem always to have been female singers. The hour of dinner was almost always twelve; and men seem generally to have sat at table with their hats on. The wines mostly in use appear to have been the Spanish white wines—both sweet and dry—some clarets—but no port. It seems still to have been a custom to go down to drink in the cellar. The Houses of Parliament met, like the courts of law, at nine, and generally adjourned at noon. The style of dress seems to have been very variable, and very costly—periwigs appear not to have been introduced, even at court, till 1663—and the still greater abomination of hair powder not to have been yet dreamed of. Much of the outskirts of the town, and the greater part of Westminster, were not paved—and the police seems to have been very deficient, as the author frequently speaks of the *danger* of returning from Whitehall and that neighbourhood to the city early in the evening—no lamps in the streets. Some curious notices of prices might be collected out of these volumes—but we have noted but a few. Coaches seem to have been common, and very cheap—our author gets a very handsome one for 32*l*. On the other hand, he pays 4*l*. 10*s*. for a beaver, and as much for a wig. Pictures too seem to have brought large prices, considering the value of money and the small proportion of the people who could then have any knowledge of the art. He pays 25*l*. for a portrait of his wife, and 30*l*. for a miniature, besides eight guineas for the setting—and mentions a flower-piece for which the painter refused 70*l*. We may take leave of him and his housekeeping, by inserting his account of two grand dinners he seems to have given—both which he appears to have regarded as matters of very weighty concernment. As to the first he says—

"My head being full of to-morrow's dinner, went to my Lord Crewe's, there to invite Sir Thomas, &c. Thence home; and there find one laying of my napkins against to-morrow in figures of all sorts; which is mighty pretty; and it seems it is his trade, and he gets much money by it. 14th. Up very betimes, and with Jane to Levett's, there to conclude upon our dinner; and thence to the pewterer's to buy a pewter sesterne, which I have ever hitherto been without. Anon comes my company, viz. my Lord Hinchingbroke and his lady, Sir Philip Carteret and his lady, Godolphin and my cosen Roger, and Creed: and mighty merry; and by and by to dinner, which was very good and plentiful (and I should have said, and Mr. George Montagu, who came at a very little warning, which was exceeding kind of him). And there, among other things, my lord had Sir Samuel Morland's late invention for casting up of sums of £ *s. d.*; which is very pretty, but not very useful. Most of our discourse was of my Lord Sandwich and his family, as being all of us of the family. And with extraordinary pleasure all the afternoon, thus together, eating and looking over my closet."

The next seems to have been still more solemn and successful.

"23d. To the office till noon, when word brought me that my Lord Sandwich was come; so I presently rose, and there I found my Lords Sandwich, Peterborough, and Sir Charles Harbord; and presently after them comes my Lord Hinchingbroke, Mr. Sidney, and Sir William Godolphin. And after greeting them and some time spent in talk, dinner was brought up, one dish after another, but a dish at a time; but all so good! But, above all things, the variety of wines and excellent of their kind I had for them, and all in so good order, that they were mightily pleased, and myself full of content at it: and indeed it was, of a dinner of about six or eight dishes, as noble as any man need to have, I think; at least, all was done in the noblest manner that ever I had any, and I have rarely seen in my life better any where else, even at the Court. After dinner my lords to cards, and the rest of us sitting about them and talking, and looking on my books and pictures, and my wife's drawings, which they commended mightily: and mighty merry all day long, with exceeding great content, and so till seven at night; and so took their leaves, it being dark and foul weather. Thus was this entertainment over—the best of its kind and the fullest of honour and content to me that ever I had in my life; and I shall not easily have so good again."

On turning to the political or historical parts of this record, we are rather disappointed in finding so little that is curious or interesting in that earliest portion of it which carries us through the whole work of the Restoration. Though there are almost daily entries from the 1st of January 1659, and though the author was constantly in communication with persons in public situations—was personally introduced to the King at the Hague, and came home in the same ship with him, it is wonderful how few particulars of any moment he has been enabled to put down; and how little the tone of his journal exhibits of that interest and anxiety which we are apt to imagine must have been universal during the dependence of so momentous a revolution. Even this barrenness, however, is not without instruction—and illustrates by a new example, how insensible the contemporaries of great transactions often are of their importance, and how much more posterity sees of their character than those who were parties to them. We have already observed that the author's own political predilections are scarcely distinguishable till he is embarked in the fleet to bring home the King—and the greater part of those with whom he converses seem to have been nearly as undecided. Monk is spoken of throughout with considerable contempt and aversion; and among many instances of his duplicity, it is recorded that upon the 21st day of February 1660, he came to Whitehall, "and there made a speech to them, recommending to them *a Commonwealth*, and *against* Charles Stuart." The feeling of the city is represented, no doubt, as extremely hostile to the Parliament (here uniformly called the Rump); but their aspirations are not said to be directed to royalty, but merely to a free Parliament and the dissolution of the existing junto. So late as the month of March our author observes, "great is the talk of a single person. Charles, George, or Richard again. For *the last* of which my Lord St. John is said to speak very high. Great also is the dispute in the House, in whose name the writs shall issue for the new Parliament." It is a comfort however to find, in a season of such universal dereliction of principle, that signal perfidy, even to the cause of the republic, is visited with general scorn. A person of the name of Morland, who had been employed under the Protector in the Secretary of State's office, had been in the habit of betraying his trust, and communicating privately with the exiled monarch—and, upon now resorting to him, had been graced with the honour of knighthood. Even our cold-hearted chronicler speaks thus of this deserter.

"Mr. Morland, now Sir Samuel, was here on board; but I do not find that my lord or any body did give him any respect—he being looked upon by him and all men as a knave. Among others he betrayed Sir Rich. Willis that married Dr. F. Jones' daughter, who had paid him 1000*l*. at one time by the Protector's and Secretary Thurloe's order, for intelligence that he sent concerning the King."

And there is afterwards a similar expression of honest indignation against "that perfidious rogue Sir G. Downing," who, though he had served in the Parliamentary army under Okey, yet now volunteered to go after him and Corbet, with the King's warrant, to Holland, and succeeded in bringing them back as prisoners, to their death—and had the impudence, when there, to make a speech to "the Lords States of Holland, telling them to their faces that he observed that he was not received with the respect and observance *now*, that he was when he came from *the traitor and rebell Cromwell!* by whom, I am sure, he hath got all he hath in the world,—and they know it too."

When our author is presented to the King, he very simply puts down, that "he seems to be a very sober man!" This, however, probably referred only to his dress and equipment; which, from the following extract, seems to have been homely enough, even for a republic.

"This afternoon Mr. Edward Pickering told me in what a sad, poor *condition* for *clothes* and money the king was, and all his attendants, when he came to him first from my lord; their clothes *not being worth forty shillings*—the best of them. And how overjoyed the King was when Sir J. Greenville brought him some money; so joyful, that he called the Princess Royal and Duke of York to look upon it, as it lay in the portmanteau before it was taken out."

On the voyage home the names of the ships are changed—and to be sure the *Richard*, the *Naseby*, and the *Dunbar*, were not very fit to bear the royal flag—nor even the *Speaker* or the *Lambert*. There is a long account of the landing, and a still longer, of Lord Sandwich's investment with the Order of the Garter—but we do not find any thing of moment recorded, till we come to the condemnation and execution of the regicides—a pitiful and disgusting departure from the broad principle of amnesty, upon the basis of which alone any peaceful restoration could be contemplated, after so long and so unequivocally national a suspension of royalty. It is disgusting to find, that Monk sate on the bench, while his companions in arms, Harrison, Hacker, and Axtell, were arraigned for the treasons in which he and they had been associated. Our author records the whole transactions with the most perfect indifference, and with scarcely a remark—for example,

"13th. I went out to Charing Cross, to see Major-General Harrison hanged, drawn, and quartered; which was done there; he looking as *cheerful!* as any man could do in that condition.—18th. This morning, it being expected that Colonel Hacker and Axtell should die, I went to Newgate, but found they were reprieved till to-morrow.—19th. This morning my dining-room was finished with greene serge hanging and gilt leather, which is very handsome. This morning Hacker and Axtell were hanged and quartered, as the rest are."

He is, to be sure, a little *troubled*, as he expresses it, at the disinterring and gibbetting of Cromwell's dead and festering body—thinking it unfit that "a man of so great courage as he was, should have that dishonour—though otherwise he might deserve it—enough!" He does not fail, however, to attend the rest of the executions, and to describe them as spectacles of ordinary occurrence—thus,

"19th. This morning, before we sat, I went to Aldgate; and at the corner shop, a draper's, I stood, and did see Barkestead, Okey, and Corbet, drawne towards the gallows at Tiburne; and there they were hanged and quartered. *They all looked very cheerful!* but I hear they all die defending what they did to the King to be just; which is very strange!"

"14th. About eleven o'clock, having a room got ready for us, we all went out to the Tower Hill; and there, over against the scaffold, made on purpose this day, saw Sir Henry Vane brought. A very great press of people. He made a long speech, many times interrupted by the sheriffe and others there; and they would have taken his paper out of his hand, but he would not let it go. But they caused all the books of those that writ after him to be given to the sheriffe; and the trumpets were brought under the scaffold that he might not be heard. Then he prayed, and so fitted himself, and received the blow; but the scaffold was so crowded that we could not see it done. He

had a blister, or issue, upon his neck, which *he desired them not to hurt!* He changed not his colour or speech to the last, but died justifying himself and the cause he had stood for; and spoke very confidently of his being presently at the right hand of Christ; and in all things appeared the most resolved man that ever died in that manner."

In spite of those rigorous measures, the author very soon gets disgusted with "the lewdness, beggary, and wastefulness," of the new government—and after sagaciously remarking, that "I doubt our new Lords of the Council do not mind things as *the late powers* did—but their pleasure or profit more," he proceeds to make the following striking remarks on the ruinous policy, adopted on this, and many other restorations, of excluding the only men really acquainted with business, on the score of their former opposition to the party in power.

"From that we discoursed of the evil of putting out men of experience in business, and of the condition of the King's party at present, who, as the Papists, though otherwise fine persons, yet being by law kept for these four-score years out of employment, they are now *wholly uncapable* of business; and *so the Cavaliers*, for twenty years, who for the most part have either given themselves over to look after country and family business, and those the best of them, and the rest to debauchery, &c.; and that was it that hath made him high against the late bill brought into the House for making all men incapable of employment that *had served against the King*. People, says he, in the sea-service, it is impossible to do any thing without them, there being not more than three men of the whole King's side that are fit to command almost; and there were Captn. Allen, Smith, and Beech; and it may be Holmes, and Utber; and Batts might do something."

In his account of another conversation with the same shrewd observer, he gives the following striking picture of the different temper and moral character of the old Republican soldiers, as contrasted with those of the Royalists—of the former he reports—

"Let the King think what he will, it is *them* that must help him in the day of warr. For generally they are the most substantiall sort of people, and the soberest; and did desire me to observe it to my Lord Sandwich, among other things, that *of all the old army* now you cannot see a man *begging* about the streets; but what? you shall have this captain turned a shoemaker; this lieutenant a baker; this a brewer; that a haberdasher; this common soldier a porter; and every man in his apron and frock, &c. as if they never had done any thing else: Whereas the other go with their belts and swords, *swearing and cursing, and stealing;* running into people's houses, by force oftentimes, to carry away something; and this is the difference between the temper of one and the other; and concludes (and I think with some reason), that the spirits of the old Parliament soldiers are so quiet and contented with God's providence, that the King is safer from any evil meant him by them, one thousand times more than from his own discontented Cavaliers. And then to the publick management of business; it is done, as he observes, so loosely and so carelessly, that the kingdom can never be happy with it, every man looking after himself, and his own lust and luxury."

The following is also very remarkable.

"It is strange how every body now-a-days *do reflect upon Oliver, and commend him;* what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him; while here a prince, come in with all the love and prayers and good liking of his people, who have given greater signs of loyalty and willingness to serve him with their estates than ever was done by any people, *hath lost all so soon*, that it is a miracle that a man could devise to lose so much in so little time."

The following particulars of the condition of the Protector's family are curious, and probably authentic. The conversation is in the end of 1664.

"In my way to Brampton in this day's journey I met with Mr. White, Cromwell's chaplain that was, and had a great deal of discourse with him. Among others, he tells me that Richard is, and hath long been, in France, and is now going into Italy. He owns publickly, that he do correspond, and return him all his money. That Richard hath been in some straits in the beginning; but relieved by his friends. That he goes by another name, but do not disguise himself, nor deny himself to any man that challenges him. He tells me, for certain, that offers had been made to *the old man*, of marriage *between the king and his daughter*, to have obliged him—*but he would not.* He thinks (with me) that it never was in his power to bring in the King with the consent of any of his officers about him; and that he *scorned* to bring him in, *as Monk did, to secure himself and deliver every body else.* When I told him of what I found writ in a French book of one Monsieur Sorbiere, that gives an account of his observations here in England; among other things he says, that it is reported that Cromwell did, in his lifetime, transpose many of the bodies of the kings of England from one grave to another; and that by that means it is not known certainly whether the head that is now set upon a post be that of Cromwell, or of one of the kings; Mr. White tells me that he believes he never had so poor a low thought in him, to trouble himself about it. He says the hand of God is much to be seen; and that all his children are in good condition enough as to estate, and that their relations that betrayed their family are all now either hanged or very miserable."

The most frequent and prolific topic in the whole book, next perhaps to that of dress, is the profligacy of the court—or what may fairly be denominated court scandal. It would be endless, and not very edifying, to attempt any thing like an abstract of the shameful immoralities which this loyal author has recorded of the two royal brothers, and the greater part of their favourites—at the same time, that they occupy so great a part of the work, that we cannot well give an account of it without some notice of them. The reader will probably be satisfied with the following specimens, taken almost at random.

"In the Privy Garden saw the finest smocks and linen petticoats of my Lady Castlemaine's, laced with rich lace at the bottom, that ever I saw; *and did me good to look at them.* Sarah told me how the King dined at my Lady Castlemaine's, and supped, every day and night the last week; and that the night that the bonfires were made for joy of the *Queene's arrivall*, the King was *there.* But there was no fire at her door, though at all the rest of the doors almost in the street; which was much observed: and that the King and she did send for a *pair of scales*, and *weighed one another;* and she, being with child, was said to be heaviest."

"Mr. Pickering tells me the story is very true of a child being dropped at the ball at Court; and that the King had it in his closet a week after, and *did dissect* it; and making great sport of it, said that in his opinion it must have been a month and three houres old; and that, whatever others think, he hath the greatest loss (it being a boy, as he says).

that hath lost a subject by the business."—"He told me also how loose the Court is, nobody looking after business, but every man his lust and gain; and how the King is now become so besotted upon Mrs. Stewart, that he gets into corners, and will be with her half an hour together kissing her to the observation of all the world; and she now stays by herself and expects it as my Lady Castlemaine did use to do; to whom the King, he says, is still kind," &c.

"Coming to St. James, I hear that the Queene did sleep five hours pretty well to-night. The King they all say, is most fondly disconsolate for her, and weeps by her, which makes her weep; which one this day told me he reckons a good sign, for that it carries away some rheum from the head! She tells us that the Queene's sickness is the spotted fever; that she was as full of the spots as a leopard: which is very strange that it should be no more known; but perhaps it is not so. And that the King do seem to take it much to heart, for that he hath wept before her; but *for all that, he hath not missed one night*, since she was sick, of supping with my Lady Castlemaine! which I believe is true, for she says that her husband hath dressed the suppers every night; and I confess I saw him myself coming through the street dressing up a great supper to-night, which Sarah says is also for the King and her; which is a very strange thing."

"Pierce do tell me, among other news, the late frolick and debauchery of Sir Charles Sedley and Buckhurst running up and down all the night, almost naked, through the streets; and at last fighting, and being beat by the watch and clapped up all night; and how the King takes their parts; and my Lord Chief Justice Keeling hath laid the constable by the heels to answer it next sessions; which is a horrid shame. Also how the King and these gentlemen did make the fiddlers of Thetford, this last progress, to sing them all the obscene songs they could think of! That the King was drunk at Saxam with Sedley, Buckhurst, &c. the night that my Lord Arlington came thither, and would not give him audience, or *could not:* which is true, for it was the night that I was there, and saw the King go up to his chamber, and was told that the King had been drinking."—"He tells me that the King and my Lady Castlemaine are quite broke off, and she is gone away, and is with child, and swears the King shall own it; and she will have it christened in the chapel at White Hall so, and owned for the King's as other kings have done; or she will bring it into White Hall gallery, *and dash the brains of it out before the King's face!* He tells me that the King and court were never in the world so bad as they are now, for gaming, swearing, women, and drinking, and the most abominable vices that ever were in the world; so that all must come to nought."

"They came to Sir G. Carteret's house at Cranbourne, and there were entertained, and *all made drunk;* and, being all drunk, Armerer did come to the King, and swore to him by God, 'Sir,' says he, 'you are not so kind to the Duke of York of late as you used to be.'—'Not I!' says the King. 'Why so?'—'Why,' says he, 'if you are, let us drink his health.'—'Why let us,' says the King. Then he fell on his knees and drank it; and having done, the King began to drink it. 'Nay, sir,' says Armerer, 'by God you must do it on your knees!' So he did, and then all the company: and having done it, all fell a crying for joy, *being all maudlin and kissing one another!* the King the Duke of York, and the Duke of York the King! and in such a maudlin pickle as never people were: and so passed the day!"

It affords us no pleasure, however, to expose these degrading traits—even in departed royalty; but it is of more consequence to mark the political vices to which they so naturally led. The following entry, on the King's adjourning the Parliament in 1667, gives such a picture of the court policy, as makes one wonder how the Revolution could have been so long deferred.

"Thus they are dismissed again, to their general great distaste, I believe the greatest that ever Parliament was, to see themselves so fooled, and the nation in certain condition of ruin, while the King, they see, is only governed by his lust, and women, and rogues about him. They do all give up the kingdom for lost, that I speak to; and do hear *what the King says*, how he and the Duke of York do DO WHAT THEY CAN TO GET UP AN ARMY, THAT THEY MAY NEED NO MORE PARLIAMENTS: and how my Lady Castlemaine hath, before the late breach between her and the King, said to the King, *that he must rule by an army*, or *all would be lost!* I am told that many petitions were provided for the Parliament, complaining of the wrongs they have received from the court and courtiers, in city and country, if the Parliament had but sat: and I do perceive they all do resolve to have a good account of the money spent, before ever they give a farthing more; and the whole kingdom is every where sensible of their being abused," &c.

The following confirmation of these speculations is still more characteristic, both of the parties and their chronicler.

"And so she (Lady Castlemaine) is come to-day, when one would think his mind should be full of some other cares, having but this morning broken up such a Parliament with so much discontent and so many wants upon him, and but yesterday heard *such a sermon against adultery!* But it seems she hath told the King, that whoever did get it, he should own it. And the bottom of the quarrel is this:—She is fallen in love with young Jermin, who hath of late been with her oftener than the King, and is now going to marry my Lady Falmouth; the King is mad at her entertaining Jermin, and she is mad at Jermin's going to marry from her: so they are all mad!—and thus the kingdom is governed! But he tells me for certain that nothing is more sure than that the King, and Duke of York, and the Chancellor, are desirous and labouring all they can *to get an army*, whatever the King says to the Parliament; and he believes that they are at last resolved to stand and fall all three together."

A little after we find traces of another project of the same truly legitimate school.

"The great discourse now is, that the Parliament shall be dissolved and another called, which *shall give the King the dean and chapter lands;* and that will put him out of debt. And it is said that Buckingham do knowingly meet daily with Wildman and other Commonwealth-men; and that when he is with *them* he makes the King believe that he is with his wenches."

The next notice of this is in the form of a confidential conversation with a person of great intelligence.

"And he told me, upon my several inquiries to that purpose, that he did believe it was not yet resolved *whether the Parliament should ever meet more or no*, the three great rulers of things now standing thus:—The Duke of Buckingham is *absolutely against their meeting*, as moved thereto by his people that he advises with, the *people of the late times*, who do never expect to have any thing done by this Parliament for their religion, and who do propose that, by the sale of the church lands, they shall be able to put the King out of debt, &c. He tells me that he is really persuaded that the design of the Duke of Buckingham is to bring the state into such a condition as, if the King do die without issue, it shall, upon his death, *break into pieces again;* and *so put by the Duke of York*,—whom

they have disobliged, they know, to that degree as to despair of his pardon. He tells me that there is no way to rule the king but by *briskness*,—which the Duke of Buckingham hath above all men; and that the Duke of York having it not, *his* best way is what he practises,—that is to say, a good temper, which will support him till the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Arlington fall out, which cannot be long first; the former knowing that the latter did, in the time of the Chancellor, endeavour with the Chancellor to *hang him* at that time, when he was proclaimed against."

And again—

"The talk which these people about our King have, is to tell him how neither privilege of parliament nor city is any thing; *but that his will is all, and ought to be so:* and their discourse, it seems, when they are alone, is so base and sordid, that it makes the eares of the very gentlemen of the back stairs (I think he called them) to tingle to hear it spoke in the King's hearing; *and that must be very bad indeed.*"

The following is not so material as to doctrine—though we think it very curious.

"After the bills passed, the King, sitting on his throne, with his speech writ in a paper which he held in his lap, and scarce looked off of it all the time he made his speech to them, giving them thanks for their subsidys, of which, *had he not need*, he would not have asked or received them; and that need, *not from any extravagancys of his*, he was sure, in any thing!—but the disorders of the times. His speech was very plain; nothing at all of spirit in it, nor spoke with any; but rather on the contrary imperfectly, repeating many time his words, though he read all: which I am sorry to see, it having not been hard for him to have got all the speech without booke."—And upon another occasion, "I crowded in and heard the King's speech to them; but *he speaks the worst that ever I heard a man in my life:* worse than if he read it all, and he had it in writing in his hand."

It is observed soon after—viz. in 1664—as a singular thing, that there should be but two seamen in Parliament—and not above twenty or thirty merchants: And yet from various intimations we gather that the deportment of this aristocratical assembly was by no means very decorous. We have already had the incidental notice of many members coming in from dinner half drunk, on the day of the author's great oration—and some of them appear now and then to have gone a little farther,—early as the hours of business then were.

"He did tell me, and so did Sir W. Batten, how Sir Allen Brodericke and Sir Allen Apsley did come *drunk* the other day into the House; and did both speak for half an hour, together, and could not be either laughed, or pulled, or bid to sit down and hold their peace,—to the great contempt of King's servants and cause; which I am grieved at with all my heart."

The mingled extravagance and penury of this disorderly court is strikingly illustrated by two entries, not far from each other, in the year 1667—in one of which is recorded the royal wardrobeman's pathetic lamentation over the King's necessities—representing that his Majesty has "actually no handkerchiefs, and but three bands to his neck"—and that he does not know where to take up a yard of linen for his service!—and the other setting forth, that his said Majesty had lost 25,000*l.* in one night at play with Lady Castlemaine—and staked 1000*l.* and 1500*l.* on a cast. It is a far worse trait, however, in his character, that he was by no means scrupulous as to the pretexts upon which he obtained money from his people—these memoirs containing repeated notices of accounts deliberately falsified for this purpose—and not a few in particular, in which the expenses of the navy are exaggerated—we are afraid, not without our author's co-operation—to cover the misapplication of the money voted for that most popular branch of the service, to very different purposes. In another royal imposture, our author now appears to have been also implicated, though in a manner far less derogatory to his personal honour,—we mean in procuring for the Duke of York, the credit which he has obtained with almost all our historians, for his great skill in maritime affairs; and the extraordinary labour which he bestowed in improving the condition of the navy. On this subject we need do little more than transcribe the decisive statement of the noble Editor, to whose care we are indebted for the publication before us; and who, in the summary of Mr. Pepys' life which he has prefixed to it, observes—

"Mr. Stanier Clarke, in particular, actually dwells upon the essential and lasting benefit which that monarch conferred on his country, by *building up and regenerating the naval power;* and asserts as *a proof of the King's great ability*, that *the regulations still enforced under the orders of the admiralty are nearly the same as those originally drawn up by him.* It becomes due therefore to Mr. Pepys to explain, that for these improvements, the value of which no person can doubt, we are indebted *to him*, and *not* to his royal master. To establish this fact, it is only necessary to refer to the MSS. connected with the subject in the Bodleian and Pepysian libraries, by which the extent of Mr. Pepys' official labours can alone be appreciated; and we even find in the Diary, as early as 1668, that a long letter of regulation, produced before the commissioners of the navy by the Duke of York, *as his own composition*, was entirely written by our clerk of the acts."—(I. xxx.)

We do not know whether the citations we have now made from these curious and most miscellaneous volumes, will enable our readers to form a just estimate of their value. But we fear that, at all events, we cannot now indulge them in any considerable addition to their number. There is a long account of the great fire, and the great sickness in 1666, and a still longer one of the insulting advance of the Dutch fleet to Chatham in 1667, as well as of our absurd settlement at Tangiers, and of various naval actions during the period to which the Diary extends. But, though all these contain much curious matter, we are not tempted to make any extracts: Both because the accounts, being given in the broken and minute way which belongs to the form of a Diary, do not afford many striking or summary passages, and because what is new in them, is not for the most part of any great importance. The public besides has been lately pretty much satiated with details on most of those subjects, in the contemporary work of Evelyn,—of which we shall only say, that though its author was indisputably more of a gentleman, a scholar, and a man of taste than our actuary, it is far inferior both in interest, curiosity, and substantial instruction, to that which we are now considering. The two authors, however, we are happy to find, were great friends; and no name is mentioned in the latter part of the Diary with more uniform respect and affection than that of Evelyn—though it is very edifying to see how the shrewd, practical sagacity of the man of business, revenges itself on the assumed superiority of the philosopher and man of letters. In this respect we think there is a fine keeping of character in the sincerity of the following passage—

"By water to Deptford, and there made a visit to Mr. Evelyn, who, among other things, showed me most excellent painting in little; in distemper, Indian incke, water colours: graveing; and above all, the whole mezzo-tinto, and the manner of it, which is very pretty, and good things done with it. He read to me very much also of his discourse, he hath been many years and now is about, about Gardenage; which is a most noble and pleasant piece. He read me part of a play or two of his own making—*very good, but not as he conceits them*, I think, to be. He showed me his Hortus Hyemalis; leaves laid up in a book of several plants kept dry, which preserve colour, however, and look very finely, better than an herball. In fine a most excellent person he is,—*and must be allowed a little for a little conceitedness;* but he may well be so, being a man so much above others. He read me, *though with too much gusto*, some little poems of his own *that were not transcendant;* yet one or two very pretty epigrams; among others, of a lady looking in at a grate, and being pecked at by an eagle that was there."

And a little after he chuckles not a little over his learned friend's failure, in a speculation about making bricks—concluding very sagely, "so that I see the most ingenious men may sometimes be mistaken!"

We meet with the *names* of many distinguished men in these pages, and some characteristic anecdotes,—but few bold characters. He has a remarkable interview with Clarendon—in which the cautious and artful demeanour of that veteran politician is finely displayed, though on a very trivial occasion. The Navy Board had marked some trees for cutting in Clarendon Park without his leave—at which he had expressed great indignation; and our author went, in a prodigious fright, to pacify him. He found him busy hearing causes in his chambers, and was obliged to wait.

"After all done, he himself called, 'Come, Mr. Pepys, you and I will take a turn in the garden.' So he was led down stairs, having the goute, and there walked with me, I think above an hour, talking *most friendly, but cunningly!*—He told me he would not direct me in any thing, that it might not be said that the Lord Chancellor did labour to abuse the King; or (as I offered) direct the suspending the report of the purveyors: *but I see what he means*, and will make it my work to do him service in it. But Lord! to see how we poor wretches dare not do the King good service, for fear of the greatness of these men!"

There is no *literary* intelligence of any value to be gained from this work. Play collectors will probably find the names of many lost pieces—but of our classical authors there are no notices worth naming—a bare intimation of the deaths of Waller, Cowley, and Davenant, and a few words of Dryden—Milton, we think, not once mentioned. There is more of the natural philosophers of Gresham College, but not much that is valuable—some curious calculations and speculations about money and coinages—and this odd but authentic notice of Sir W. Petty's intended will.

"Sir William Petty did tell me that in good earnest he hath in his will left some parts of his estate to him that could invent such and such things. As among others, that could discover truly the way of milk coming into the breasts of a woman! and he that could invent proper characters to express to another the mixture of relishes and tastes. And says, that to him that invents gold, he gives nothing for the philosopher's stone; for (says he) they that find out that, will be able to pay themselves. But, says he, by this means it is better than to go to a lecture; for here my executors, that must part with this, will be sure to be well convinced of the invention before they do part with their money."

The Appendix, which seems very judiciously selected, contains some valuable fragments of historical information: but we have not now left ourselves room for any account of them; and are tempted to give all we can yet spare to a few extracts from a very curious correspondence between Mr. Pepys and Lord Reay and Lord Tarbut in 1699, on the subject of the Second Sight among our Highlanders. Lord Reay seems to have been a firm believer in this gift or faculty—but Lord Tarbut had been a decided sceptic, and was only converted by the proofs of its reality, which occurred to himself while in the Highlands, in the year 1652 and afterwards. Some of the stories he tells are not a little remarkable. For example, he says, that one night when one of his Celtic attendants was entering a house where they had proposed to sleep, he suddenly started back with a scream, and fell down in an agony.

"I asked what the matter was, for he seemed to me to be very much frighted: he told me very seriously that I should not lodge in that house, because shortly a dead coffin would be carried out of it, for many were carrying it when he was heard cry! I neglecting his words and staying there, he said to others of the servants he was very sorry for it, and that what he saw would surely come to pass: and though no sick person was then there, yet the landlord, a healthy Highlander, *died of an apoplectic fit before I left the house.*"

Another occurred in 1653, when, in a very rugged part of the country, he fell in with a man who was staring into the air with marks of great agitation. Upon asking what it was that disturbed him, he answered,

"I see a troop of Englishmen leading their horses down that hill—and some of them are already in the plain, eating the barley which is growing in the field near to the hill.' This was on the 4th of May (for I noted the day), and it was four or five days *before any barley was sown* in the field he spoke of. Alexander Monro asked him how he knew they were Englishmen: he answered, because they were leading horses, and had on hats and boots, which he knew no Scotchmen would have on there. We took little notice of the whole story as other than a foolish vision, but wished that an English party were there, we being then at war with them, and the

place almost inaccessible for horsemen. But the *beginning of August thereafter*, the Earl of Middleton, then lieutenant for the King in the Highlands, having occasion to march a party of his towards the South Islands, sent his foot through a place called Inverlacwell, and the forepart, which was first down the hill, did fall to eating the barley which was on the little plain under it."

Another of his lordship's experiences was as follows. In January 1682, he was sitting with two friends in a house in Ross-shire, when a man from the islands

"Desired me to rise from that chair, for it was an unlucky one. I asked 'Why?' He answered, 'Because there was a dead man in the chair next to it.'—'Well,' said I, 'if it be but in the next, I may safely sit here: but what is the likeness of the man?' He said he was a tall man with a long grey coat, booted, and one of his legs hanging over the chair, and his head hanging down to the other side, and his arm backward, as it were broken. There were then some English troops quartered near the place, and there being at that time a great frost after a thaw, the country was wholly covered over with ice. Four or five Englishmen riding by this house, not two hours after the vision, where we were sitting by the fire, we heard a great noise, which proved to be these troopers, with the help of other servants, carrying in one of their number who had got a very mischievous fall and had his arm broke; and falling frequently into swooning fits, they brought him to the hall, and set him *in the very chair and in the very posture* which the seer had proposed: *but the man did not die*, though he revived with great difficulty."

These instances are chiefly remarkable as being given upon the personal knowledge of an individual of great judgment, acuteness, and firmness of character. The following is from a still higher quarter; since the reporter was not even a Scotchman, and indeed no less a person than Lord Clarendon. In a letter to Mr. Pepys in 1701, he informs him, that, in 1661, upon a Scottish gentleman being in his presence introduced to Lady Cornbury, he was observed to gaze upon her with a singular expression of melancholy; and upon one of the company asking the reason, he replied, "I see her *in blood!*" She was at that time in perfect health, and remained so for near a month, when she fell ill of small-pox: And

"Upon the ninth day after the small-pox appeared, in the morning, she *bled* at the nose, which quickly stopt; but in the afternoon the blood burst out again with great violence at her nose and mouth, and about eleven of the clock that night she dyed, *almost weltering in her blood!*"

There is a great number of similar stories, reported on the most imposing testimony—though, in some instances, the seer, we must say, is somewhat put to it to support his credit, and make out the accomplishment of his vision. One chieftain, for instance, had long been seen by the gifted, with an arrow sticking in his thigh; from which they all inferred, that he was either to die or to suffer greatly, from a wound in that place. To their surprise, however, he died of some other infliction, and the seers were getting out of reputation; when luckily a fray arose *at the funeral*, and an arrow was shot fairly through the thigh of the dead man, in the very spot where the vision had shown it! On another occasion, Lord Reay's grandfather was told that he had been seen with a dagger run into his breast—and though nothing ever happened to him, one of his servants, to whom he had given *the doublet* which he wore at the time of this intimation, was stabbed through it, in the very place where the dagger had been seen. Lord Reay adds the following additional instance, of this glancing, as it were, of the prophecy on the outer garment.

"John Macky, of Dilril, having put on a new suit of clothes, was told by a seer that he did see the gallows upon his coat, which he never noticed; but some time after *gave his coat* to his servant, William Forbess, to whose honesty there could be nothing said at that time; but he was shortly after hanged for theft, *with the same coat about him:* my informer being an eye-witness of his execution, and one who had heard what the seer said before."

His lordship also mentions, that these visions were seen by *blind* people, as well as those who had sight,—and adds, that there was a blind woman in his time who had the faculty in great perfection; and foretold many things that afterwards happened, as hundreds of living witnesses could attest. We have no time now to speculate on these singular legends—but, as curious *mementos* of the lubricity of human testimony, we think it right they should be once more brought into notice.

And now we have done with Mr. Pepys. There is trash enough no doubt in his journal,—trifling facts, and silly observations in abundance. But we can scarcely say that we wish it a page shorter; and are of opinion, that there is very little of it which does not help us to understand the character of his times, and his contemporaries, better than we should ever have done without it; and make us feel more assured that we comprehend the great historical events of the age, and the people who bore a part in them. Independent of instruction altogether too, there is no denying, that it is very entertaining thus to be transported into the very heart of a time so long gone by; and to be admitted into the domestic intimacy, as well as the public councils, of a man of great activity and circulation in the reign of Charles II. Reading this book, in short, seems to us to be quite as good as living with Mr. Samuel Pepys in his proper person,—and though the court scandal may be detailed with more grace and vivacity in the Memoires de Grammont, we have no doubt but even this part of his multifarious subject is treated with far greater fidelity and fairness in the work before us—while it gives us more clear and undistorted glimpses into the true English life of the times—for the court was substantially foreign—than all the other memorials of them put together, that have come down to our own.

The book is rather too dear and magnificent. But the editor's task we think excellently performed. The ample text is not incumbered with ostentatious commentaries. But very brief and useful notices are supplied of almost all the individuals who are mentioned; and an admirable and very minute index is subjoined, which methodises the immense miscellany—and places the vast chaos at our disposal.

(July, 1808.)

A History of the early Part of the Reign of James the Second; with an Introductory Chapter By the Right Honourable Charles James Fox. To which is added an Appendix. 4to pp. 340. Miller, London: 1808.

If it be true that high expectation is almost always followed by disappointment, it is scarcely possible that the readers of Mr. Fox's history should not be disappointed. So great a statesman certainly has not appeared as an author since the time of Lord Clarendon; and, independent of the great space which he fills in the recent history of this country, and the admitted splendour of his general talents,—his known zeal for liberty, the fame of his eloquence, and his habitual study of every thing relating to the constitution, concurred to direct an extraordinary degree of attention to the work upon which he was known to be engaged, and to fix a standard of unattainable excellence for the trial of his first acknowledged production. The very circumstance of his not having published any considerable work during his life, and of his having died before bringing this to a conclusion, served to increase the general curiosity; and to accumulate upon this single fragment the interest of his whole literary existence.

No human production, we suppose, could bear to be tried by such a test; and those who sit down to the perusal of the work before us, under the influence of such impressions, are very likely to rise disappointed. With those, however, who are at all on their guard against the delusive effect of these natural emotions, the result, we venture to predict, will be different; and for ourselves, we are happy to say, that we have not been disappointed at all; but, on the contrary, very greatly moved and delighted with the greater part of this singular volume.

We do not think it has any great value as a history; nor is it very admirable as a piece of composition. It comprehends too short a period, and includes too few events, to add much to our knowledge of facts; and abounds too little with splendid passages to lay much hold on the imagination. The reflections which it contains, too, are generally more remarkable for their truth and simplicity, than for any great fineness or apparent profundity of thinking; and many opportunities are neglected, or rather purposely declined, of entering into large and general speculations. Notwithstanding all this, the work, we think, is invaluable; not only as a memorial of the high principles and gentle dispositions of its illustrious author, but as a record of those sentiments of true English constitutional independence, which seem to have been nearly forgotten in the bitterness and hazards of our more recent contentions. It is delightful as the picture of a character; and most instructive and opportune as a remembrancer of public duties: And we must be permitted to say a word or two upon each of these subjects.

To those who know Mr. Fox only by the great outlines of his public history,—who know merely that he passed from the dissipations of too gay a youth into the tumults and cabals of a political life,—and that his days were spent in contending about public measures, and in guiding or averting the tempests of faction,—the spirit of indulgent and tender feeling which pervades this book must appear very unaccountable. Those who live much in the world, even in a private station, commonly have their hearts a little hardened, and their moral sensibility a little impaired. But statesmen and practical politicians are, with justice, suspected of a still greater forgetfulness of mild impressions and honourable scruples. Coming necessarily into contact with great vices and great sufferings, they must gradually lose some of their horror for the first, and much of their compassion for the last. Constantly engaged in contention, they cease pretty generally to regard any human beings as objects of sympathy or disinterested attachment; and, mixing much with the most corrupt part of mankind, naturally come to regard the species itself with indifference, if not with contempt. All the softer feelings are apt to be worn off in the rough conflicts of factious hostility; and all the finer moralities to be effaced, by the constant contemplation of expediency, and the necessities of occasional compliance.

Such is the common conception which we form of men who have lived the life of Mr. Fox; and such, in spite of the testimony of partial friends, is the impression which most private persons would have retained of him, if this volume had not come to convey a truer and a more engaging picture to the world at large, and to posterity.

By far the most remarkable thing, then, in this book, is the tone of indulgence and unfeigned philanthropy which prevails in every part of it;—a most amiable sensibility to all the kind and domestic affections, and a sort of softheartedness towards the sufferings of individuals, which seems hitherto to have been thought incompatible with the stern dignity of history. It cannot but strike us with something still more pleasing than surprise, to meet with traits of almost feminine tenderness in the sentiments of this veteran statesman; and a general character of charity towards all men, not only remote from the rancour of vulgar hostility, but purified in a great degree from the asperities of party contention. He expresses indeed, throughout, a high-minded contempt for what is base, and a thorough detestation for what is cruel: But yet is constantly led, by a sort of generous prejudice in favour of human nature, to admit

all possible palliations for the conduct of the individual delinquent, and never attempts to shut him out from the benefit of those natural sympathies of which the bad as well as the good are occasionally the objects, from their fortune or situation. He has given a new character, we think, to history, by this soft and condescending concern for the feelings of individuals; and not only left a splendid record of the gentleness and affectionate simplicity of his own dispositions, but set an example by which we hope that men of genius may be taught hereafter to render their instructions more engaging and impressive. Nothing, we are persuaded, can be more gratifying to his friends, than the impression of his character which this work will carry down to posterity; nor is it a matter of indifference to the country, that its most illustrious statesman should be yet more distinguished for the amiableness of his private affections.

This softness of feeling is the first remarkable thing in the work before us. The second is perhaps of more general importance. It is, that it contains the only appeal to the old principles of English constitutional freedom, and the only expression of those firm and temperate sentiments of independence, which are the peculiar produce, and natural protection of our mixed government, which we recollect to have met with for very many years. The tone of the work, in this respect, recalls us to feelings which seem of late to have slumbered in the country which they used to inspire. In our indolent reliance upon the imperishable virtue of our constitution, and in our busy pursuit of wealth, we appeared to be forgetting our higher vocation of free citizens; and, in our dread of revolution or foreign invasion, to have lost sight of those intestine dangers to which our liberties are always more immediately exposed. The history of the Revolution of 1688, and of the times immediately preceding, was eminently calculated to revive those feelings, and restore those impressions, which so many causes had in our days conspired to obliterate; and, in the hands of Mr. Fox, could scarcely have failed to produce a very powerful effect. On this account, it must be matter of the deepest regret that he was not permitted to finish, or indeed to do more than begin, that inspiring narrative. Even in the little which he has done, however, we discover the spirit of the master: Even in the broken prelude which he has here sounded, the true notes are struck with such force and distinctness, and are in themselves so much in unison with the natural chords of every British heart, that we think no slight vibration will be excited throughout the country; and would willingly lend our assistance to propagate it into every part of the empire. In order to explain more fully the reasons for which we set so high a value upon the work before us on this particular account, we must be allowed to enlarge a little upon the evil which we think it calculated to correct.

We do not think the present generation of our countrymen substantially degenerated from their ancestors in the days of the Revolution. In the same circumstances, we are persuaded, they would have acted with the same spirit;—nay, in consequence of the more general diffusion of education and intelligence, we believe they would have been still more zealous and more unanimous in the cause of liberty. But we have of late been exposed to the operation of various causes, which have tended to lull our vigilance, and relax our exertions; and which threaten, unless powerfully counteracted, to bring on, gradually, such a general indifference and forgetfulness of the interests of freedom, as to prepare the people for any tolerably mild form of servitude which their future rulers may be tempted to impose upon them.

The first, and the principal of these causes, however paradoxical it may seem, is the actual excellence of our laws, and the supposed inviolability of the constitution. The second is, the great increase of luxury, and the tremendous patronage of the government. The last is, the impression made and maintained by the events of the French Revolution. We shall say but a word upon each of these prolific themes of speculation.

Because our ancestors stipulated wisely for the public at the Revolution, it seemed to have become a common opinion, that nothing was left to their posterity but to pursue their private interest. The machine of Government was then completed and set agoing—and it will go on without their interference. Nobody talks now of the divine right, or the dispensing power of kings, or ventures to propose to govern without Parliaments, or to levy taxes without their authority;—therefore, our liberties are secure;—and it is only factious or ambitious people that affect any jealousy of the executive. Things go on very smoothly as they are; and it can never be the interest of any party in power, to attempt any thing very oppressive or injurious to the public. By such reasonings, men excuse their abandonment of all concern for the community, and find, in the very excellence of the constitution, an apology for exposing it to corruption. It is obvious, however, that liberty, like love, is as hard to keep as to win; and that the exertions by which it was originally gained will be worse than fruitless, if they be not followed up by the assiduities by which alone it can be preserved. Wherever there is power, we may be sure that there is, or will be, a disposition to increase it; and if there be not a constant spirit of jealousy and of resistance on the part of the people, every monarchy will gradually harden into a despotism. It will not, indeed, wantonly provoke or alarm, by seeking again to occupy those very positions from which it had once been dislodged: but it will extend itself in other quarters, and march on silently, under the colours of a venal popularity.

This indolent reliance on the sufficiency of the constitution for its own preservation, affords great facilities, no doubt, to those who may be tempted to project its destruction; but the efficient *means* are to be found chiefly

in the prevailing manners of the people, and the monstrous patronage of the government. It can admit of no doubt, we suppose, that trade, which has made us rich, has made us still more luxurious; and that the increased necessity of expense, has in general outgone the means of supplying it. Almost every individual now finds it more difficult to live on a level with his equals, than he did when all were poorer; almost every man, therefore, is needy; and he who is both needy and luxurious, holds his independence on a very precarious tenure. Government, on the other hand, has the disposal of nearly twenty millions *per annum*, and the power of nominating to two or three hundred thousand posts or places of emolument;—the whole population of the country amounting (1808) to less than five millions of grown men. The consequence is, that, beyond the rank of mere labourers, there is scarcely one man out of three who does not hold or hope for some appointment or promotion from government, and is not consequently disposed to go all *honest* lengths in recommending himself to its favour. This, it must be admitted, is a situation which justifies some alarm for the liberties of the people; and, when taken together with that general indifference to the public which has been already noticed, accounts sufficiently for that habit of presuming in favour of all exertions of authority, and against all popular discontent or interference, which is so remarkably the characteristic of the present generation. From this passive desertion of the people, it is but one step to abet and defend the actual oppressions of their rulers; and men, otherwise conscientious, we are afraid, too often impose upon themselves by no better reasonings than the following—"This measure, to be sure, is bad, and somewhat tyrannical;—but men are not angels;—all human government is imperfect; and, on the whole, ours is much too good to be quarrelled with. Besides, what good purpose could be answered by my individual opposition? I might ruin my own fortune, indeed, and blast the prospects of my children; but it would be too romantic to imagine, that the fear of my displeasure would produce an immaculate administration—so I will hold my tongue, and shift for myself as well as possible." When the majority of those who have influence in the country reason in this manner, it surely cannot be unnecessary to remind us, now and then, of the great things that were done when the people roused themselves against their oppressors.

In aid of these actual temptations of interest and indolence, come certain speculative doctrines, as to the real value of liberty, and the illusions by which men are carried away who fancy themselves acting on the principle of patriotism. Private happiness, it is discovered, has but little dependence on the nature of the government. The oppressions of monarchs and demagogues are nearly equal in degree, though a little different in form; and the only thing certain is, that in flying from the one we shall fall into the other, and suffer tremendously in the period of transition. If ambition and great activity therefore be not necessary to our happiness, we shall do wisely to occupy ourselves with the many innocent and pleasant pursuits that are allowed under all governments; instead of spreading tumult and discontent, by endeavouring to realize some political conceit of our own imagination. Mr. Hume, we are afraid, is chiefly responsible for the prevalence of this Epicurean and ignoble strain of sentiment in this country,—an author from whose dispositions and understanding, a very different doctrine might have been anticipated.* But, under whatever authority it is maintained, we have no scruple in saying, that it seems to us as obviously false as it is pernicious. We need not appeal to Turkey or to Russia to prove, that neither liberal nor even gainful pursuits can be carried on with advantage, where there is no political freedom: For, even laying out of view the utter *impossibility* of securing the persons and properties of individuals in any other way, it is certain that the consciousness of independence is a *great enjoyment in itself*, and that, without it, all the powers of the mind, and all the capacities of happiness, are gradually blunted and destroyed. It is like the privation of air and exercise, or the emasculation of the body;—which, though they may appear at first to conduce to tranquillity and indolent enjoyment, never fail to enfeeble the whole frame, and to produce a state of oppressive languor and debility, in comparison with which even wounds and fatigue would be delicious.

To counteract all these enervating and depressing causes, we had, no doubt, the increasing opulence of the lower and middling orders of the people, naturally leading them to aspire to greater independence, and improving their education and general intelligence. And thus, public opinion, which is in all countries the great operating check upon authority, had become more extensive and more enlightened; and might perhaps have been found a suffi-

* Few things seem more unaccountable, and indeed absurd, than that Hume should have taken part with high-church and high-monarchy men. The persecutions which he suffered in his youth from the Presbyterians, may perhaps have influenced his ecclesiastical partialities. But that he should have sided with the Tudors and the Stuarts against the people, seems quite inconsistent with all the great traits of his character. His unrivalled sagacity must have looked with contempt on the preposterous arguments by which the *jus divinum* was maintained. His natural benevolence must have suggested the cruelty of subjecting the enjoyments of thousands to the caprice of one unfeeling individual; and his own practical independence in private life, might have taught him the value of those feelings which he has so mischievously derided. Mr. Fox seems to have been struck with the same surprise at this strange trait in the character of our philosopher. In a letter to Mr. Laing, he says, "He was an excellent man, and of great powers of mind; but his partiality to kings and princes is intolerable: nay, it is, in my opinion, quite ridiculous; and is more like the foolish admiration which women and children sometimes have for kings, than the opinion right or wrong, of a philosopher."

cient corrective of all our other corruptions, had things gone on around us in their usual and accustomed channels. Unfortunately, however, the French Revolution came, to astonish and appal the world; and, originating with the people, not only subverted thrones and establishments, but made such havoc on the lives and properties and principles of individuals, as very naturally to excite the horror and alarm of all whose condition was not already intolerable. This alarm, in so far as it related to this country, was always excessive, and in a great degree unreasonable: But it was impossible perhaps altogether to escape it; and the consequences have been incalculably injurious to the interests of practical liberty. During the raging of that war which Jacobinism in its most disgusting form carried on against rank and royalty, it was natural for those who apprehended the possibility of a similar conflict at home, to fortify those orders with all that reason and even prejudice could supply for their security, and to lay aside for the time those jealousies and hereditary grudges, upon which, in better days, it was their duty to engage in contention. While a raging fever of liberty was epidemic in the neighbourhood, the ordinary diet of the people appeared too inflammatory for their constitution; and it was thought advisable to abstain from articles, which, at all other times, were allowed to be necessary for their health and vigour. Thus, a sort of tacit convention was entered into,—to say nothing, for a while, of the follies and vices of princes, the tyranny of courts, or the rights of the people. The Revolution of 1688, it was agreed, could not be mentioned with praise, without giving some indirect encouragement to the Revolution of 1789; and it was thought as well to say nothing in favour of Hampden, or Russell, or Sydney, for fear it might give spirits to Robespierre, Danton, or Marat. To this strict regimen the greater part of the nation submitted of their own accord; and it was forced upon the remainder by a pretty vigorous system of proceeding. Now, we do not greatly blame either the alarm, or the precautions which it dictated; but we do very seriously lament, that the use of those precautions should have degenerated into a sort of national habit; and should be continued and approved of so very long after the danger which occasioned them has ceased.

It is now at least ten years since Jacobinism was prostrated at Paris; and it is still longer since it ceased to be regarded with any thing but horror in this country. Yet the favourers of power would still take advantage of its name to shield authority from question; and to throw obloquy on the rights and services of the people. The power of habit has come unfortunately to their aid; and it is still unfashionable, and, we are afraid, not very popular, to talk of the tyranny of the Stuarts, and the triumph of the Revolution, in the tone which was universal and established within these last twenty years. For our parts, however, we see no sort of reason for this change; and we hail, with pleasure, this work of Mr. Fox's, as likely to put an end to a system of timidity so apt to graduate into servility; and to familiarize his countrymen once more to speak and to think of Charles, of James, and of Strafford,—and of William, and Russell, and Sydney,—as it becomes Englishmen to speak and to think of such characters. To talk with affected tenderness of oppressors, may suit the policy of those who wish to bespeak the clemency of an Imperial Conqueror; but must appear peculiarly base and inconsistent in all who profess an anxiety to rouse the people to great exertions in the cause of their independence.

The volume itself, which has given occasion to these reflections, and from which we have withheld our readers too long, consists of a preface or general introduction from the pen of Lord Holland; an introductory chapter, comprising a review of the leading events, from the year 1640 to the death of Charles II.; two chapters of the history of the reign of James, which include no more than seven months of the year 1685, and narrate very little but the unfortunate expeditions of Argyle and of Monmouth; and a pretty long Appendix, consisting chiefly of the correspondence between Barillon, the French confidential minister at the court of England, and his master Louis XIV.

Lord Holland's part of the volume is written with great judgment, perspicuity, and propriety; and though it contains less anecdote and minute information with regard to his illustrious kinsman than every reader must wish to possess, it not only gives a very satisfactory account of the progress of the work to which it is prefixed, but affords us some glimpses of the character and opinions of its author, which are peculiarly interesting, both from the authenticity of the source from which they are derived, and from the unostentatious simplicity with which they are communicated. Lord Holland has not been able to ascertain at what period Mr. Fox first formed the design of writing a history; but, from the year 1797, when he ceased to give a regular attendance in parliament, he was almost entirely occupied with literary schemes and avocations. The following little sketch of the temper and employments of him who was pitied by many as a disappointed politician, is extremely amiable; and, we are now convinced by the fragment before us, correctly true.

"During his retirement, that love of literature, and fondness for poetry, which neither pleasure nor business had ever extinguished, revived with an ardour, such as few, in the eagerness of youth or in pursuit of fame or advantage, are capable of feeling. For some time, however, his studies were not directed to any particular object. Such was the happy disposition of his mind, that his own reflections, whether supplied by conversation, desultory reading, or the common occurrences of a life in the country, were always sufficient to call forth the vigour and exertion of his faculties. Intercourse with the world had so little deadened in him the sense of the simplest enjoyments, that even in the hours of apparent leisure and inactivity, he retained that keen relish of existence, which, after the first impressions of life, is so rarely excited but by great interests and strong passions. Hence it was, that in the interval between his active attendance in parliament, and the undertaking of his History, he never felt the tedium of a vacant day. A verse in Cowper, which he frequently repeated,

'How various his employments whom the world
Calls idle!'

was an accurate description of the life he was then leading; and I am persuaded, that if he had consulted his own gratifications only, it would have continued to be so. The circumstances which led him once more to take an active part in public discussions, are foreign to the purposes of this preface. It is sufficient to remark, that they could not be foreseen, and that his notion of engaging in some literary undertaking was adopted during his retirement, and with the prospect of long and uninterrupted leisure before him."—p. iii. iv.

He seems to have fixed finally on the history of the Revolution, about the year 1799; but even after the work was begun, he not only dedicated large portions of his time to the study of Greek literature, and poetry in general, but meditated and announced to his correspondents a great variety of publications, upon a very wide range of subjects. Among these were, an edition of Dryden—a Defence of Racine and of the French Stage—an Essay on the Beauties of Euripides—a Disquisition upon Hume's History—and an Essay or Dialogue on Poetry, History, and Oratory. In 1802, the greater part of the work, as it now stands, was finished; but the author wished to consult the papers in the Scotch College, and the *Depôt des Affaires etrangères* at Paris, and took the opportunity of the peace to pay a visit to that capital accordingly. After his return, he made some additions to his chapters; but being soon after recalled to the duties of public life, he never afterwards found leisure to go on with the work to which he had dedicated himself with so much zeal and assiduity. What he did write was finished, however, for the most part, with very great care. He wrote very slow: and was extremely fastidious in the choice of his expressions; holding pedantry and affectation, however, in far greater horror than carelessness or roughness. He commonly wrote detached sentences on slips of paper, and afterwards dictated them off to Mrs. Fox, who copied them into the book from which the present volume has been printed without the alteration of a single syllable.

The only other part of Lord Holland's statement, to which we think it necessary to call the attention of the reader, is that in which he thinks it necessary to explain the peculiar notions which Mr. Fox entertained on the subject of historical composition, and the very rigid laws to which he had subjected himself in the execution of his important task.

"It is therefore necessary to observe, that he had formed his plan so exclusively on the model of ancient writers, that he not only felt some repugnance to the modern practice of notes, but he thought that all which an historian wished to say, should be introduced as part of a continued narration, and never assume the appearance of a digression, much less of a dissertation annexed to it. From the period, therefore, that he closed his Introductory Chapter, he defined his duty as an author, to consist in recounting the facts as they arose; or in his simple and forcible language, *in telling the story of those times*. A conversation which passed on the subject of the literature of the age of James the Second, proves his rigid adherence to these ideas; and perhaps the substance of it may serve to illustrate and explain them. In speaking of the writers of that period, he lamented that he had not devised a method of interweaving any account of them or their works, much less any criticism on their style, into his history. On my suggesting the example of Hume and Voltaire, who had discussed such topics at some length, either at the end of each reign, or in a separate chapter, he observed, with much commendation of their execution of it, that such a contrivance might be a good mode of writing critical essays, but that it was, in his opinion, incompatible with the nature of his undertaking, which, if it ceased to be a narrative, ceased to be a history."—p. xxxvi. xxxvii.

Now, we must be permitted to say, that this is a view of the nature of history, which, in so far as it is intelligible, appears to be very narrow and erroneous; and which seems, like all such partial views, to have been so little adhered to by the author himself, as only to exclude many excellences, without attaining the praise even of consistency in error. The object of history, we conceive, is to give us a clear narrative of the transactions of past ages, with a view of the character and condition of those who were concerned in them, and such reasonings and reflections as may be necessary to explain their connection, or natural on reviewing their results. That some account of the authors of a literary age should have a place in such a composition, seems to follow upon two considerations: *first*, because it is unquestionably one object of history to give us a distinct view of the state and condition of the age and people with whose affairs it is occupied; and nothing can serve so well to illustrate their true state and condition as a correct estimate and description of the great authors they produced: and, *secondly*, because the fact that such and such authors did flourish in such a period, and were ingenious and elegant, or rude and ignorant, are facts which are interesting in themselves, and may be made the object of narrative just as properly as that such and such princes or ministers did flourish at the same time, and were ambitious or slothful, tyrannical or friends to liberty. Political events are not the only events which are recorded even in ancient history; and, now when it is generally admitted, that even political events cannot be fully understood or accounted for without taking into view the preceding and concomitant changes in manners, literature, commerce, &c. it cannot fail to appear surprising, that an author of such a compass of mind as belonged to Mr. Fox, should have thought of confining himself to the mere chronicling of wars or factions, and held himself excluded, by the laws of historical composition, from touching upon topics so much more interesting.

The truth is, however, that Mr. Fox has by no means adhered to this plan of merely "telling the story of the times" of which he treats. On the contrary, he is more full of argument, and what is properly called reflection, than most modern historians with whom